



अतुल्य! भारत Incredible! India



Ministry of Tourism - Government of India

A consumer connect initiative

For Body, mind & soul



Indian traditions and practises have revolutionised the concepts of holistic health around the world. With options that range from yoga to ayurveda, India is the ideal rejuvenation destination



gradually becoming popular for various specialised treatments like orthopaedic surgeries, cardiac surgeries, dental treatments etc. Infrastructure in terms of well-equipped hospitals of international standards with highly qualified and experienced doctors and support staff make India attractive as a medical tourism destination.

Today, the sector of medical tourism is growing and this growth is expected to continue. Governmental policies have also helped make India an attractive destination for the medical tourists. The Indian Government issues medical visa to facilitate visits for medical purposes. The Ministry of Tourism provides financial support under the Market Development Assistance (MDA) scheme to approved medical tourism service providers, i.e. Representatives of Hospitals accredited by Joint Commission for International Accredited Hospitals (JCI) and National Accreditation Board of Hospitals (NABH) and Medical Tourism Facilitators (Travel Agents/ Tour Operators approved by Ministry of Tourism and engaged in Medical Tourism).

But health is, as stated in the World Health Organization definition, "a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease

Travelling for health is a tradition that dates back to ancient times when people would travel to places that were known for the healing powers of their natural resources like hot water springs, mud baths, etc., which had near miraculous effects. That was the origin of spas with their mineral enriched waters and volcanic mud pools. The advent of modern medicine has not reduced travel for traditional therapies. Medical tourism, a niche category of tourism has grown by leaps and bounds in the last decade. Essentially it means traveling to different countries for healthcare purposes.

The success of medical tourism depends upon synergy between two sectors- healthcare sector and the tourism sector. A large number of tourists from other countries have begun to travel to India specifically to avail the medical and health care services. As healthcare continues to become increasingly expensive in the west, destinations such as India are much in demand. Medical tourism is fast becoming a preferable way to combine health and well-

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ness with leisure. The availability of World class infrastructure combined with the cost of treatment being significantly lower in comparison to the countries in the West, India is

or infirmity." India is uniquely positioned to cater to not merely health (the absence of disease or infirmity) but Wellness too with a rich pool of ancient wisdom, knowledge and traditions to draw upon. From Yoga to Ayurveda, from several schools of meditation to Naturopathy, Indian culture traditionally believes in Wellness as a way of life. And that legacy today makes us one of the major Wellness destinations in the world. Recognizing the potential of this sector the Government of India has been active in encouraging this niche tourism category. Recognizing that unregulated institutions claiming to be Wellness centres have begun mushrooming across the country the Tourism Ministry is encouraging accreditation of Wellness centres. The Guidelines for Accreditation of Wellness Centers have been developed by the National Board for Accreditation of Hospitals & Healthcare Services (NABH) in consultation with AYUSH, which were released during the workshop on Wellness tourism organized by the Ministry in February 2011. The Ministry of Tourism has extended its scheme to Wellness tourism service providers accredited by NABH. Presently the Wellness centers accredited by the State Tourism Departments of Kerala and Karnataka are also eligible for the MDA scheme. There is every indication that in the coming years, tourism sector as a whole and Wellness and Healthcare in particular have a huge growth potential.



face to face

Sky's the limit



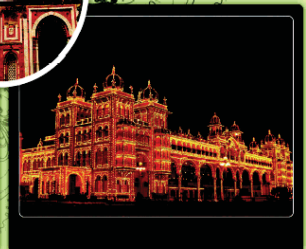
SULTAN AHMED,
Minister of
State for Tourism,
Government of India

Tourism is an ideal vehicle for inclusive growth of society as it showcases the heritage of the nation and actively contributes to the development of local communities and poverty alleviation. Says Shri Sultan Ahmed, Minister of State for Tourism, "Tourism can indeed be one of the most powerful engines for economic growth, income redistribution, employment generation and social integration. Tourism can alleviate poverty and generate employment in backward, isolated and remote areas. We are promoting Rural Tourism in a big way with a view to generating income for our rural masses."

