

## National Conference of State Tourism Ministers Held



18-July, 2013

A National Tourism Ministers' Conference was held here today to discuss the future strategies for realising the full tourism potential of the country. The Conference was chaired by Union Tourism Minister Shri K. Chiranjeevi. State and Union Territory Tourism Authorities were represented in the conference either through their Tourism Ministers and/ or senior officials.

This meeting assumed a significant importance as Indian Tourism has recently been hit by natural calamities and some incidents. "At such a time, we should all put our heads together and work out the best possible ways and strategies to develop and promote Indian tourism in the most effective manner. Tourism development, being a residuary subject in our Constitution, is our collective responsibility. We all know and we all understand that tourism plays an important role in the economic development of the nation and for the employment generation in the country. We are all aware that this critical sector helps in mainstreaming the remote areas and weaker sections of the society.

Having said that, I appeal to all stakeholders to join hands with the Ministry to meet the challenges that Indian Tourism is facing today,” said the Union Tourism Minister in his opening remarks.

During the conference, while an exchange of ideas took place between the Ministry of Tourism and various State and Union Territory Tourism Authorities, interaction between the State and Union Territory Tourism Authorities and industry stakeholders also took place. 22 National Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Industry Associations also attended the conference through their senior office bearers. Delegates attending the Conference laid stress on the safety and security of tourists, particularly women. The Conference launched a new campaign “I Respect Women” with Ministry of Tourism issuing badges in Hindi and ten international languages.

The Conference deliberated on various agenda items, which included the safety and security of tourists, Campaign Clean India to improve cleanliness at important tourist destinations, rationalisation of Taxes to make Indian tourism products competitive, bringing uniformity in the structure of Road Taxes and promote seamless travel, the timely implementation of tourism infrastructure projects, the time bound issue of licences and no objection certificates for various tourism related services, the provision of single window clearance for film shootings and MICE(Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) activities, promoting accessible and sustainable tourism and improving coordination between various State Governments and Union Territory Administrations for promoting Intra-regional Tourism.

After due deliberations, the Conference adopted the following resolution:

“That the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will work for ensuring the safety and security of tourists, especially women;

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will consider setting up of a special force such as a Tourist Police, where it does not exist at present, either by taking few companies on deputation from the Police Department or by engaging Ex-Servicemen or Home Guards.

that in the case of any unfortunate incident involving a tourist, the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will ensure that immediate action is taken to investigate the crime and undertake speedy trials to bring the culprits to book.

that in the case of any unfortunate incident of assault on any tourist, the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will ensure immediate post-traumatic help to the victim respecting his/her privacy and showing utmost sensitivity to the feelings of the victim. The “service recovery” will be of the highest order.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will sensitise all stakeholders including the community through various electronic and print campaigns towards the need of being sensitive to the needs of tourists and being helpful.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will take necessary steps to inculcate proper values in children by arranging at least one lecture each every year in every class on the importance of sensitivity to tourists and the cleanliness of public areas.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will run a mass awareness campaign called "I respect women".

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will work to ensure cleanliness at various tourism destinations, inter alia, by ensuring the removal of garbage at regular intervals, declaring polythene and garbage free zones and providing toilets to stop open defecation.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will try to establish proper toilet facilities along roads leading to important tourist destinations utilizing the existing infrastructure like petrol pumps, dhabas, panchayat and other public buildings by utilizing services of unemployed youth.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will set up a coordination mechanism with the concerned municipality / local body to monitor the state of cleanliness at various tourist destinations on a regular basis.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will work towards making tourism destinations and traffic crossings beggar free, by making help zones nearby.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will work towards keeping their States and UTs clean, inter alia, by involving various corporate houses, public sector undertakings and non-governmental organizations as partners for ensuring the upkeep of various destinations.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will work towards imparting working spoken knowledge of a foreign language to every member of their staff that deals with the foreign tourists.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will work towards rationalizing the tax structure to make various tourism destinations competitive and also for enabling seamless travel.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will work towards providing the necessary licences/no objection certificates for various tourism services in a time bound manner.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will endeavour to make various tourism destinations accessible to differently-abled tourists.

that the Departments of Tourism of all States and UTs will assess the carrying capacity of various tourism destinations, especially religious places, on the basis of the principles of environmental sustainability and take immediate remedial measures to avoid any untoward incident”.

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