

The Inaugural session of the 4th Tourism Working Group Meeting under G20 held at Goa today

Foreign Tourists during the period, January to April 2023 is 166% higher than arrivals registered during the last year same period in 2022 : Shri G. Kishan Reddy

Goa Roadmap shall be a key guiding tool for creation of a sustainable, inclusive and resilient tourism sector: Shri Shripad Yesso Naik

Government of India lays great focus on development of rural tourism destinations that aim to preserve and promote cultural and natural heritage: Shri Ajay Bhatt

Goa is an all-season tourist destination where there is an something for everyone, in this coastal Paradise: Shri Pramod Sawant

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The Inaugural session of the 4th Tourism Working Group Meeting under G20 hosted by the Ministry of Tourism was held at Goa today morning.

The inaugural session was addressed by Union Minister for Tourism, Culture and DoNER Shri G.Kishan Reddy, Minister of State for Tourism Shri Ajay Bhatt; Minister of State for Tourism Shri Shripad Yesso Naik and Chief Minister of Goa Shri Pramod Sawant. Minister of Tourism in Goa Shri Rohan Khaunte graced the occasion.

Addressing the inaugural session Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and DoNER Shri G.K Reddy

said in the past few months, G20 Tourism Working Group Meetings were held under India's Presidency and it includes first meeting at Rann of Kutch, Gujarat, second at Siliguri, West Bengal, third meeting at Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir and had some insightful, thought provoking and positive discussions on different types of tourism products with experts, innovators, and leaders from, across the world.





He also added that a visit to India, would be incomplete, without experiencing the beauty, greatness and richness of our spiritual strength and diversity of different places of the country. He said “We are home to more than, 50 Shakti Peethas, where the divinity of women is worshipped. India is the birth place of Sikhism and we have the Sikh Golden Temple, Amritsar, which is a symbol of brother-hood and equality.

He also said “India is the birth place of the Buddhism and Jainism and has around 80% Hindu population. The 200 large Buddhist monasteries across India remind us of the Buddhist principles of non-violence and the Jain philosophy of living in harmony with nature forms, the basis for the Government’s Mission LiFE - Lifestyle For Environment.”

Speaking about Prime Minister’s leadership he said “Ensuring that rich heritage, and civilizational strength gets due recognition, our government under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi ji, has been promoting tourism since 2014 and he is our very own Tourism Ambassador introducing , Indian tourism at a global level.”

He further remarked “Since ancient times, travelling to India was an avenue for finding oneself and India has always been a popular destination for travellers from all corners of the globe seeking and Self-discovery. This has provided opportunities for people across 200 countries and varied faiths to experience India’s Culture and Spiritual Heritage.”

Shri G.K Reddy further informed that in India, in the spirit of our ancient philosophy of ‘Athithi Devo Bhava’ - where the guest is treated as divine, our foreign tourist arrivals after COVID 19 again have increased and Foreign Tourists during the period, January to April 2023 is 166% higher than arrivals registered during the last year same period in 2022. India is expected to recover its, inbound travel to pre-pandemic levels in 2023.

He further said that the final meeting will provide us all, action points and recommendations for national and other governments, and other tourism stakeholders, to act upon to achieve, Sustainable Development Goals.

Union Minister also informed “Currently our Indian government has two priorities: Sustainable infrastructure creation, to cater to the growing needs of the tourists, and Raising awareness among the tourists, for responsible consumption and adoption of an environmentally conscious lifestyle and through the launch of the G20 Tourism and SDG Dashboard, a legacy has been created.

The dashboard being developed, shall promote policies and initiatives by the G20 countries, and guest countries in building a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient sector.

He also appealed to that together and build a more diverse, resilient, and sustainable tourism sector for our future generation.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik, Minister of State for Tourism said that Goa is the perfect holiday destination and is a colourful kaleidoscope of different things to see and do. It has serene landscape, palm-lined beaches, golden sands, lush green countryside, an amazing mosaic of wonderful cultural history, and a unique mix of east and west cultures.

Shri Shripad Yesso Naik also said “The well-developed tourism infrastructure along the coastal areas and water bodies combined with favourable weather conditions aid in promoting adventure tourism in the country as is evident in the growing popularity of the segment amongst domestic and foreign tourists.”