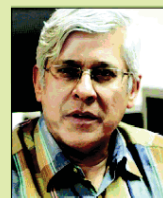
As far as Medical Tourism is concerned, health remains a major concern among foreign tourists. "Our hospitals are ready to provide quality services to the world at competitive cost. India is developing fast as a hub for Wellness Tourism and our Wellness products are very popular. As a matter of fact many stakeholders abroad have asked us to facilitate opening of more quality wellness resorts," explains Shri Ahmed.

As leisure travel is becoming more and more popular, the volumes are increasing and there's tremendous pressure on the airlines and hotel industry. "We are in constant dialogue with the Ministry of Civil Aviation to enhance connectivity with Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. Ministry of Tourism has recently constituted Hospitality Promotion and Development Board to facilitate clearances for new hotel projects," delineates Shri Ahmed. Corporate and MICE Tourism are also witnessing a spurt in inbound tourists. "For the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) segment we have world-class facilities in Delhi, Hyderabad and other major metropolitan cities. There is a new interest in holding exhibitions and conferences in India and clubbing them with tours to rich cultural, heritage and natural tourism sites," says Shri Ahmed. Additionally, the Tourism Ministry has definite plans in place for expansion, especially the network of agents. These agents are being upgraded as specialists and consultants. "The network of our agents is expanding day by day at a fast pace and many of our traditional tour operator companies have now developed themselves into Destination Management Companies. It's a very positive sign. Today our tour operators and destination management companies are developing strong partnership with their counterparts abroad for increasing inbound tourism to India," asserts Shri Ahmed.

The Ministry of Tourism is also taking steps to position India as a "value-for-money" destination among domestic tourists. With the cultural shift taking place in the Indian tourism landscape, families are opting for shorter but more frequent holidays both within and outside the country. "This shift is taking place the world over and people are opting for shorter and more frequent holidays. We are also changing our promotion and marketing strategy, both within and outside India to facilitate such travel," adds Shri Ahmed.



Amazing Potential



RAJEN HABIB KHWAJA,
Secretary,
Government of India,
Ministry of Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism's Incredible India campaign has lived up to its promise of engaging and catching the imagination of domestic and inbound tourists. The number of foreign tourist arrivals has gone up from 2.38 million in the year 2002 to 5.58 million in 2010, while the number of domestic tourists has gone up from 269.60 million in 2002 to 650.04 million in 2009. The Incredible India campaign has been largely responsible for this increase, says the Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, R.H. Khwaja. He adds: "We have tremendous potential to host the maximum number of visitors in the world. We have excellent tourist products and our effort is now to make them world class facilities. Our focus is on development of state-of-the-art infrastructure, accompanied by world-class services. Of late, there been a very positive change in the attitudes of service providers and they have become customer friendly."

These steps are necessary to cash in on the interest generated by the Incredible India campaign. For the country to offer world-class tourist products, technology and innovation are viewed as the key drivers. The Ministry of Tourism is upgrading the technology quotient and is also trying to harness new technology to make operations more efficient and profitable. "We are upgrading our website. Most of stakeholders in the trade are utilizing latest technology to provide quality services to the customers. We are trying to use social media to enhance the reach of Incredible India," says R.H. Khwaja.

The Ministry is trying to tackle the challenge of lack of proper transport and accommodation in and around several lesser known but popular destinations. These are the destinations which have the potential of drawing a large number of domestic as well as foreign tourists. Says Khwaja: "At lesser know destinations, we do have the challenge of lack of suitable accommodation and transport. We are trying to facilitate investment from the private sector for providing quality infrastructure at such places. We are also contemplating a Caravan Policy to facilitate travel of tourists."

