

Ministry of Tourism displays India's diverse and unique tourism products at the Italy edition of the Incredible India Reconnect 2022 virtual roadshow

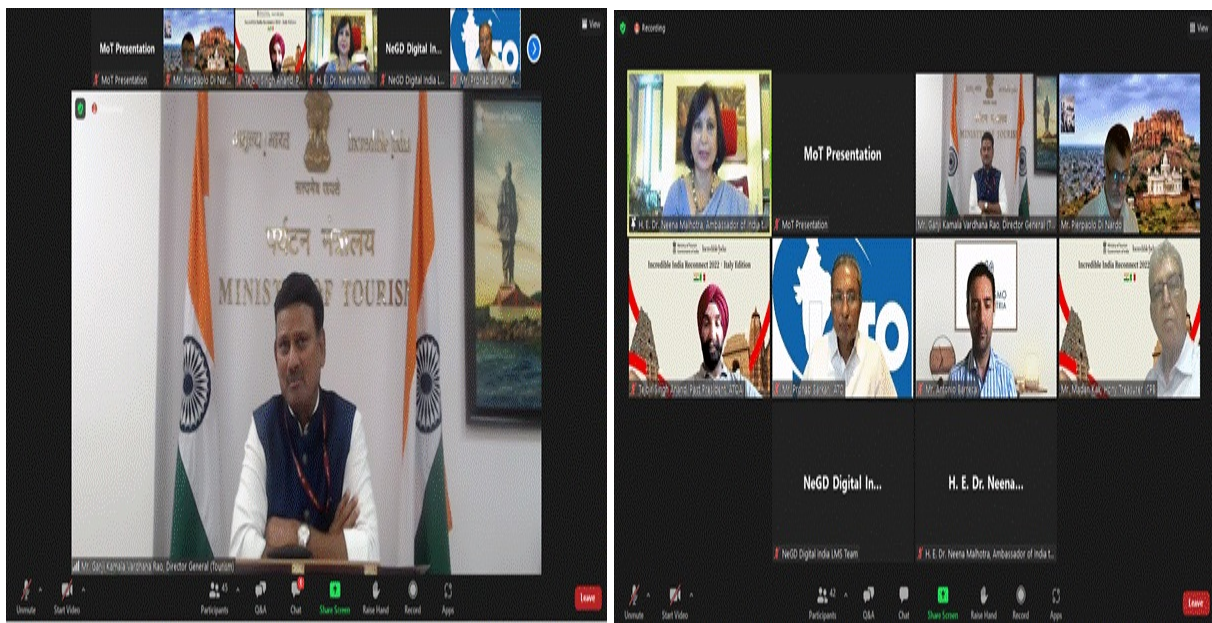
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As India opens its borders post-pandemic, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has been organising a series of virtual roadshows in collaboration with Indian Missions abroad to reconnect with and welcome back partners in the international travel and tourism industry. As much as it is aimed to be an update on Indian tourism, it is also an initiative to rediscover old ties and explore new opportunities for the future.

India's diverse and unique tourism products were at display on 26th July, 2022 with the Italy edition of the Incredible India Reconnect 2022 virtual roadshow.



