

## Sansad TV Perspective: Promoting Tourism

In the series Sansad TV Perspective, we bring you an analysis of the discussion featured on the insightful programme 'Perspective' on Sansad TV, on various important topics affecting India and also the world. This analysis will help you immensely for the [IAS exam](#), especially the mains exam, where a well-rounded understanding of topics is a prerequisite for writing answers that fetch good marks.

In this article, we feature the discussion on the topic: '**Promoting Tourism**'.

**Video link:** <https://youtu.be/qqbR3q8BreM>

**Anchor:** Vishal Dahiya

**Guests:**

1. Subhash Goyal, President, Confederation of Tourism Professionals
2. Manjula Chaudhary, Professor, Tourism, Kurukshetra University
3. Urmi Goswami, Senior Journalist

**Context:** Tourism sector in India.

**Highlights of the discussion:**

- Introduction
- Status of Tourism in India
- Challenges in the sector
- Measures to make tourism sustainable
- Way Ahead

**Introduction:**

- The tourism sector in India is a significant economic multiplier and is becoming increasingly important as the country strives for rapid economic growth and employment creation.
- Despite the tourism sector being severely affected by COVID, India witnessed a jump in Foreign Tourist Arrivals in 2022.
- The [Draft National Tourism Policy](#) formulated by the Ministry of Tourism is a holistic framework for sustainable and responsible growth of the tourism sector in the country. It aims at improving framework conditions for tourism development in the country and supporting tourism industries.
- India is observing 'Visit India Year 2023' in order to develop tourism in mission mode and accelerate India's rise towards world leadership in the tourism sector.

- The Ministry of Tourism is also organizing First Global Tourism Investors' Summit in May 2023 to showcase investible projects and opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sector to domestic and international investors.

### **Status and Situation of India's Tourism Sector:**

- In 2019, there were more than 11 million inbound tourists from abroad, and India earned approximately \$30 Billion.
- During the pandemic, this sector suffered the most. Though tourism has recovered after the pandemic, it has still not reached the pre-COVID levels. This is majorly because:
  - The number of international scheduled flights has not resumed at the same level as before the pandemic.
  - There is a tremendous rise in airfares and hotel stays. This would out-price India in comparison to countries like Maldives, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Thailand, etc.
- Still, a lot of people that are purely dependent on foreign tourists like tour guides, small tour operators, etc have not recovered.

Also read: [Tourism Statistics in India](#)

### **Challenges and Issues in the Tourism Sector:**

- There is a lack of clarity while targeting tourists in various initiatives. Similarly, there is a lack of clarity on how to achieve responsible and sustainable tourism.
- The sustainability aspect is missing in tourism. For example, tourism is also a reason for [land subsidence in Joshimath](#) apart from development. Notably, most of the development in the region occurs due to an increase in tourism activities.
- One of the major limiting factors in India is that the planning does not occur at the micro-level.
- India lacks Destination Management Organization (DMO) and therefore specific tourism planning for each area/region/destination is missing.
- In the [Union Budget 2023-24](#), the government has proposed to hike the tax collected at source (TCS) from 5% to 20% on overseas tour packages. High tax on outbound tourism acts as a barrier for small and medium operators or middle-income groups.
- Some tourist destinations get overburdened or over-exploited.

### **Initiatives taken by the Government:**

- The government of India has launched a draft National Tourism Policy.
- It has also introduced the 'Visit India 2023' campaign and would host a Tourism Investors Summit in May 2023.
- The budgetary allocation for infrastructure development like new roadways, new airports, etc has increased in Budget 2023-24.

### Measure to make tourism sustainable and more beneficial

- Instead of focusing on volume-based tourism, it is important to focus on value-based tourism.
- Real-time data collection is required for crowd management.
- Data should also be analyzed for outcome-based objective analysis.
- It is essential to involve the local host population for sustainability, as they can force the tourists, industry, and government to behave sustainably.
- The startup concept in tourism education should also be promoted as it would naturally encourage young people to propose innovative and sustainable solutions.

### Way Ahead

- It is important to aggressively market and use digital marketing to attract tourists.
- It is important to cultivate domestic tourism for a robust tourism sector.
- India is a vast and diverse country and tourism itself can be sliced for tourists with varied interests in eco-tourism, pilgrimage tourism, etc.
- Aspects like food and the economy should be integrated for the holistic development of the sector.
- Seamless and appropriate services should be provided so that the tourists feel welcome in the country and take back a good experience.
- The lens of holistic tourism needs to be changed slightly and integrated with various policies like aviation policy.
- As tourism is a source of livelihood for many, it is necessary to look at the sector from the non-tourism perspective. It should be a part of the overall development model of a region with all the required infrastructure.
- It is important to assess how much tourism is permissible and how much development should come from the non-tourism dimension.
- Moreover, the carrying capacity of any particular region should be assessed and traffic should be regulated.
- Every policy should be converted into a concrete action plan. Moreover, one policy cannot be replicated in every part of India due to the diversity of the landscape.
- There should be different strategies for domestic and international tourists. For instance,
  - Domestic Tourist
    - There is already a boom in domestic tourism. For example, Jammu and Kashmir saw a huge rush post-pandemic.
    - Domestic tourists also include pilgrimage tourists.
    - Not much promotion is required for this segment of tourists and initiatives like offering packages to employees of public sector entities or big corporate houses in enough.
    - Incentives for MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) can also be provided.

- Foreign Tourist
    - To attract foreign tourists, it is necessary to aggressively advertise.
    - Initiatives like Service Export Incentive Scheme should be re-introduced.
  - Many new travel destinations should be developed in order to reduce pressure on some of them.
  - Connectivity and communication should also be improved.
  - Manpower like the tour guides should be adequately trained.
  - It is important to strengthen foreign exchange and investment, as the foreign exchange from services has declined.
  - All the aspects like the infrastructure, carrying capacity regulation, urban planning, safety, cleanliness, and service provided should be integrated while formulating a policy.
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