

The 1st Tourism Working Group Meeting begins with a side event on 'Rural Tourism for Community Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation'

Self reliant villages will lead to a self-reliant India:
Shri G.K Reddy

Tourism, provides a channel for promoting local products and services , Empowering youth to become entrepreneurs ; Employing women, and disadvantaged communities : Shri G.K Reddy

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Major Highlights :

- *The main event tomorrow will be graced by Minister of Tourism, Culture and DoNER Sh. G. Kishan Reddy; Union Minister Shri Parshottam Rupala, Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, and Chief Minister of Gujarat Sh. Bhupendra Bhai Patel.*
- *Travel and Tourism must not be looked upon only as a medium for discovery and pleasure but also as a lever to enable, empower and employ : Shri G.K Reddy*
- *India is focused on using Tourism as a vehicle for achieving Sustainable Development Goals during India's G20 Presidency: Shri G.K Reddy*

The 1st Tourism Working Group Meeting under G20 hosted by the Ministry of Tourism began today with a side event of panel discussion on 'Rural Tourism for Community Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation'. The keynote address at today's side event was delivered by Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and DoNER Shri G.K Reddy.

The delegates were given warm, colorful and traditional welcome which included performance by folk artists at Bhuj Airport as well as at the tent city, Dhordo, Rann of Kutch. The panel discussion was attended by representatives from Indonesia, Italy , Spain ,Japan , ILO along with UNEP. From India, Representatives from government of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Nagaland along with OYO and Global Himalayan Expedition participated in the discussion. Among other topics discussions and presentations were held on Women Empowerment through Homestays, Community based Eco Tourism and The Rural Tourism model of Rann of Kutch.

Delivering the keynote address Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and DoNER Shri G.K Reddy said that it

is a matter of great honour and responsibility for India to assume G20 presidency at this critical moment when the world is facing a number of challenges.

Union Minister also highlighted the fact that India is focused on using tourism as a vehicle for achieving Sustainable Development Goals during India's G20 Presidency . Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, Shri G.K Reddy said that " The soul of India lives in its villages" and thus by showcasing our villages, country's way of life , country's spiritual and cultural heritage and country's natural beauty is being showcased. Shri G.K Reddy also said that Self reliant villages will lead to a self-reliant India.

Shri G.K Reddy said that tourism has the potential for generating maximum number of jobs with least investment and therefore tourism can be a positive force for economic transformation, rural development and community well being.

Giving the example of Pochampally village in Telangana which has been declared as one of the best tourism villages by UNWTO, the Union Minister said that Indian villages are already receiving global recognition for rural tourism.





Shri G.K Reddy also stressed upon the fact that tourism provides a channel for Enabling the sale of local products and services, Empowering the youth to become entrepreneurs; Employing women, and disadvantaged communities such as tribals and thus leading to community empowerment and Poverty alleviation.

Union Minister informed that the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India for the first time has come up with a draft on National strategy and roadmap for the development of Rural Tourism which is in line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji's vision of "Self-Reliant India" or 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.

The panellists gave presentations and held discussions highlighting the best practices, success stories prospects , opportunities and issues in the field of Rural tourism.



More than 100 delegates are attending the 1st Tourism Working Group meeting at Dhordo, Rann of Kutch, Gujarat. Five priority areas in the tourism sector have been identified during India's G-20 Presidency, which will constitute the key building blocks for accelerating the transition of the tourism sector and will achieve the targets for 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The five priority include **Green Tourism** "Greening of tourism sector for a sustainable, responsible and resilient tourism sector"; **Digitalization** "Harnessing the power of digitalization to promote competitiveness, inclusion and sustainability in tourism sector"; **Skills** "Empowering youth with skills for jobs and entrepreneurship in tourism sector"; **Tourism MSMEs** "Nurturing tourism MSMEs / Startups/ private sector to unleash innovation and dynamism in tourism sector" and **Destination Management** "Rethinking the strategic management of destinations towards a holistic approach that delivers on the SDGs".

The main event tomorrow will be graced by Minister of Tourism, Culture and DONER Sh. G. Kishan Reddy; Union Minister Shri Parshottam Rupala, Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, and Chief

Minister of Gujarat Sh. Bhupendra bhai Patel. The participants would be senior delegates from G20 member countries, invitee countries and international organizations.

Four G20 meetings of tourism track are being held at various locations including Rann of Kutch, Silugiri, Goa and a location in North India. A Ministerial level Communique, entailing the direction which the different countries have agreed upon to take forward during G20 meetings, will be presented at the end of the summit. The different places chosen for the G20 events will encompass different flavours like rural, archaeological, historical.

In addition to the four G20 meetings of Tourism track, three mega events are also planned to promote tourism during the period of G20 meetings. The Ministry would be organizing the first Global Tourism Investors' Summit (GTIS) in April/May 2023 in New Delhi; MICE Global Conference in May; G20 CEO Forum in June.

During the Rann of Kutch meeting one of the key highlights is showcasing archaeological tourism as a part of which delegates will be taken on an excursion trip to Dholavira which is a UNESCO World heritage site. There will be live demonstrations of the local arts and handicrafts before the delegates and also the farewell gifts to the delegates will be under the One District One Product initiative.

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