



Incredible India Tourist Facilitator Certification Programme

Why in News

Recently, on the occasion of [World Environment Day \(5th June\)](#), the Tourism Minister appreciated the **Incredible India Tourist Facilitator Certification Programme (IITFC)**.

Key Points

▪ About:

- IITFC Programme is a **digital initiative of the Ministry of Tourism (MoT)**, for the citizens of India to become a part of the booming Tourism Industry.
- It is an **online programme** where one can learn about tourism at their own time, space, path and pace.
- The successful completion of this programme would enable the learner to become a **Certified Tourist Facilitator** of the Ministry of Tourism.

▪ Tourism & Hospitality Sector in India:

- In FY20, the tourism sector in India accounted for 39 million jobs, which was **8% of the total employment** in the country. By 2029, it is **expected to account for about 53 million jobs**.
- According to WTTC (World Travel and Tourism Council), India **ranked 10th among 185 countries in terms of travel & tourism's total contribution to GDP** in 2019. During 2019, the contribution of travel & tourism to GDP was 6.8% of the total economy.
- **By 2028, international tourist arrivals are expected to reach 30.5 billion** and generate **revenue over USD 59 billion**.

▪ Other Initiatives of the Ministry of Tourism:

◦ [DekhoApnaDesh Campaign](#):

- It is an initiative to encourage the citizens to travel widely within the country and explore the wonders of India thus enabling the development of Domestic Tourism tourist facilities and infrastructure in tourism spots in the country.

◦ [Prashad Scheme](#):

- The Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) was launched in the year 2014-15 with the objective of holistic development of identified pilgrimage destinations.

◦ [Swadesh Darshan Scheme](#):

- Swadesh Darshan, a [Central Sector Scheme](#), was launched in 2014-15 for integrated development of **theme based tourist circuits** in the country.
- Currently, there are 15 theme based circuits - Buddhist, Coastal, Desert, Eco, Heritage, Himalayan, Krishna, North-east, Ramayana, Rural, Spiritual, Sufi, Tirthankara, Tribal and Wildlife.

▪ Recent Initiatives:

- In **January 2021**, the Union Tourism Minister announced plans to develop **an international-level infrastructure in Kargil (Ladakh)** to promote **adventure tourism and winter sports**.
- As of March 2021, the **e-Tourist Visa facility** was extended to citizens of 171 countries.
- The [Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation \(IRCTC\)](#) runs a series of **Bharat Darshan tourist trains** aimed at taking people to various pilgrimages across the country.
- **All India Tourist Vehicles Authorisation and Permit Rules, 2021:** It was **introduced by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways**, in which a tourist vehicle operator can register online for All India Tourist Authorisation/Permit.

Way Forward

- India's travel and tourism industry has huge growth potential.
- The industry is also looking forward to the expansion of **e-Visa scheme**, which is expected to double the tourist inflow in India.
- India's travel and tourism industry has the potential to expand **by 2.5%** on the back of higher budgetary allocation and low-cost healthcare facilities according to a joint study conducted by **Assocham and Yes Bank in 2017**.

Source: PIB

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