

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3176**  
ANSWERED ON 19.03.2026

**ENHANCING TOURISTS ARRIVALS**

3176 SHRI SANJAY SETH:

Will the Minister of **TOURISM** be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of strategies to double international tourist arrivals to 20 million by 2030;
- (b) the details of visa policy reforms and e-visa processing efficiency improvements;
- (c) the details of investments made by Government and private operators to make India's tourism internationally competitive;
- (d) the manner in which foreign exchange earnings from tourism are being leveraged to strengthen the balance of payments; and
- (e) the details of measures being taken to address safety, sanitation and service quality concerns?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a): International Tourist Arrivals (ITAs) in India reached 20.57 million in 2024, effectively surpassing the 20 million milestone.

To sustain growth and to increase international footfall, the Ministry of Tourism has implemented several key strategies like Incredible India 2.0, Visa Policy Reforms, Infrastructure Development through the revamped Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme, and RCS-UDAN scheme in Coordination with the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Further, the Ministry is in active engagement with global organizations such as UN Tourism, G20, ASEAN, and BRICS, to shape tourism policies, enhance connectivity, and strengthen cultural ties. Additionally, the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) scheme has sanctioned projects to develop Iconic Tourist Centres to Global Scale with 100% central funding.

Further, Ministry of External Affairs, through its Missions/Posts abroad, is actively promoting India as a global hub for medical value tourism by conducting outreach sessions with local stakeholders and facilitating connections between reputed Indian hospital chains and counterparts overseas. These efforts aim to enhance awareness of India's advanced, affordable medical services and strengthen patient inflow from partner countries. MEA has advised our Missions for developing country specific tourism promotion strategies and annual action plan for tourism promotion.

(b): The Government has introduced several visa reforms to facilitate travel:

- (i) E-Visa facility is now available to nationals of 172 countries under 14 sub-categories, including tourism, business, and medical purposes.
- (ii) Processing is conducted entirely on an online platform to ensure efficiency.

- (iii) E-visa is valid for entry through 33 designated airports, 16 designated seaports, and 02 land ports.
  - (iv) Visa-on-Arrival facility has been extended to nationals of Japan, South Korea, and UAE.
- (c): Targeted investments to improve global competitiveness include:
- (i) Sanctioning of 53 projects worth ₹2,208.31 Crore under Swadesh Darshan 2.0 and 54 projects worth ₹1,726.74 Crore under PRASHAD. Additionally, 40 projects for ₹3,295.76 Crore were sanctioned in 2024-25 under the SASCI scheme of Government of India for iconic tourist centers to a global scale.
  - (ii) 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is allowed under the automatic route for tourism and hospitality construction. In 2024, FDI in hotels and restaurants reached ₹11,490.18 Crore.
  - (iii) Inclusion of three-star or higher category classified hotels located outside cities with population of more than 1 million, ropeways & cable cars and Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre Projects with minimum built-up floor area of 100,000 square metres of exclusively exhibition space or convention space or both combined, have been included in the Harmonized Master List of infrastructure sub-sectors.
- (d): Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) from tourism reached ₹2,93,033 Crore (\$35.016 Billion) in 2024, reflecting a growth of 10.14% over 2023. The tourism sector's total share in India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is estimated at 5.22% for 2023-24, contributing significantly to the national economy and strengthening the services sector balance.
- (e): Key measures for safety, sanitation, and quality include:
- (i) Deployment of dedicated Tourist Police in 15 States/UTs and operation of a 24x7 Multi-Lingual Tourist Info-Helpline (1800111363) in 12 languages.
  - (ii) Implementation of the Incredible India Tourist Facilitator (IITF) Certification Programme and 'Paryatan Mitra/Paryatan Didi' initiatives to create a pool of trained professionals.
  - (iii) Utilization of the NIDHI+ portal for mandatory/voluntary classification and recognition of accommodation units and service providers.

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