

Ramayana Circuit

May 28, 2022

In news- On June 21, when the first Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train starts on its maiden journey, it will become the first tourist train from India to cross the international border into Nepal.

More information-

- The train will run on the Ramayana Circuit identified under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, **covering prominent places associated with the life of Lord Ram.**
- The 14-coach train, to be run by IRCTC, will have 11 air conditioned three-tier coaches for tourists, along with a pantry car, a restaurant car, and a separate coach for use by the train staff.
- The train can accommodate up to 600 tourists.
- Ayodhya will be the Bharat Gaurav Train's first stop, where tourists will visit the Ram Janmabhoomi Temple and the Hanuman temple, besides Bharat Mandir at Nandigram.
- The train will then head to Buxar in Bihar, where tourists will visit the hermitage of Vishwamitra and Ramrekha Ghat on the Ganga.
- The visit to Ram Janaki temple in Janakpur in Nepal via Jainagar in Bihar's Madhubani district will follow.
- From Janakpur, the train will cross back into India and proceed to Sitamarhi in Bihar, which is believed to have been the birthplace of Sita.
- The next stop is Varanasi, where the place Shringverpur, where Ram, Sita and Laxman are believed to have crossed the Ganga, and Chitrakoot by road.
- The train will then move west and south – to Nasik for visits to the Trayambakeshwar temple and Panchvati, and then to Krishkindha, Hampi, which is believed to be the birthplace of Lord Hanuman.
- The next destination will be Rameshwaram, for visits to the Ramanathaswamy temple and Dhanushkodi.

- The train will then head to **Bhadrachalam in Telangana, also referred to as the Ayodhya of the South**, and end its 8,000-km journey in Delhi.

The Indian Railways launched the Bharat Gaurav trains last year, to be operated by private players on theme-based circuits. Any operator or service provider can lease a train to run on a theme-based circuit as a special tourism package.

About Swadesh Darshan Scheme

- It is a scheme of the Ministry of Tourism under Government of India that aims to promote, develop and harness the potential of tourism in India.
- Launched in 2015, it is a central sector scheme.
- The funding available for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives of Central Public Sector Undertakings and Corporate Sector is also used in this scheme.
- The entire scheme is based on theme-based tourism and each theme is called a “circuit” and composed of various tourist destinations.
- Tourist Circuit is defined as “a route having at least three major tourist destinations which are distinct and apart”.
- The circuits are – Buddhist circle, Coastal circle, Desert circle, Eco circle, Heritage circle, Himalayan circle, Krishna circle, North-East circle, Ramayana circle, Rural circle, Spiritual circle, Sufi circle, Tirthankar circle, Tribal circle and Wildlife circle.