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Uttar Pradesh govt eyeing investment of Rs 32K cr in hospitality sector

The state is focusing on ramping up hospitality units in tourism hotspots such as Varanasi, Ayodhya, Prayagraj, and Agra

Virendra Singh Rawat | Lucknow



Photo: PTI

The Uttar Pradesh government is eyeing investments of Rs 32,000 crore in the hospitality and tourism sector, a senior government official has said.

The state's annual tourist footfall is estimated to reach 850 million by 2028.

The official said the investment would likely create an additional 80,000 accommodation units by way of hotels, and resorts to bridge the deficit in room availability. "To cater to this increasing demand, the state is looking to create a robust supply of accommodation units with the development of hotels, resorts, and homestays," the official said.

The state is focusing on ramping up hospitality units in tourism hotspots such as Varanasi, Ayodhya, Prayagraj, and Agra.

The heritage properties, including forts and palaces, are being offered to the private sector for development. Apart from hotels, the state government is bullish on leveraging the homestays to cater the 'economy' tourists. The state is encouraging homeowners to enlist their properties for homestays, while the owners of heritage properties are being invited to convert their precincts as heritage hotels for discerning tourists.

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Recently, the UP tourism department signed an agreement with rural homestay providers to cater the backpackers looking for a comfortable 'farm stay' experience replete with local culture, cuisine, and folklore.

UP Tourism and Culture Minister Jaiveer Singh said the state also provides subsidies under the Tourism Policy 2022 for setting up unique countryside farm stays. Under this template, the selected villages are converted into rural tourism centres.

Moreover, the state is aiming to develop multi-experience circuits such as wellness centres, and improving the connectivity of Buddhist destinations, such as Sarnath and Kaushambi with popular tourist spots of Varanasi, Prayagraj, and Ayodhya.

The state is also focusing on diversifying tourism experiences and creating contemporary tourism products by developing adventure tourism, MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions), wellness, and ecotourism.

In fact, about 500 tourism and related infra projects have already been launched in Ayodhya, Varanasi, Vrindavan, Prayagraj, Kushinagar, and Mirzapur pertaining to hotels, resorts, guest houses, and infra development.

These projects are expected to generate over 250,000 fresh job opportunities across sector.

Religious tourism gained momentum in the state after the consecration of Lord Ram temple in Ayodhya on January 22. The state government has estimated Ayodhya to generate Rs 55,000 crore annually in tourism revenue in initial years.

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