

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2026

- A bilateral meeting was held on 27 January 2026 between Hon'ble Minister of Tourism, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, and H.E. Ms. Olga Kefalogianni, Hon'ble Minister of Tourism of Greece. Discussions focused on enhancing connectivity, promoting cultural and youth exchanges and renewal of the Tourism Cooperation Agreement.
- The delegation of Ministry of Tourism attended FITUR-2026 held in Madrid, Spain from 21-25 January 2026.
- Ministry of Tourism attended the 34th Meeting of the ASEAN-India Tourism Working Group (TWG) held on 27 January 2026 in Cebu, the Philippines, co-chaired by India and the Philippines. The Meeting reviewed progress under the ASEAN-India Tourism Work Plan 2023-2027, including activities relating to sustainable tourism, capacity building, cruise tourism, crisis communication and tourism marketing cooperation under the ASEAN-India Year of Tourism. India updated the Meeting on key initiatives, including, the ASEAN-India Cruise Dialogue 2025, tourism professionals' exchange programmes and Industry engagement platforms and reaffirmed its commitment to advancing mutually agreed tourism cooperation with ASEAN Member States.
- Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Hon'ble Minister of Tourism attended ASEAN Tourism Ministers' Meeting in virtual mode on 30 January 2026 in Cebu, Philippines, assisted by Joint Secretary (Tourism). The Meeting considered, inter alia: (i) outcomes of the 22nd ASEAN-India Summit; (ii) the Report of the ASEAN-India Tourism Working Group Meeting; (iii) consideration and adoption of the Joint Media Statement; and (iv) consideration and adoption of the Summary Record.
- So far there was no mechanism for a consultation between Union and State Tourism Secretaries with the tourism industry stakeholders such as travel, hotel and tour operators. The first such meeting was convened on January 13, 2026 which was extremely well received and it also led to the exchange of best practices between the States. For example, Madhya Pradesh has developed an easier system for giving approvals for hotel construction and this was shared by the ACS Tourism and industry agreed and commended the same. Thereafter, Ministry of Tourism has written to all the States asking them to consider adopting this. We shall be doing this meeting once every quarter so that a permanent mechanism is created to resolve issues and foster best practices.
- We have got tourism included as a mandatory theme in the State Deregulation Commission, taking the inputs from the afore-mentioned meeting.
- Institutes of Hotel Management (IHIM) were set up broadly on the same pattern as IIMs for managerial talent for the hotel and hospitality industries and there are 21 across India training 25000 every year. IHM PUSA, IHM Bombay, IHM Calcutta has produced several stellar alumni such as the CEO of the Taj Hotels Group Puneet Chatwal, CEO, Hilton Zubin

Saxena, several celebrity chefs like Vikas Khanna, Manish Mehrotra etc. However over the years there has been a significant fall in various aspects of the functioning of these institutions. We have started a major overhaul of these including improvement of pedagogy, modernizing the curriculum, enhancing starting salaries and closing down/rationalizing those courses which do not have a market demand. This a long process and the first steps have been taken now.

- First steps in terms of outreach have been made to the top leadership of Walt Disney Company, Universal Theme Parks, SeaWorld, Six Flags, Merlin, Dronisus, Pursuit, Excurio etc. for their next big investment. This is again a long journey and almost every one of them has had a bad history in India largely with the private sector and the land and resource requirements for them is significant We have also spoken to several states who are happy to consider giving them the land and approvals up-front.
