

TOURISM - SHOWCASING THE INDIAN ODYSSEY

“India: the cradle of human race, the birthplace of human speech, the mother of history, grandmother of legend, great grandmother of tradition” - Mark Twain

India becomes the first country in the world to land on moon's South Pole- a testament to the remarkable resilience, vision and foresight of this great country. This global milestone couldn't have come at a better time as world leaders converge in India, the land of '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*', to discuss future forward.

In that direction, G20 tourism working groups and ministerial meetings in India, set amidst the iconic G20 presidency of India have set the ball rolling by ushering in major optimism among the tourism stakeholders across India. This has boosted confidence of all Indian tourism businesses, employees, tourists and investors as this has come as a revival stimulant.

Tourism is the most transformative engine for growth with the potential to increase jobs, economic output, forex and infrastructure creation. Tourism and hospitality create diversified employment opportunities in various sectors like food & beverage, accommodation, service vendors, tours, travel and transportation services, art, architecture and cultural sites. Infact, job creation in this sector is not just limited to tourism but those that have greater affinity with hospitality like education, agriculture, communication and aviation sectors.

The prestigious G20 Meet is a big boost considering that the 200 + G20 meetings across all tracts are being hosted in 50 + destinations across the length and breadth of India, a timeless experience of India's symphony of tradition, taste and travel. Diverse marvels united by this country's wonderful warmth.

Any such landmark event requires planning of the highest order. The diligent ideation and attention to detail undertaken by Ministry of Tourism and the G20 secretariat in the four tourism working group meetings and the final ministerial meeting, bringing all stakeholders together is praise worthy. They simplified a huge task at various levels to enable swift action and implementation.

In order of their execution, the tourism working group meetings at Rann of Kutch, at Siliguri, at Srinagar and at Goa followed back to back by the ministerial meeting there, curated and integrated the local cuisines, cultures, costumes and customs of each of these destinations beautifully. A glowing tribute to the richness of each region.

The parallel sessions conducted on the side of each tourism working group be those on the rural theme in Rann of Kutch, the adventure theme at Siliguri, the film and eco-tourism at Srinagar and cruise tourism, sustainability and CEO forum at Goa engaged the local tourism industry. The highlight was the release of the national draft film tourism policy and national draft cruise tourism policy which FAITH was immensely proud to have partnered with Ministry of Tourism and the G20 secretariat on behalf of all its national member associations.

The four tourism working groups culminated in the ministerial declaration at Goa around the principles of responsible and sustainable tourism, harnessing the power of digitalisation to promote competitiveness, nurturing tourism MSMEs, empowering women & youth with skills for decent jobs, strategic planning & management of destinations and private sector driven tourism through government support has set a global model of tourism as a vehicle for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The painstaking efforts of coordination and bringing the massive delegation to these destinations, three of these through charter flights- underscored the Ministry of Tourism's commitment to Brand India, setting the stage for showcasing a world class tourism industry embodying the varied Indian tapestry soaked in the ethos, values and beauty of the Indian tourism product. Ministry of Tourism and the G20 secretariat has set a new global benchmark of excellence of astute planning and implementing MICE activity for world leaders. Other nations will really need to up their game to match the exceptional operational, logistical and experiential matrix laid out by India for the G20.

The Ministry of Tourism has walked the talk and brought to fore their deep insights and knowledge that has exalted the golden aura of G20. The effort and enduring spirit of excellence has infused a sense of pride in the Indian tourism industry and enhanced confidence in FAITH and its association members that its \$ 3 trillion tourism vision for India for 2047 is completely achievable.

Be it the moon or the earth, Brand India shines bright.

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