

## Development of Excavation Sites and Heritage Complexes (DESH) scheme

*Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Government policies and interventions*

### Why in News?

Recently, the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed developing archaeological sites in the Union Budget 2026.

- **Aim** - It is a **heritage-based cultural tourism development scheme** aimed at developing archaeological sites into vibrant experiential cultural destinations.
- **Nodal Ministry** - The Ministry of Culture.
- **Objective** - To place heritage at the centre of cultural tourism.
- To open excavated landscapes for **public engagement and generate local employment**, and strengthen regional economies.
- To disperse tourism from over-crowded destinations to emerging heritage locations.
- **Proposed Sites** - Sites span from 3rd century BC to 19th century, across India.

Period	Site
<b>Indus Valley / Ancient Civilisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lothal (Gujarat)</li> <li>• Dholavira (Gujarat)</li> <li>• Rakhigarhi (Haryana)</li> <li>• Hastinapur (Uttar Pradesh)</li> <li>• Agroha (Haryana)</li> <li>• Eran (Madhya Pradesh - ancient mint site)</li> </ul>
<b>Buddhist / Early Historic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarnath (Uttar Pradesh)</li> <li>• Sannati (Karnataka)</li> <li>• Udayagiri (Odisha)</li> </ul>
<b>Iron Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adichanallur (Tamil Nadu - Iron Age urn burial site)</li> </ul>

<b>Medieval to Early Modern</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jhansi Fort (Uttar Pradesh)</li> <li>• Chittorgarh Fort (Rajasthan)</li> <li>• Purana Qila (New Delhi)</li> <li>• Leh Palace (Ladakh)</li> <li>• Sivasagar – Ahom site (Assam)</li> </ul>
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## References

[IE | DESH scheme](#)

