

CURRENT AFFAIRS

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TOPIC:TOURISM

Centre to promote destinations in 15 States as part of *Swadesh Darshan 2*

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Prayagraj, Chitrakoot, and Gwalior are among the cities identified in 15 States across the country to be promoted as part of India's new domestic tourism policy which moves away from theme-based tourist circuits and focuses on revving up destination tourism.

The initiative is being taken as part of the first phase of the 'Swadesh Darshan 2' which will be kicked off in January.

Fifteen States are part of the first phase which include Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra. Two destinations from each State have been identified, sources in the Ministry of Tourism told *The Hindu*.

Some of the prominent



Ellora caves is among the sites included in the scheme. FILE PHOTO

places identified are Jhansi and Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh, Gwalior, Chitrakoot and Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh and Ajanta and Ellora in Maharashtra.

The sources said the destinations had been zeroed in on after consultations with the State Tourism Departments, and the Centre was now waiting for approval from Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy. The Swadesh Darshan scheme is 100% centrally

funded. The scheme has been revamped with the mantra of "vocal for local", a top official of the Tourism Ministry told *The Hindu* adding that it was essentially aimed at targeting domestic tourists.

The Swadesh Darshan Scheme was launched by the Centre in 2014-15 for the integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits. Under the scheme, the Ministry of Tourism provides financial

assistance to State governments, Union Territory Administrations or Central Agencies for development of tourism infrastructure in the country.

From December, the revamped scheme would be launched which seeks to enhance the contribution of tourism.

"To create jobs including self-employment for local communities, to enhance the skills of local youth in tourism and hospitality, to increase private sector investment in tourism and hospitality and to preserve and enhance local cultural and natural resources," the vision document said.

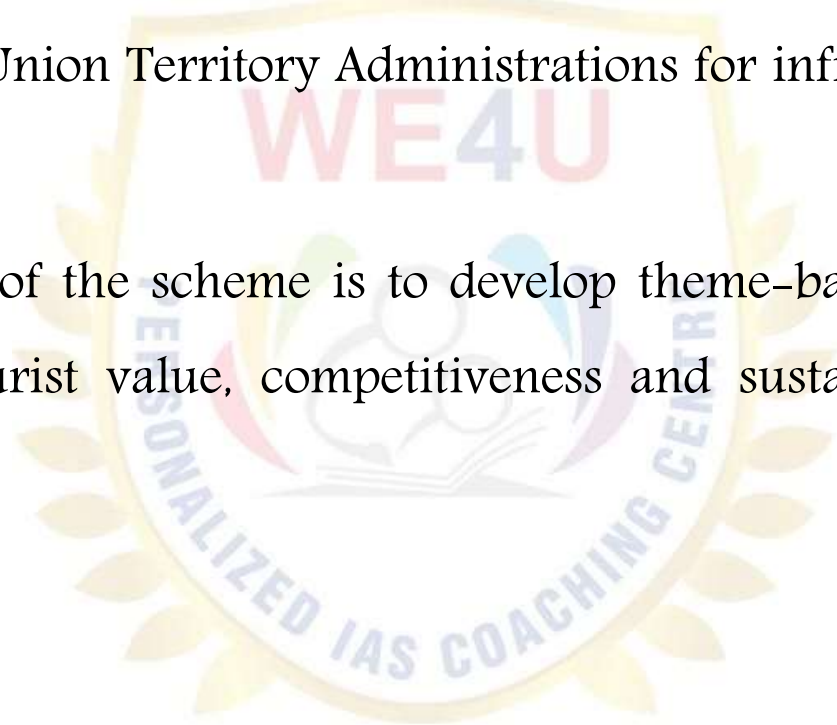
According to the third Tourism Satellite Account for 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20, the contribution of tourism to the employment is 14.78%, 14.87% and 15.34%, respectively.

✓ Swadesh Darshan

✓ Swadesh Darshan, a Central Sector Scheme, was launched in 2014 -15 for integrated development of theme based tourist circuits in the country.

✓ This scheme is envisioned to synergise with other schemes like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill India, Make in India etc.

- ✓ Under the scheme, the Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for infrastructure development of circuits.
- ✓ One of the objectives of the scheme is to develop theme-based tourist circuits on the principles of high tourist value, competitiveness and sustainability in an integrated manner.



TOPIC: WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Tamil Nadu launches mission to save critically endangered vultures

B. Aravind Kumar
CHENNAI

Alarmed at the 96% decline in India's vulture population between 1993 and 2003, the Central government put into place two action plans to protect the species at the national level – the first in 2006 and the second, ongoing plan for 2020-2025. One of the important action points in this nationwide plan is the formation of State-level committees to save the critically endangered population of vultures.

Acting on it, the Tamil Nadu Government formed a State-level Committee to set up an institutional framework for the effective conservation of vultures, which almost went extinct in the country at the beginning of the 21st century. A



Feathered friend: A white-backed vulture being trained to fly in Siryur near Mudumalai Tiger Reserve. M. SATHYAMOORTHY

formal order was issued by Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Climate Change and Forests, on Wednesday.

In Tamil Nadu, four species of vultures are found – the Oriental white-backed vulture, the long-billed vulture, the red-headed vulture, and the Egyptian vulture. “The first three are

residents and can be found in the landscapes of the Nilgiris and Sathyamangalam,” S. Bharathidasan, secretary of Arulagam, which works for vulture conservation, said. “There is evidence of Egyptian vulture breeding only at one site in Dharmapuri,” he said.

