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New Delhi, July 23 The government’s focus on the development of notable spiritual landmarks in the Union Budget ...

A photograph of Nirmala Sitharaman, the Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, speaking at a podium during a budget session. She is wearing a white and purple sari and glasses. Two men are seated behind her, one in a white shirt and one in a blue shirt.

Centre's focus on developing key spiritual landmarks a commendable move: Experts

New Delhi, July 23 The government’s focus on the development of notable spiritual landmarks in the Union Budget 2024-25 is a commendable move, said experts on Tuesday.

In her seventh Budget speech, the Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman, emphasised the historical and cultural significance of tourism in India.

She announced about the “comprehensive development” of Vishnupad temple corridor and Mahabodhi temple corridor in Bihar.

"The government's proactive perspective on enhancing tourism, particularly through the development of spiritual and cultural landmarks like the Vishnupad temple in Gaya and Mahabodhi temple in Bodh Gaya, is a commendable move that promises substantial economic and social benefits," Pradeep Shetty, President of the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), told IANS.

Noting that tourism has always been a part of our civilisation, the FM said: “Positioning India as a global tourist destination will create jobs, stimulate investments, and unlock economic opportunities.”

For FY 2024-25, the government earmarked about Rs 2,478 crore for the tourism ministry. It is similar to Rs 2,400 crore allocated last year in FY24, according to budgetary documents. Actual expenditure last year was Rs 1,692 crore.

Dr Malini Saba from Anannke Foundation said that the “tourism and hospitality sectors, severely impacted by the pandemic, are poised for recovery.”

She added that “the development of iconic tourist destinations will invigorate this sector, contributing to job creation and economic revitalisation.”