For the tourists to come in and enjoy a memorable experience, it is necessary to have effective law and order machinery in place which helps in promoting safe tourism. Adds Khwaja: "India is committed to promote sustainable, safe and honourable tourism. Last year major stakeholders took a pledge to promote tourism in a sustainable and safe manner. The Ministry has brought in a voluntary Code of Conduct in promoting safe and honourable tourism and is also planning for large-scale stakeholders and community involvement for the same."





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Discover India

Visitors have been fascinated by India no less than the writers who imagined India for so long. And for many of them, India always made an impact of foreignness and alienisms that they struggled to make sense of within the matrix of their home culture

The Imagined and the Real



SUBODH KANT SAHAI
Minister for Tourism
Government of India

India today is one of the most exciting tourist destinations in the world. The varied and vast landscape of the country forms a beautiful background to the cultural mosaic that is India. The visitor is spoiled for choice. In the north is the pristine, snow clad majesty of the Himalayas - considered one of the most interesting mountain ranges in the world due to the sheer diversity of its flora and fauna. From the fragrant valleys of Kashmir, famed for their saffron, saffrons and apples; to the mystic Buddhism of the foggy mountains

in Sikkim; from the cold deserts of Leh and Ladakh to the fabled playground of the gods - Uttarakhand; the length and breadth of the Himalayan range offers an unparalleled journey. The south makes an equally strong claim. Home to the Dravidians, considered the original inhabitants of the sub continent, southern India is a fascinating cultural experience. It is speculated that it was here that Christianity found one of its earliest refuge and it was here again that the Europeans first landed. The home of ayurveda and exotic spices,

tropical forests and rock cut temples, peninsular India has its own unique rhythms to enthrall and ensnare the senses. From a boat ride over the back waters of Kerala to the beach where an ocean and a sea finally meet; from Mumbai - the city that harbours dreams but deals in hard currency to the promenades of Goa that hark back to Portugal, peninsular India is unique.

Since India is a country of extremes and opposites it is no surprise that while western India is composed of a desert north east India is a lush, tropical paradise. The dry Thar desert is one of the most popular tourist destinations in India thanks to its myriad attractions. From the glorious forts that are now heritage resorts and hotels, to the pageantry of a land that sparkles with the brightness of its colors against the sere desert, Rajasthan has long captured the imagination of most visitors. And then there is the captivating brilliance of Gujrat with its rich folk arts and traditions. It is also home to some truly spectacular landscape; the Rann of Kutch. While the western part of India displays its vibrancy of culture via colour, the north eastern states of India rival each other in verdant greenery. Dominated by tribes, the north east is a virtual treasure chest, from the fables that link it to most revered epics of Hinduism - The Ramayana and Mahabharata - to the unique societal practices such as the matrilineal society in Meghalaya, there is much to explore and discover.

>>Your India<<
India is greater than the sum of

its cultural past. It is also a vibrant, growing economy that is busily engaged with modernizing itself and making a claim on the global economic stage. And tourism is beginning to play a key role in that economic development; the foreign exchange earnings from tourism in 2010 was estimated at US\$ 14.19 billion, or Rupees 64889 crores.

While tremendously proud of its heritage India today is not hampered by its traditions. Visiting India is not limited to a cultural glimpse; it can be to experience a wide range of experiences ranging from adventure travel to therapeutic travel; from medical services to unparalleled learning opportunities in a diverse range of fields and subjects, India has much to offer. Today tourism in India is capable of catering to a variety of sectors and tourist interests; medical tourism allows visitors access to world class health care at a fraction of what it would cost them in the west. The rise of rural tourism is creating unprecedented opportunities for development in a sector that has incredible potential. Realising the potential for tourism in India, the government has made a concentrated effort to develop infrastructure and launch initiatives that aid visitors in selecting the kind of sector they want to engage in; be it a cultural trip designed to visit the monuments or an adventure trip that focuses on sporting opportunities; be it a medical holiday for treatment or a time of relaxation, the Indian Tourism sector really does have it all.



