

2018-19, Ministry of Tourism has identified 17 sites in 12 clusters in the country for development as Iconic Tourist Sites namely Taj Mahal & Fatehpur Sikri (Uttar Pradesh), Ajanta & Ellora (Maharashtra), Humayun's Tomb, Red Fort & Qutub Minar (Delhi), Colva (Goa), Amer Fort (Rajasthan), Somnath and Dholavira (Gujarat), Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh), Hampi (Karnataka), Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu), Kaziranga (Assam), Kumarakom (Kerala) and Mahabodhi Temple (Bihar).

The Ministry shall be developing the above sites in a holistic manner with focus on issues concerning connectivity to the destination, better facilities/experience for the tourists at the site, skill development, involvement of local community, promotion & branding and by bringing private investment. The development of Iconic Tourist sites scheme is awaiting approval of the Ministry of Finance.

Tourism in Kashmir

2552. SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of number of tourists visiting Kashmir in the months of August, September and October for the last five years;
- (b) the steps taken by the Ministry to attract more tourists to Jammu and Kashmir over the last five years; and
- (c) the steps that are being taken to increase the influx of tourists in the coming years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI PRAHALAD SINGH PATEL): (a) As per information provided by the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, the number of tourists for the months of August, September and October of the last five years visiting Kashmir are as under:-

Month	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Aug.	98177	78980	41438	164410	86134
Sept.	15640	58896	31552	135670	83723
oct.	16947	65876	29905	133220	59048

(b) and (c) Development and promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government/Union Territory Administration. However, Ministry

of Tourism, Government of India under its schemes of Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD and Assistance to Central Agencies, provide central financial assistance to State Governments/Union Territories/Central Agencies for development and promotion of tourism infrastructure and facilities in the country including in Jammu and Kashmir. Government of India has also taken various steps including the following to boost tourism in the country:

- Extended E-Visa facility to citizens of 169 countries.
- The Incredible India 2.0 campaign launched with market specific promotional plans and content creation.
- 24x7 Toll Free Multi-Lingual Tourist Helpline 1800111363 launched in 12 International Languages including Hindi and English.
- Promotion of activities in tourist generating markets overseas through the India Tourism Offices abroad with active Participation in International Tourism Events.
- Deployment of Tourist Police in various States / Union Territories.
- Identification, diversification, development and promotion of Niche products like Cruise, Adventure, Medical, Wellness, Golf, Polo, Eco, Film and Meeting Incentives Conference and Exhibition (MICE)

Further, Government of India has taken various measures including the following for development and promotion of tourism specifically in Jammu and Kashmir:

- (i) Six projects under Swadesh Darshan and one project under PRASHAD Schemes have been sanctioned to Jammu and Kashmir.
- (ii) 100% central financial assistance for organizing fairs & festivals is allowed to Jammu and Kashmir.
- (iii) Provision of complimentary space to Jammu and Kashmir in India Pavilions set up at major International Travel Fairs and Exhibitions.
- (iv) The Ministry of Tourism has been releasing special campaigns on Jammu and Kashmir on Doordarshan and Private TV channels to promote tourism in the regions.
- (v) Government of India employees are allowed to avail Leave Travel Concession (LTC) for visiting Jammu and Kashmir in lieu of Home town LTC.