



BHARAT RANBHOOMI DARSHAN – EVENT

NEWS: *The Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan website has been launched by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on January 15th.*

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan Overview

- **Launch Event:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled the *Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan* website on the occasion of the 77th Army Day (15th January 2025).
- **Purpose:**
 - To provide visitors with comprehensive information on 77 significant battlefields and forward areas along India's borders.
 - To help visitors make necessary travel arrangements, including applying for permits to access restricted areas.
- **Features of the Website:**
 - **Virtual Tours:** Enables users to explore sites virtually, offering immersive digital experiences.
 - **Historical Narratives:** Includes stories, timelines, and details about military operations in these areas.
 - **Interactive Content:** Visitors can engage with content to learn about the history and strategic importance of these locations.
- **Integration with Tourism:**
 - Promoted under the *Incredible India* campaign by the Ministry of Tourism to attract domestic and international tourists.





Battlefield Tourism

- **Objective:** To promote tourism at historically significant military sites and border areas while driving socio-economic development in remote regions.
- **Key Locations:**
 - **Galwan Valley, Ladakh:** Known for the violent border clash with China in June 2020, where 20 Indian soldiers were martyred.
 - **Doklam:** The site of the 2017 standoff between India and China at the tri-junction of India, Bhutan, and China.
 - **Nathu La, Sikkim:** Witnessed the 1967 clashes with China.
 - **Longewala, Rajasthan:** A key battlefield in the 1971 India-Pakistan war, situated in the Thar Desert.
- **Significance of Sites:**
 - Focuses on areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China and the Line of Control (LoC) with Pakistan, which have a history of wars and clashes post-independence.
- **Accessibility:**
 - These previously restricted locations, due to their strategic importance and difficult terrain, are now being opened to visitors, giving them an insight into the lives of soldiers stationed there.

Historical Context: Line of Actual Control (LAC) vs. Line of Control (LoC)

Line of Actual Control (LAC):

- **Definition:** The LAC is the demarcation separating Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory.
- **Length:**
 - India considers the LAC to be 3,488 km long, while China estimates it at around 2,000 km.
- **Sectors:**
 - **Eastern Sector:** Covers Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim.
 - **Middle Sector:** Includes Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.
 - **Western Sector:** Encompasses Ladakh.
- **Status:** The LAC is not formally agreed upon by both countries and remains undemarcated.

Line of Control (LoC):

- **Definition:** A legally recognized boundary established after the 1948 ceasefire in Kashmir, later formalized in the 1972 Shimla Agreement.
- **Legal Recognition:** Unlike the LAC, the LoC is delineated on maps signed by the Directors General of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan.



Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP)

- **Introduction:** Launched in 2023 as a centrally sponsored scheme for the development of villages along the India-China border.
- **Geographical Scope:** Targets villages in 46 blocks across 19 districts in Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and Ladakh.
- **Purpose:**
 - To enhance the quality of life in border villages and prevent migration.
 - To bolster security by ensuring people remain in these strategically important areas.

Key Features of VVP:

1. **Addressing Basic Issues:** Tackles backwardness, illiteracy, and infrastructure gaps identified in a 2018 report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee.
2. **Hub and Spoke Model:** Develops growth centers in border villages by promoting social entrepreneurship and skill development.
3. **Tourism Development:**
 - Promotes local culture, traditions, and heritage to attract tourists.
 - Leverages tourism to create employment opportunities and reduce migration.
4. **Empowering Locals:**
 - Focuses on skill development for youth and women to enable self-sufficiency.
5. **Infrastructure Development:** Enhances connectivity, access to basic amenities, and overall economic activities in remote border regions.

Tourism and Socio-Economic Development

- **Growth in Tourism:**
 - Defence Minister Rajnath Singh highlighted a 30% increase in tourism in Ladakh, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh over the past four years.
 - This growth is attributed to improved infrastructure and the promotion of border tourism.
- **Collaboration with Civil Authorities:**
 - The Indian Army, in partnership with local governments, is facilitating tourism initiatives while maintaining operational preparedness.
- **Economic Impact:**
 - Tourism is expected to boost local businesses, generate jobs, and improve the socio-economic conditions of border communities.

Strategic Importance of the Initiatives

- **Nation-Building:**
 - Showcases India's military heritage, instills national pride, and fosters awareness of the sacrifices made by soldiers.
- **Connectivity and Security:**



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- Better infrastructure and tourism in border areas not only improve quality of life but also enhance the country's strategic security.
- **Integrated Approach:** Combines tourism, development, and security to achieve long-term benefits for the nation.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/upsc-current-affairs/upsc-essentials/knowledge-nugget-tourism-defence-bharat-ranbhoomi-darshan-upsc-9780411/>



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