Development of Tourism Infrastructure MEGA DESTINATIONS/CIRCUITS

<p>➤ ANDHRA PRADESH</p> <p>a) Charminar area of Hyderabad - Destination b) Tirupati Heritage Circuit c) Kadapa Heritage Tourist Circuit</p> <p>➤ ASSAM</p> <p>National Park Mega Circuit covering Manas, Orang, Nameri, Kaziranga, Jorhat, Sibsagar & Majuli</p> <p>➤ BIHAR</p> <p>Bohdhaya-Rajgir-Nalanda Circuit</p> <p>➤ CHHATTISGARH</p> <p>Jagdulpur-Tirathgarh-Chitrakoot-Barsur-Dantewada-Tirathgarh Circuit</p> <p>➤ DELHI</p> <p>Illumination of monuments- Circuit</p> <p>➤ GOA</p> <p>Churches of Goa Circuit</p> <p>➤ GUJARAT</p> <p>a) Dwarka-Nageshwar-Bet Dwarka Circuit b) Shuklatirth-Kabirvad-Mangleshwar-Angadeshwar Circuit</p>	<p>➤ HARYANA</p> <p>Panipat-Kurukshetra-Pinjore Circuit</p> <p>➤ HIMACHAL PRADESH</p> <p>Eco and Adventure Circuit (Kullu-Katrain-Manali)</p> <p>➤ HARYANA & HIMACHAL PRADESH</p> <p>Panchkula - Yamunanagar (Haryana) - Ponta Sahib</p> <p>➤ JAMMU & KASHMIR</p> <p>a) Mubarak Mandi Heritage Complex, Jammu - Destination b) Naagar Nagar Circuit (Watalab via Hazratbal, Tulmullah, Mansbal and Development of Mega Circuit in Leh Wullar Lake), Srinagar c) Development of mega circuit in Leh Ladakh</p> <p>➤ JHARKHAND</p> <p>Mega Destination at Deoghar</p> <p>➤ KARNATAKA</p> <p>Hampi Circuit</p>	<p>➤ KERALA</p> <p>Muziris Heritage Circuit connecting historically and archaeologically important places of Kodungalloor</p> <p>➤ MADHYA PRADESH</p> <p>a) Development of Chitrakoot as Mega Destination b) Jabalpur as Mega Circuit</p> <p>➤ MAHARASHTRA</p> <p>Vidarbha Heritage Circuit</p> <p>➤ MANIPUR</p> <p>INA Memorial</p> <p>➤ ORISSA</p> <p>Bhubaneswar- Puri-Chilika- Circuit</p> <p>➤ PUDUCHERRY</p> <p>Puduchery Destination</p> <p>➤ PUNJAB</p> <p>Amritsar Destination</p> <p>➤ RAJASTHAN</p> <p>a) Ajmer- Pushkar Destination b) Desert Circuit</p>	<p>(Jodhpur- Bikaner-Jaisalmer)</p> <p>➤ SIKKIM</p> <p>Gangtok- Destination</p> <p>➤ TAMIL-NADU</p> <p>a) Mahabalipuram- Destination b) Pilgrimage Heritage Circuit (Madurai-Rameshwaram-Kanyakumari) c) Thanjavur</p> <p>➤ UTTARAKHAND</p> <p>a) Haridwar-Rishikesh-Munikireti-Circuit b) Nirmal Gangotri</p> <p>➤ UTTAR PRADESH</p> <p>a) Agra Circuit b) Varanasi-Sarnath-Ramnagar Circuit</p> <p>➤ WEST BENGAL</p> <p>a) Ganga Heritage River Cruise Circuit b) Dooars (Jalpaiguri District)</p> <p>➤ TRIPURA</p> <p>Mega Lake Circuit including Mata Bari</p> <p>Source MR Division (MOT)</p>
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Hunar Se Rozgar

