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Title: Developing cultural tourism of Deoghar, Jharkhand.

SHRI NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Deoghar, which falls under the Santhal Pargana region, is an unique and extremely revered site of one of the 51 Shaktipeeths and also of the Dwadash Jyotirlinga in the country. This is a religious and cultural capital of Eastern India which catapults the holy place to an international acclaim and is visited by over 5 crore pilgrims every year. Other prominent personalities associated with the place like Guru Rabindernath Tagore wanted to set up SHANTINIKETAN here, Mahatma Gandhi in his biography mentioned this place as his ashram, Maharishi Arvind who shifted to Pudicherry from here only, this place is also the birth place of well known social reformer Late Ishwar Chand Vidyasagar.

The potential for cultural tourism of Deoghar in Jharkhand still is insufficiently researched and poorly utilized. The State as a whole is not valued as a cultural centre and this often results in neglect of the State's hidden cultural treasures. These are the pending demands under Ministry of Tourism and Culture:

- (1) Deoghar Ravindra cultural centre will conceptualize the aim of projecting cultural kinship which transcends territorial boundaries.
- (2) Food craft institute at Deoghar is pending with the ministry which requires early sanction.
- (3) Deoghar is included in the Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spirituality Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) Yojana scheme among the 20 cities. The Government of India is giving Rs.40 crore and the State Government is also willing to invest to create a project on the lines of Amritsar project.