He also said that the National Strategy for Adventure Tourism has been launched to position India as a preferred adventure tourism destination and help adventure tourism grow in the country. This strategy focuses on developing adventure destinations, promoting safety in adventure tourism, skill development, capacity building and marketing.

He further added that the Goa Roadmap for Tourism builds on the efforts of the G20 Tourism Working Group in the past three years and identifies five interconnected priority areas under the India’s G20 Presidency of Green Tourism, Digitalization, Skill Development, Tourism MSMEs and Destination Management with corresponding recommended actions to progress the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals.

He also said that the. Goa Roadmap shall be a key guiding tool for creation of a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient tourism sector.

Speaking on the occasion Minister of State for Tourism Shri Ajay Bhatt said that Tourism gives people the chance to learn about other cultures and empowers communities, which helps the economy grow. Creation of robust infrastructure at the destination boosted by enhancement in last mile connectivity has facilitated an increase of tourism experiences in the country.

Further, social media has also contributed a lot in promotion of lesser-known tourism destinations as tourists look out for enriching experiences combining thrill, pleasure, and cultural exchange.

Informing about the PRASAD scheme he said “It is interesting to note that India is a major hub for spiritual tourism and heritage tourism. I take immense pride in informing the esteemed gathering that the Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) scheme of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India was started in 2014-2015 by the Ministry of Tourism in order to make pilgrimage destinations and heritage cities more appealing to tourists.”

He also added that the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India also lays great focus on development of rural tourism destinations that aim to preserve and promote cultural and natural heritage while also making sure that tourism leads to sustainable development.

He added “The Global Tourism Plastics Initiative brings the travel industry together for achieving a unified goal, that is to eradicate plastic pollution at its source. This requires collaborative and dedicated efforts from governments, industry players and other tourism stakeholders, thereby promoting sustainable tourism practices within the tourism industry.”

Speaking at the inaugural session Shri Pramod Sawant, Chief Minister of Goa, highlighted the appeal of Goa as a year-round tourist destination that attracts diverse travellers due to its wide range of tourism offerings. He also stressed the importance of fostering an inclusive travel sector that prioritizes sustainable travel experiences.

He also said that as we have gathered today in Goa under the theme Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam we embark on the collective journey towards a more inclusive sustainable and prosperous world. He added “Goa is famously known as the 'Pearl of the Orient' and has been attracting millions of domestic as well as foreign tourists annually. He also said that Goa is known for its beautiful beaches, vibrant Nightlife, thrilling adventurous sports, pristine western ghats and mesmerizing water-falls, serene backwaters, yoga and wellness retreats, delicious cuisine and the unique culture and heritage.

He also said that Goa is an all-season tourist destination where there is something for everyone in this coastal Paradise and tourists indulge in a various kinds of water sports and experience the vibrant nightlife attend musical events cultural programs and try out local cuisine.

A thematic discussion on 'Making India a Hub for Cruise Tourism' was also organised in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) today.

In the event discussions were held on successful practices of Cruise Tourism Promotion and Development, Development of River cruising, way forward in developing cruise Tourism.

'Draft strategy-Vision and Integrated Cruise Tourism Strategy for India' was unveiled at the side event by Shri G Kishan Reddy, Shri Shripad Naik and Shri Ajay Bhatt.

Addressing the Thematic discussion, Union Minister Shri. G.K Reddy said that Indian government is making all the efforts to encourage and improve the cruise tourism and is working with whole of the sector approach. He said that that the government is working to ensure that in the coming days anyone can enjoy the experience of cruise tourism. We are coordinating with the various ministries, state governments, international organisations, stake holders and industry to bring about a revolution in Cruise Tourism, he added. The minister further said that we have a coastal line of more than 7500 Kms, which we can explore through Cruise tourism.

CM of Goa Shri Pramod Samant remarked that Goa has immense potential and a robust ship building and cruise industry. He highlighted that with a 'Make in Goa for the Globe' approach, Goa is playing a pioneering role in cruise infrastructure development and invited investments for strengthening the cruise tourism industry. He also highlighted that a first of its kind marine cluster has been introduced to boost the marine industry in Goa.

Minister of State for Tourism, Shri Ajay Bhatt, stated during the thematic discussion 'Making India a Hub for Cruise Tourism' that with active collaboration among stakeholders and government initiatives under the visionary leadership of PM Shri Narendra Modi, India would establish itself as a renowned global destination for cruise tourism very soon.

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