The committee, apart

from the senior officials of the Forest Department, also has other experts, including K. Ramesh from the Wildlife Institute of India, S. Muralidharan of SACON, Vibhu Prakash of the Bombay Natural History Society, and two locals involved in conservation – B. Ramakrishnan of the Government Arts College, Uthagamandalam, Mr. Bharathidasan of Arulagam. The committee, which has a two-year tenure, will take steps for monitoring the conservation and recovery of existing vulture sites.

Vultures play a key role as nature's scavengers, keeping the environment clean. Their social and ecological significance cannot be underestimated, Ms. Sahu said, adding “It is the last level scavenger.”

IUCN Status:

- ✓ Oriental White backed Vulture, Long Billed Vulture , Red Headed Vulture=Critically Endangered.
- ✓ Egyptian Vulture=Endangered.

TOPIC: TECHNOLOGY

'India fast emerging as Web3 ecosystem'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

India has a rapidly growing Web3 ecosystem with more than 450 active start-ups, which cumulatively raised \$1.3 billion in funding till April, Nassom said.

While global response to Web3 was still shaping up, India's growing economy, demographic dividend and exponential adoption of emerging technologies across sectors, positioned the country to become one of the highest growth markets for Web3 globally.

The study was released by Nasscom and VC firm Hashed Emergent.

Web3, a new iteration of

the World Wide Web, incorporates concepts such as blockchain technologies and metaverse.

In the last two years, Indian Web3 start-ups have grown to a 450-plus community with four unicorns.

In fiscal 2022 alone, India registered more than 170 new Web3 start-ups, yielding more than 50% CAGR growth since 2015, according to the report.

In terms of distribution, more than 80% of the Web3 start-ups were in tier I cities. However, the tier II/III ecosystem was growing rapidly with locations such as Jaipur and Vadodra evolving as emerging hubs for Web3 start-ups.

Web 3.0

The concept of Web3, also called Web 3.0, used to describe a potential next phase of the internet, created quite a buzz in 2021.

World Wide Web, which is also known as a Web, is a collection of websites or web pages stored in web servers and connected to local computers through the internet.


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- The logo for WE4U Personalized IAS Coaching Centre is a circular emblem with a yellow border and a sunburst pattern. Inside the circle, the text 'WE4U' is at the top, 'PERSONALIZED IAS COACHING CENTRE' is at the bottom, and a central graphic depicts a person reading a book with a magnifying glass over it.
- ✓ Web 3.0 is a decentralized internet to be run on blockchain technology, which would be different from the versions in use, Web 1.0 and Web 2.0.
 - ✓ In Web3, users will have ownership stakes in platforms and applications unlike now where tech giants control the platforms.

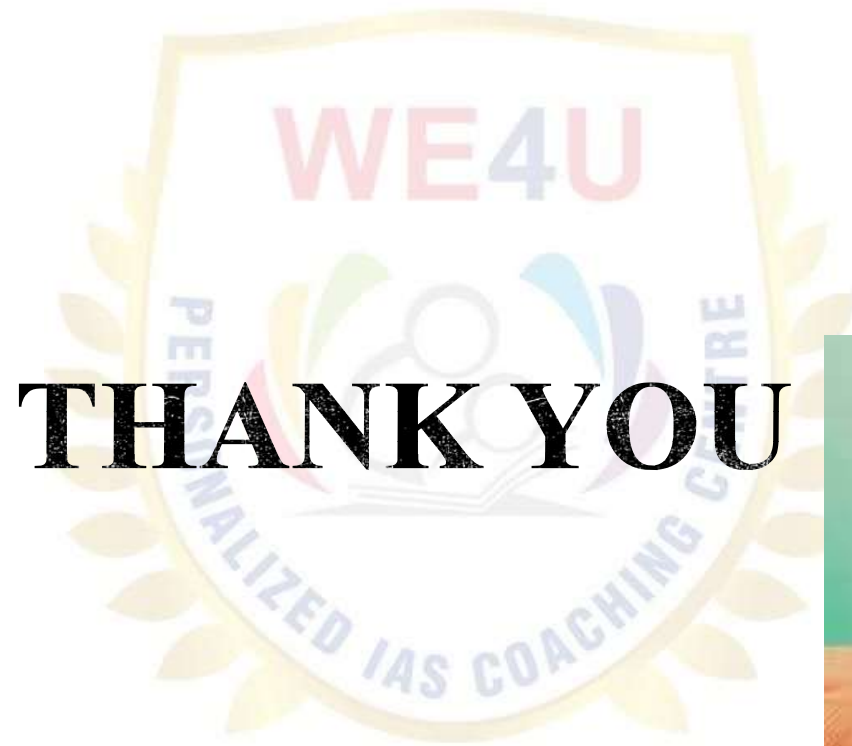
TOPIC: POLLUTION

Endosulfan: Daya Bai ends stir as govt. clarifies on treatment

Endosulfan

- ✓ Endosulfan is an organochlorine insecticide which was first introduced in the 1950s and is commonly known by its trade name Thiodan.
- ✓ It is linked to a slew of grave medical conditions, such as neurotoxicity, physical deformities, poisoning and more.

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- ✓ It is sprayed on crops like cotton, cashew, fruits, tea, paddy, tobacco etc. for control of pests such as whiteflies, aphids, beetles, worms etc.
 - ✓ Endosulfan is listed under both the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.



THANK YOU

