

India received 6.19 million Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) during 2022 as compare to 1.52 million during the same period of 2021.

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There were 10.93 million Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India during pre-pandemic year 2019. Tourism Industry has shown good signs of revival after Covid-19 pandemic. According to latest information received from Bureau of Immigration, India received 6.19 million Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) during 2022 as compare to 1.52 million during the same period of 2021.

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India under its Schemes of Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD and Assistance to Central Agencies, provides central financial assistance to State Governments/ Union Territories/Central Agencies for development of tourism related infrastructure and facilities in the country to provide an enriching tourism experience to visitors in a planned and phased manner.

The Ministry of Tourism has set up a 24x7 Multi-Lingual Tourist Info-Helpline on the toll free number 1800111363 or on a short code 1363 in 12 Languages including 10 international languages (German, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Arabic), Hindi & English for domestic and foreign tourists to provide support service in term of information relating to Travel in India and to offer appropriate guidance to tourists in distress while travelling in India.

The details of Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) through tourism in India during 2021 and 2022 (in Rs. Crore) are given below:

| Year | FEEs through tourism in India (in Rs. crore) |
|--------|--|
| 2021 | 65,070 |
| 2022 * | 1,34,543 |

*: Provisional estimates

The Ministry of Tourism has taken several initiatives to give boost to the tourism sector in the country and to increase foreign tourist arrivals, details of which are:

- i. Launched Dekho Apna Desh initiative with the objective of creating awareness among the citizens about the rich heritage and culture of the country and encourage citizens to travel within the country.
- ii. Conducting Programmes under the 'Capacity Building for Service Providers' (CBSP) Scheme to train and up-grade manpower to provide better service standards.
- iii. Launched Incredible India Tourist Facilitator Certification Programme, a digital initiative that aims at creating an online learning platform with the objective of creating a pool of well trained professional tourist facilitators across the country to support tourists.
- iv. 24x7 toll free Multi-Lingual Tourist Helpline.
- v. Providing facility of e-Visa for 5 sub-categories i.e. e-Tourist visa, e-Business visa, e-Medical visa, e-Medical Attendant visa and e-Conference visa for nationals of 166 countries.
- vi. E-Visa has been further liberalized and the visa fee has been substantially reduced.

vii. New mountain peaks have been opened for Mountaineering/Trekking to give boost to adventure tourism in the country.

viii. Lowering of GST on hotels rooms with tariffs of ₹1,001 to ₹7,500/night to 12%; those above ₹7,501 to 18% to increase India's competitiveness as a tourism destination.

ix. On the recommendation of the Ministry of Tourism, 59 tourism routes have been awarded to the identified airlines by the Ministry of Civil Aviation under the RCS UDAN Scheme, for which Ministry of Tourism extends financial support in form of VGF (Viability Gap Funding). 51 of these routes have been operationalized till date.

x. In order to boost visitor arrival, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has declared "Incredible India! Visit India Year 2023".

G20 meetings are being held at 55 destinations throughout the country. The infrastructure at these cities are being augmented and upgraded for the G20 meetings.

Tourism offerings are being highlighted in run up to these meetings. Excursion of Delegates is also organised to nearby tourist attractions. Effort is being made to make G20 Delegates visiting these destinations are going back to their countries as tourism ambassadors. Important tourism sites and facilities are being upgraded to international standards.

This reply was given by Minister of Culture, Tourism and Development of North-Eastern Region Shri G Kishan Reddy in Rajya Sabha yesterday.

NB/SK

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