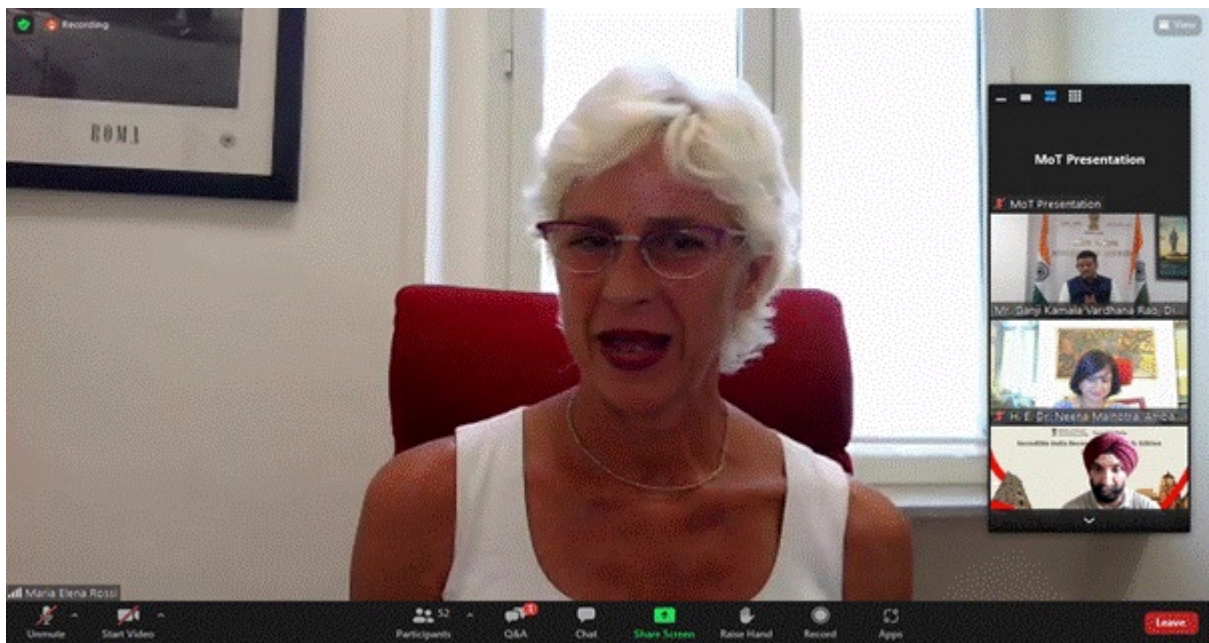
The Incredible India Reconnect 2022 Virtual Roadshow began with opening remarks from Dr. Neena Malhotra, Ambassador of India to Italy. She highlighted the importance of efforts such as this in reigniting the tourism and travel interest between Indian and Italy – given the rich commonalities between history, culture, and civilization. She spoke at length about how Italy and India are fertile grounds for film and cultural tourism to thrive.



It was followed by remarks from Mr. G Kamala Vardhana Rao, Director General (Tourism), Ministry of Tourism. The Director General began with recalling the Prime Minister’s slogan ‘Chalo India’ mentioned in his address to Indian diaspora in Denmark. The call for the diaspora was for each of them to invite 5 non – Indian friends to come and visit India. Highlighting the importance of the diaspora, he mentioned the need for enabling members of the Indian diaspora to talk about the diverse tourism offerings of India in their daily places of work and interaction. He also mentioned how India was a tourist destination that offered the most economical and the most luxurious of tourist offerings at each of the 165-170 declared tourist destinations in India. While also highlighting Italian tourist preferences towards India’s traditional culture, heritage, wildlife, and nature, he mentioned how India’s success story in vaccination has allowed for tourism recovery at a faster pace than was predicted by global thought leaders like UNWTO and WTTC. He reiterated on the importance of medical and wellness tourism and its popularity in Italy. Dilating on the fact, he mentioned how India was among the only countries in the world having a dedicated Ministry and action plan towards traditional knowledge systems.



Post this, Mr. Antonio Barreca, Director General, Federation of Tourism Industry highlighted that Italian tourists have traditionally been very enthusiastic about Indian culture, the outdoors, the cities, and the general vibrancy and diversity of India. He mentioned about how Italy and India can together compete on quality and excellence, while offering each other technical knowhow allowing opportunities for knowledge transfer.



Ms. Maria Elena ROSSI, Marketing & Promotion Director, ENIT – Italian National Tourist Board, spoke at length about new initiatives being taken by the Board with respect to digitalization and sustainability. Realizing the importance of people and community in this industry, she spoke at length about the need to make people and youth join the tourism and travel industry, she mentioned how India and Italy can get together to join hands and create tourism and travel professionals for the bright future of this industry.



Mr. Pierpaolo Di Nardo from Maldindia Tour Operators, spoke about his passion for India given it being a destination which changed his life for the better. He mentioned how he was trying to give back to India by spreading knowledge about the rich and diverse destination that is India, through tailor made thematic trips to India exposing tourists to yoga, music, dance, and architecture in India. His experience only reiterated the importance of India being a must-visit experiential transformative destination. Mr. G Kamala Vardhana Rao, Director General (Tourism) in order to learn and delve deeper into Mr. Di Nardo's experiences, threw light on the point about tourists wanting to experience India in a deep and authentic way. He also mentioned how India was taking forward-thinking steps with respect to rural and homestay tourism to enable the same.

This session was followed by insightful presentations from the representatives of ATOAI, IATO, and ICPB who spoke about India's tourism offerings, the varied geography and tourism products, and its edge as a MICE tourism destination.

The virtual roadshow was a signal of the continuing efforts of the Ministry of Tourism to encourage bilateral tourism by recognising the issues, challenges, and opportunities between India and its top 20 source markets,

sowing seeds for new ideas and relationships for a brighter future for Indian tourism.

NB/OA

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