

Swadesh Darshan scheme

July 22, 2021

In news- Eco-tourism has been identified as one of the Niche Tourism areas under 'Swadesh Darshan scheme' by the Ministry of Tourism.

About the scheme-

- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** for integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits in the country in **2014-15**.
- This scheme is envisioned to synergize with other Government of India schemes like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill India, Make in India, etc. with the idea of positioning the tourism sector as the driving force for economic growth.
- The funding available for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives of Central Public Sector Undertakings and Corporate Sector is also used in this scheme.
- **Objectives** include-
- To position tourism as a major engine of economic growth and job creation
- Develop circuits having tourist potential in a planned and prioritized manner
- Promote cultural and heritage value of the country to generate livelihoods in the identified regions
- Enhancing the tourist attractiveness in a sustainable manner by developing world-class infrastructure in the circuit /destinations
- Follow community-based development and pro-poor tourism approach
- Creating awareness among the local communities about the importance of tourism for them in terms of increased sources of income, improved living standards and overall development of the area

- To create employment through the active involvement of local communities
- The entire scheme is based on **theme-based tourism**.
- Each theme is called a “circuit” and is composed of various tourist destinations.
- Tourist Circuit is defined as “a route having at least three major tourist destinations which are distinct and apart. Circuits should have well-defined entry and exit points. A tourist who enters should get motivated to visit most of the places identified in the circuit.
- A Circuit could be confined to a State or could be a regional circuit covering more than one State/Union Territory.
- Currently, there are **15 theme-based circuits** – Buddhist, coastal, desert, eco, heritage, Himalayan, Krishna, north-east, Ramayana, rural, spiritual, Sufi, Tirthankar, tribal and wildlife.

The **assistance under this scheme shall not be admissible** for the components such as below:

- Land acquisition for development
- Resettlement and rehabilitation package
- Improvement/investments in assets/structures owned by private entities
- Accommodation
- Rejuvenation/dredging/development of bunds of a water body (man-made & natural both)
- Convention Centers / Golf Course / Aquamarine Parks /amusement parks/theme parks which shall be taken up for VGF under other schemes of the ministry.

