



Ministry of Tourism

Steps to Increase In-Bound Tourists to the Country

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The Ministry of Tourism has taken various steps to increase the number of in-bound tourists in the country which inter-alia include the following:

- i) The nomenclature of existing e-Tourist Visa has been changed to e-Visa with three sub categories i.e. e-Tourist Visa, E-Business Visa and e-Medical Visa for citizens of 161 countries.
- ii) Development and promotion of 'Niche Tourism' products.
- iii) Generating sufficient manpower to meet the requirements of the tourism and hospitality industry.
- iv) Launch of 24x7 toll free Multi-Lingual Tourist Helpline.
- v) Providing Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for various tourism projects including fairs, festivals and tourism related events as per the relevant scheme guidelines.
- vi) Ministry of Tourism is offering free Pre- loaded SIM Cards for tourists on e-Visa at the ITDC counter at IGI Airport.

In addition, the Ministry of Tourism has also taken the following steps for the development of Tourism:-

- i) Launching theme based tourist circuits under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme for integrated development of tourism infrastructure and facilities.
- ii) Launching the National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) to beautify and improve the amenities and infrastructure at pilgrimage centres of all faiths.
- iii) Promoting India as a holistic tourism destination including the various tourism sites and products of every State/Union Territory of the country in the domestic and international markets.

Foreign Tourists Arrivals (FTAs) in India during the year 2015 were 80,27,133 with a growth rate of 4.5% over the year 2014 and during the year 2016 were 88,89,784 with a growth rate of 10.7% over the year 2015.

This information was given by Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State for Tourism and Culture (Independent Charge) in a written reply in Rajya Sabha today.

Sanjay Kumar/jk/Parl. No. 2/29-03-2017

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