

ACCENT REGION

UTTAR PRADESH

State expects tourist inflow of 1.3 bn in 2025

VIRENDRA SINGH RAWAT

Lucknow, 30 June

Uttar Pradesh (UP) is expecting tourist arrivals to hit 1.3 billion in 2025, indicating a significant uptick in its tourism economy. This would be a 100 per cent jump over 2024, when the state had logged tourist inflow of 650 million. In 2023, it had recorded nearly 480 million domestic and international visitors.

Varanasi attracted more than 11 million tourists, an increase of 8.2 million from the previous year. To accommodate the growing number of backpackers, about 100,000 new hotel rooms have been added to the

The state's foreign tourist inflow has witnessed a notable rise, with the number of foreign visitors growing to 2.27 million in 2024 from 1.6 million in 2023, according to state officials.

Agra emerged as the top destination for foreign tourists, with 1.47 million international visitors in 2024. UP, the chart topper in domestic tourist inflow, has received hospitality sector investment proposals of nearly ₹1 trillion.

The proposed investments pertain to

hotels, resorts, guesthouses, wellness centres, and home-stays across 75 districts of the state.

Most of these are proposed in religious and spiritual centres such as Varanasi, Ayodhya and Prayagraj apart from traditional tourism hotspots of Lucknow, Agra, Kanpur, and Noida among others.

Ayodhya, which saw the consecration of the Ram Temple on January 22, 2024, is now among the state's top tourist destinations. It welcomed 16.4 million pilgrims in 2024, up from 5.757 million in 2023.

On an average, a tourist staying overnight in UP spends ₹5,400, while long-term visitors spend around ₹7,500. Hotel stays account for almost 41 per cent of accommodations, while inter-district travel within UP accounts for 80 per cent of all tourism activity. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh account for most domestic arrivals. Thailand, South Korea, and Myanmar take the top spots respectively in terms of international backpackers.

Uttar Pradesh Minister of Tourism & Culture Jaiveer Singh has underlined the critical role of tourism in promoting the state's trillion-dollar economy goal.