

Boost to Buddhist tourism in UP with ₹168.39 crore development projects

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, 25 JULY

The Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department is developing tourist places and facilities at significant sites associated with Lord Gautam Buddha in the state with an estimated budget of Rs 168.39 crores with an aim to enhance the visitor experience for Buddhist devotees from India and around the world.

In this direction, key development works are underway at notable Buddhist sites, including Kushinagar, Shravasti, Kaushambi, Sankisa, Kapilvastu, and Sarnath.

In Kushinagar, a tourist facilitation center is being constructed at a cost of Rs 8.06 crore. The development and beautification of a Buddha



ghat near Ramabhar Stupa are being carried out with an investment of Rs 23.81 crore. A gate complex on the main entry routes is being constructed for Rs 4.25 crore, and tourism facilities at Buddhist vihars are being developed for Rs 3.57 crore. In Shravasti, tourism facilities at Buddhist Vihars are being enhanced with an investment of Rs 6.78

crores.

In Kaushambi, a Buddhist theme park is being developed at a cost of Rs 22.94 crore, and a 51-feet high bronze statue of Lord Buddha in a meditation posture is being installed for Rs 11.25 crores.

Additionally, a gate complex in the village of Kosam Inam is being constructed at a cost of Rs 23.95 crore.

The integrated tourism development of Kapilvastu, located in Siddharthnagar, is being executed at a cost of Rs 9.77 crore, with the creation of tourism facilities at Buddhist vihars for Rs 4.63 crores and the construction of a Vipassana Center for Rs 24.37 crore.

In Sarnath, a light and sound program at Dhamek Stupa is being implemented for Rs 9.63 crore, and facade lighting work at Mulgandh Kuti Vihar is being done for Rs 3.95 crores.

Furthermore, signage installation work is being carried out in the Buddhist circuit area in Farrukhabad district for Rs 3.18 crore, in Sankisa for Rs 1.50 crore, in Shravasti for Rs 3.61 crore, and in Samath, Varanasi, for Rs 3.17 crore.

These projects are part of a comprehensive plan to develop the Buddhist circuit and provide an enriching experience to visitors.

Uttar Pradesh is home to six major sites linked to the life of Lord Buddha. Kapilvastu, located in the Siddharthnagar district, is the childhood home of Siddharth Gautam, where he spent his first 29 years and began his journey towards enlightenment.

Shravasti is the place where Gautam Buddha spent 25 rainy seasons in Jetavana. In Sankisa, located in Farrukhabad, Buddha descended from heaven to earth. Kaushambi is where Buddha spent his sixth and ninth years of enlightenment. Sarnath, located in Varanasi district, is where Buddha gave his first

sermon on the Four Noble Truths. Kushinagar is the place where Buddha attained Mahaparinirvana. Additionally, Ramgram in Maharajganj is believed to house the remains of Buddha in its stupa, and Devdaha in Maharajganj is identified as the maternal home of Rani Maya Devi, Buddha's mother.

UP Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh on Thursday emphasised the significance of these sites and the government's commitment to improving facilities for visitors. "Our efforts aim to ensure that devotees leave with pleasant memories," he stated, highlighting the importance of these developments in fostering a deeper connection with the rich heritage of Lord Gautam Buddha's life.