

Ministry of Tourism



# Union Minister for Culture and Tourism Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat Highlights ITDC as a Multi-Dimensional Growth Engine

## Joint Celebration of 60 Years of ITDC and 70 Years of The Ashok Hotel Celebrates a “New Tech-Enabled Era of Experience” Redefining Guest Engagement and Service Standards

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The Union Minister for Culture and Tourism, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, today inaugurated a series of multi-dimensional, high-impact initiatives at the Convention Centre of The Ashok, New Delhi, marking the joint celebration of 60 years of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) and 70 years of The Ashok Hotel.



Describing ITDC as a “multi-dimensional growth engine for India’s tourism and hospitality ecosystem,” the Minister underscored the organisation’s re-imagination strategy for the digital and metaverse age, aligned with the Prime Minister’s vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.



The landmark celebration witnessed the launch of a comprehensive bouquet of physical, digital, intellectual, and institutional initiatives aimed at catalysing growth across the tourism and hospitality sector. These initiatives reflect the Union Budget 2026 emphasis on emerging technologies, including Gen AI, immersive experiences, and smart digital infrastructure for commercial excellence.



Established in 1966, ITDC is a Schedule ‘B’ Mini-Ratna CPSE under the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Over six decades, it has played a pioneering role in shaping India’s tourism infrastructure, hospitality standards, and international outreach. As ITDC celebrates its Shashthipoorti (60 years), it continues to strengthen market leadership through modernization, institutional reforms, and technology-enabled transformation.

Commissioned in 1956, The Ashok, New Delhi, ITDC’s flagship property and India’s only PSU-managed five-star luxury hotel, marks 70 years of distinguished service to the Nation. Along with its sister property Hotel Samrat, it continues to redefine excellence in hospitality. The Ashok is a recipient of the National Tourism Award for Best Facilities for Differently-Abled Persons and Best Hotel-Based Meeting Venue, and remains central to India’s diplomatic engagements, MICE tourism, and luxury hospitality landscape.

In collaboration with the Department of Posts, a customized commemorative “My Stamp” postage stamp sheet was released to honour The Ashok’s 70-year legacy. These officially valid stamps will serve as collectibles, branding tools, and heritage souvenirs.

ITDC unveiled a specially curated illustrated comic book, “A Day at the Hotel,” in partnership with Amar Chitra Katha, introducing school and college students—especially from Tier 2, Tier 3, and rural India—to career

opportunities in hospitality. The initiative aligns with the Budget 2026–27 announcement regarding the proposed National Institute of Hospitality Management.

A stylized commemorative postcard embedded with a QR code was launched, enabling users to access a film on The Ashok and relive the celebration digitally, blending memorabilia with immersive technology. A promotional film celebrating The Ashok’s expansive greens, micro-climate, architectural grandeur, and modern indulgence was also unveiled for year-round global promotions.

A heritage coffee-table publication, The Ashok Recipe Book Inspired by “Gyan Bharatam”, documenting state banquet menus served at Hyderabad House since 1975, was released. The book highlights gastronomy as an instrument of soft power and cultural diplomacy.

The refurbished swimming pool facilities at Hotel Samrat, including upgraded adult and children’s pools with enhanced safety and premium amenities, were inaugurated. Seasonal memberships are scheduled to open in mid-March.

To strengthen India’s “Wed in India” and “Meet in India” segments, The Ashok expanded its outdoor event infrastructure with renovated Aishwarya Gardens and the launch of Airawat Outdoors, a newly developed multi-purpose venue for exhibitions, fairs, conferences, and weddings.

Standardized ITDC-branded prepaid gift vouchers for rooms, dining, and gifting solutions were introduced for The Ashok, Hotel Samrat, and Kalinga Ashok properties, enhancing guest engagement and structured revenue streams.

A fully modernized ITDC Procurement of Goods & Services Manual 2026 was released, aligned with revised General Financial Rules, CVC circulars, the GeM platform, and Department of Expenditure guidelines. Replacing the 1997 manual, it strengthens transparency, compliance, and efficiency. ITDC also launched the Sound & Light Shows Manual 2026, making it the only government organisation with a structured operational framework for heritage Sound & Light Shows, integrating modern projection mapping, QCBS evaluation mechanisms, and standardized execution processes.

A unified ITDC Template for General Clauses 2026 was introduced to streamline tendering, agreements, and licensing processes across ITDC divisions, promoting speed, scale, and governance uniformity.

The Ashok Institute of Hospitality & Tourism Management was repositioned as Institute of Hotel Management (IHM) Ashok, aligning with the national IHM framework and strengthening its identity as a Centre of Excellence.

Teasers were launched for five state-of-the-art immersive Sound & Light Shows at Leh, Purana Qila, Bundi, Sarkhej Roza, and Udayagiri & Khandagiri, using projection mapping, laser technology, and immersive storytelling to rejuvenate historic destinations.

Ashok Travels & Tours (ATT) unveiled a comprehensive physical and digital brochure repositioning itself as a one-stop solution offering bespoke tours, visa and passport services, concierge support, transportation, ticketing, and premium accommodation. ITDC also launched its online booking portal, [www.itdcbookings.in](http://www.itdcbookings.in), a digital ecosystem for Government Ministries, PSUs, Defence, and Paramilitary forces, enabling seamless booking of flights, hotels, transport, and conferences.

An MoU was signed with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to train 1,500 tribal homestay operators nationwide through IHM Ashok in hospitality standards, financial literacy, and digital operations, supporting inclusive and sustainable tourism. Students from JK Lakshmi Pat University were felicitated for their pro-bono systems design project enhancing user experience at Taj Restaurant, Agra.

A teaser for “Chalo India with Eric Ji” (Mizoram) was launched in partnership with NITI Aayog, promoting Mizoram’s tourism potential under the Hon’ble Prime Minister’s “Chalo India” campaign.

The joint celebration symbolizes ITDC’s transformation into a technology-enabled, governance-driven, experience-centric hospitality leader, integrating heritage with innovation. With strategic reforms, immersive tourism initiatives, digital modernization, and inclusive capacity building, ITDC is poised to play a defining role in advancing India’s tourism sector towards the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.

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