

UP to transform tourism into a 'People's Industry'

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Lucknow: Acknowledging the significant impact of tourism on local communities, the Uttar Pradesh govt is working to transform tourism into a "people's industry," ensuring that its benefits reach the residents of the state.

A govt spokesperson revealed that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has encouraged every resident to become a brand ambassador for their city, promoting better hospitality and offering support to tourists, in line with the traditional Indian ethos of 'Atithi Devo Bhava.'

"By embracing this approach, tourists will feel welcomed and inspired to visit the place repeatedly. The CM has consistently emphasised this message, urging citizens to uphold these values," the official said.

The spokesperson added that the govt has been developing basic infrastructure and ensuring safety at major tourist destinations across the state. These efforts have been reflected in the rising number of tourists and the growing income of local businesses. As a result, UP has secured the top position for domestic tourist arrivals in India for the third consecutive year.

The CM recently said that in 2016, Ayodhya welcomed an average of 2.83 lakh tourists annually, but following the construction of the Ram Temple, this number is expected to reach approximately 16 crore soon, with 13.44 crore tourists already having visited by Sept 2024.

Similarly, Varanasi, which previously

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saw 50 lakh visitors annually, has experienced a six-fold increase, reaching nearly 6 crore visitors after the development of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor.

"The economic benefits of tourism are substantial. On average, a tourist spends around Rs 5,000 on transportation, accommodation, food, prasad, and local products, directly benefiting local vendors, hoteliers, and artisans," the spokesperson said.

He explained that in Ayodhya and Varanasi, where many locals previously earned a few thousand rupees monthly, many are now reporting earnings in lakhs due to the surge in tourism. Hotels and homestays in these cities often operate at full capacity. "Every investment in tourism ensures lasting, long-term benefits, as the appeal of a destination often influences nearby regions as well. For instance, many tourists and devotees visiting the Prayagraj Maha Kumbh are also drawn to Ayodhya and Varanasi, boosting tourism and benefiting these cities," the official said.