

Buddhist Circuit

January 20, 2021

In news: The Ministry of Tourism organised an interesting webinar titled “Exploring Buddhist Circuit by Train” on 16th January, 2021 as a part of ‘Dekho Apna Desh’ Webinar series.

Key updates

- The Webinar focused on promoting and showcasing the rich Buddhist Heritage in India and highlighted the major destinations visited by Buddha personally across the country besides showcasing the Buddhist Heritage left behind by his disciples including the modern monasteries.
- Further, the Webinar also focused on providing first-hand information to the viewers on arrangements for travel (Especially by Train) & accommodation to the Buddhist Sites in India.
- IRCTC Buddhist Circuit Tourist Train envisioned for covering the most venerable sites of Buddhism, following the life path of the Enlightened One, the Buddha, himself.
- The Buddhist tourist train covers all the places which had a significant impact on Buddha’s life and teachings.

The Buddhist Circuit

In the Mahaparinirvana sutra, the Buddha tells his followers that they can attain merit and a noble rebirth by going on pilgrimage to the places where he was born (Lumbini, Nepal), gained enlightenment (Bodhgaya), first taught (Sarnath), and attained nirvana (Kushinagar).

The Buddhist Circuit tourist train operated by IRCTC Ltd takes you to these places and helps you experience firsthand the self-disciplined and legendary life of Lord Buddha

Details of important places associated with Buddha are:

- **Lumbini (in Nepal)** – The Lord Buddha was born in 623 BC in the sacred area of Lumbini located in the Terai plains of southern Nepal, testified by the inscription on the pillar erected by the Mauryan Emperor Asoka in 249 BC..
- **Bodhgaya (in Bihar)** – where he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree.
- **Sarnath (in Uttar Pradesh)** –It was here in around 530 BC that Gautam Buddha had preached his first sermon just five weeks after he attained enlightenment.
- **Nalanda and Rajgir (in Bihar)** – where he lived and taught, and Nalanda, in particular, became the center of Buddhist learning and teaching. Legends say that it was Rajgir where Lord Buddha set in motion his second wheel of law and spent several seasons meditating and preaching.
- **Kushinagar (in Uttar Pradesh)** – Kushinagar, or Kushinara, as it was known in those days, is where Lord Buddha left his corporal self and attained Mahaparinirvana
- **Kapilavastu (on India Nepal Border)** – Kapilvastu is deeply endowed with the Buddha's origins. It is believed that Buddha spent his first early years here before embarking on the long journey to enlightenment.
- **Vaishali (in Bihar)**– It is said Lord Buddha came to Vaishali around five years after his enlightenment. Buddha delivered his last sermon here.
- **Sravasti (in Uttar Pradesh)** – Buddha spent twenty four rainy seasons here at the Jetavan monastery, built by his disciple Sudatta Anathapindika. Shravasti is immensely significant as the site where Gautam Buddha is said to have confounded the Tirthika non-believers by performing some of his most iconic miracles, such as creating several images of himself.

Kausambi (in Uttar Pradesh) – Buddha is believed to have stayed and preached at Kausambi



About 'Dekho Apna Desh'

- The Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India is arranging a series of Webinars under the overall theme of 'Dekho Apna Desh'. Recognising the fact that revival in the tourism sector will be largely spearheaded by Domestic Tourism, the Ministry is focusing on the promotion of Domestic Tourism
- **The objective of these Webinars is to promote various tourism destinations of India** – including the lesser known destinations and lesser known facets of popular destinations.
- **The Webinars include glimpses of the culture, heritage, handicrafts and cuisine of the destinations, in addition to the tourist spots.**
- Concepts of Responsible Tourism, Accessible Tourism, Wildlife, Trekking, Bicycling and Motor Cycle Tours, etc. have also been promoted through the Webinars.

- They are an attempt to present an undiscovered India to its citizens and encourage them to travel.
- A repository of all the Webinars is being maintained by the Ministry and YouTube links to the Webinars are made available on the Incredible India Social Media handles of the Ministry of Tourism.