

U.P. saw influx of over 46 crore tourists in 2023, says CM Yogi

Over 40 crore pilgrims are expected to arrive for Mahakumbh 2025, which will be an occasion to showcase UP's spiritual and cultural heritage on the world stage, says CM

HT Correspondent

letters@hindustantimes.com

LUCKNOW: Highlighting that Uttar Pradesh is now drawing tourists from around the world, chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said more than 46 crore (460 million) people visited the state last year.

Speaking on the occasion of the World Tourism Day from his official residence, the chief minister also extended his best wishes to the people of Uttar Pradesh and expressed optimism that the upcoming Mahakumbh 2025 will attract over 40 crore (400 million) pilgrims.

The 45-day Mahakumbh will be held in Prayagraj from Makar Sankranti on January 13, 2025 to Mahashivratri on February 26.

Asking the officials to ensure best preparations for the Mahakumbh, he said this would be an occasion to showcase Uttar Pradesh's spiritual and cultural heritage on the world stage. "The state is a hub for religious, spiritual, heritage, and eco-tourism, drawing visitors from around the world. In 2023 alone, more than 46 crore tourists visited the state," Adityanath said.

Reflecting on Uttar Pradesh's tourism achievements, he credited the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for driving the state's development.

"Uttar Pradesh, at the heart of India's spiritual and religious tradition, has succeeded in drawing tourists from all corners of the globe," he remarked.

He highlighted that tourism not only boosts the state's cul-

tural heritage, but also plays a crucial role in generating employment opportunities.

"In terms of spiritual tourism, we have the Ramayana Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, and Jain Circuit, among others. Today, Baba Vishwanath Dham in Kashi is attracting crores of devotees, while Ayodhya, Vrindavan, Gokul, and Barsana have become global tourist hot-spots," he added.

The CM said that sites such as Sarnath, Kushinagar, Shravasti, Kaushambi, and Sankisa are drawing Buddhist devotees from across the world. He also noted significant opportunities for Jain tourism in the state, with Ayodhya being the birthplace of many Jain Tirthankaras, and Kushinagar remaining a revered site for Jain pilgrims.

He also underscored the rich heritage tourism offerings in the state, from the Lakshmi Fort in Jhansi and Kalinjar Fort in Banda to forts in Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, and the Imambara in Lucknow. The forts of Prayagraj, Ramnagar Varanasi, and Chunar in Mirzapur further contribute to the state's historical significance, he said.

"Eco-tourism is another area of growth, with destinations such as Dudhwa, Chuka, Katerniaghat, Hastinapur and Okhla Bird Sanctuary attracting nature lovers," the chief minister mentioned. He highlighted U.P.'s "impressive" infrastructure, noting the state's road, rail, water, and air connectivity, which is further boosting its appeal as a tourism hub.



Chief minister Yogi Adityanath along with Jammu and Kashmir BJP president Ravinder Raina, Union minister of state Jitendra Singh and others during a public rally at Ramnagar in Udhampur.

'Pak will yearn for every drop of water'

HT Correspondent

letters@htlive.com

LUCKNOW: Chief minister Yogi Adityanath said on Friday that water and terrorism did not flow together. Soon, Pakistan would yearn for every drop of water, he said.

Addressing a public meeting in support of the BJP candidate in Ramnagar, Udhampur and Kathua areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Yogi Adityanath said, "Since childhood, I've been singing the lines, 'Bina Sindhu ke Hind kahan hai, Ravi bin Punjab nahi, Ganga aakhir khush ho kaise, jab tak sang Chenab nahi.'"

While ordering a review of the 1960 Indus Water Treaty, the Government of India said in clear terms that 'water and terrorism don't flow together.' Until now, Pakistan had been holding a begging bowl, but soon it would be desperate for every single drop of water," he said.

Highlighting the political turmoil in Pakistan, the CM said, "Pakistan is suffering for two reasons: first, it is facing the consequences of its own actions. Balochistan no longer wishes to remain part of Pakistan because the government treats them as foreigners. Similarly, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir is rejecting Pakistan's rule, expressing preference to join Jammu and Kashmir and contribute to realizing the vision of Akhand Bharat,

rather than dying of starvation."

Issuing a stern warning to those spreading terror at Pakistan's behest, Yogi said the terrorists would neither have a shroud to cover themselves nor land for burial. Pakistan-backed terrorists knew the cost of their actions, and soon Pakistan would be divided into three parts, ceasing to exist as it was known today, he said.

The effectiveness of the double-engine government was evident in Uttar Pradesh, where Ram Lalla was finally enthroned in Ayodhya Dham after 500 years. "Some claimed that building the Ram Temple would lead to rivers of blood. We asserted that in New India, rivers of blood do not flow; instead, it knows how to protect itself," he said.

In the past seven and a half years, Uttar Pradesh had not witnessed a single riot. He asserted that like UP, Jammu and Kashmir also deserved development.

The Congress, PDP, and National Conference had exploited the public by transforming the paradise on earth into a warehouse of religious fanaticism. "These parties fostered terrorism and corruption for their political gain, but with the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A, development has gained momentum in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

The region had shifted from being a hotbed of terrorism to a tourist destination. The country's largest and highest bridge

was currently under construction in Jammu and Kashmir and a world-class train service like Vande Bharat had begun operations from Jammu to Delhi.

Launching a scathing attack on the opposition, Yogi said those who claimed they would restore Article 370 if their government came to power were essentially seeking to bring back an era of terrorism, nepotism and corruption.

"There is no room for these three parties here. The public has decided to say goodbye to the trio. When in power, the leaders of the Congress, NC, and PDP spent eight months a year in Europe and England and three months in Delhi. With such limited engagement, how can Jammu possibly develop in just one month?" he asked.

Accusing the Congress, NC, and PDP of fostering an environment of anarchy, corruption, nepotism, and terrorism, Yogi Adityanath said, "The people from the Bakarwal, Gujjar, Dalit and Valmiki communities have been deprived of their rights for too long. In contrast, the BJP is effecting positive change in their lives under the leadership of PM Modi" he said.

Yogi urged the public to support the formation of a double-engine BJP government in Jammu and Kashmir to ensure security and development, and to realize former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee vision of Akhand Bharat.

YOGI IS CM OF 'UTTAM PRADESH': BJP MP

UDHAMPUR: Union minister and BJP MP from Udhampur Jitendra Singh said, "Yogi Adityanath is not merely the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh; he is the chief minister of 'Uttam Pradesh'."

He emphasized that CM Yogi had transformed the state into an exemplary model, restoring law and order to a level that served as a benchmark for all of India.

"Yogi Adityanath has become an ideal for millions of Indians. He communicates with the people in a way that resonates with their understanding. He embodies the qualities of a Maharaj, chanting mantras and taking decisive action against land encroachments with a bulldozer," Singh said.