Tourism is a perfect vehicle for inclusive growth of society as it showcases the heritage of the nation and positively contributes to the development of local communities and poverty alleviation. It can indeed be one of the most powerful engines for economic growth, income redistribution, employment generation and social integration. Tourism can alleviate poverty and generate employment in backward and remote areas in isolation. One of the more innovative schemes in this regard is the "Hunar Se Rozgar" scheme of the Ministry of Tourism. It is a program that imparts employable skills to young people of the age group of 18-28 years with a minimum education level of 8th standard, enabling them to be employed in the hospitality sector. This scheme is aimed at bridging the gap of skilled manpower in the hospitality sector. The trainees are given 6 to 8 weeks training in food and beverage service and food production areas and also paid a stipend as an incentive. Ultimately, it is building towards not just a stronger sector growth but overall up gradation of the soft skills levels of all those participating in the sector.

One of the greatest incidental benefits of rural tourism is the preservation of a culture and a way of life that otherwise would have become economically untenable and give way to pseudo urbanism

Rhythms of tradition

Taking the road less travelled is one of the more interesting ways to travel as it allows a true glimpse into the truth of a culture. Fortunately for the travelers of today taking the road less traveled is a lot easier than strapping on a backpack and venturing, with only a prayer and hope, into the great unknown with all its variables and discomforts.

Rural tourism is a concept that has revolutionized the tourism industry and for the tourist it has opened a world of new possibilities. Rural tourism is the cultural equivalent of ecotourism; while the latter is concerned with the preservation of the environment, the former is concerned with preserving and showcasing a 'slice of life' glimpse of a traditional way of life. Ministry of Tourism defines rural tourism as "Any form of tourism that showcases rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and the

locals for a more enriching tourism experience."

But what does it consist of? The Ministry of Tourism explains further, "Rural tourism is essentially an activity which takes place in the countryside. It is multifaceted and may entail farm/agricultural tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism and ecotourism. As against conventional tourism, rural tourism has certain typical characteristics: It is experience-oriented; the locations are sparsely populated; it is predominantly in natural environments; it meshes with seasonality and local events; and it is based on the preservation of culture, heritage and traditions."

Fundamentally it is a cultural experience that the tourist can participate in as opposed to the kind of tourism where the tourist merely sees and observes. And India is uniquely poised to offer an unparalleled experience in this niche segment. As on date, 172 rural tourism projects in 29 States/Union Territories have been sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism.

The Rural Tourism Project at Hodka village in Kutch district of Gujarat won the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) award for the year 2010 under the Heritage category. The citation awarded reads: "The scale of this project is very welcome and could have major positive impacts on the community."

A National Tourism Policy was introduced in 2002, with rural tourism identified as a focus area to generate employment and promote sustainable livelihoods. While in the initial two years of the scheme, only physical infrastructure (Hardware) development activities were taken up under the scheme, from the year 2004-05 capacity building (Software) activities were also taken up. Clearly rusticity has an international appeal. At the other end of the cultural spectrum from Hodka village in Gujarat is Mawlynnong in Meghalaya. Since it was declared the cleanest village in Asia in 2003, it has attracted international attention and thousands of visitors, both domestic and foreign. What

is common to both is a sense of community participation that allows the community to not only be the majority stakeholders in the project but also the major beneficiary.

One of the greatest incidental benefits of this form of tourism is the preservation of a culture and a way of life that otherwise would have become economically untenable and give way to shoddy pseudo urbanism. Now instead, these rustic locations are among the hottest destinations.

Rural tourism appeals to a niche segment whose motivations vary. Ranging, perhaps, from the desire to do something different to curiosity and a desire to learn and understand. Or perhaps it is the ultimate counterpoint to the stresses of an increasingly confining urban lifestyle. What is clear is that this is still a growing segment with a huge potential for development. And the fact that the government has seriously invested, conceptually and financially, in developing this niche category is good news all round.

