

‘Tourism sector is fastest employment creator’

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Tourism is fast emerging as Uttar Pradesh’s biggest engine of job creation and could play a pivotal role in powering the state’s ambition of building a trillion-dollar economy, State Transformation Commission CEO **Manoj Kumar Singh** said.

Positioning tourism as a strategic growth multiplier rather than a standalone sector, Singh said it delivers quick, inclusive and large-scale employment across the value chain. “Unlike capital-intensive sectors with long gestation periods, tourism generates jobs rapidly—benefiting hotels, transporters, guides, artisans, vendors and small entrepreneurs,” he said.

Citing global trends, he noted that tourism contributes nearly 10% of global GDP and supports about 33 crore jobs worldwide, underlining its significance as a driver of economic activity and foreign exchange. For UP, the potential is even larger given its unmatched diversity of destinations. From Ayodhya, Kashi, Mathura and Prayagraj to Agra’s Taj Mahal, Buddhist circuits like Kushinagar and Shravasti, and eco-tourism hubs such as Dudhwa National Park—the state offers a multi-segment tourism portfolio.



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UP already leads the country in domestic tourist footfall, attracting nearly 64 crore visits annually, along with around 22.7 lakh foreign tourists.

Ayodhya alone draws about 16 crore visitors each year, followed by Varanasi with nearly 11 crore, Mathura around 9 crore and Prayagraj close to 5 crore. Agra continues to be a key international magnet. Singh pointed to Kumbh 2019 and Maha Kumbh 2025 as benchmarks of how investment in infrastructure and sanitation can



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transform tourism outcomes. While over 1 lakh toilets were installed during Kumbh 2019, nearly 1.5 lakh sanitation units were deployed during Maha Kumbh 2025, significantly improving public hygiene and visitor experience.

“The Kumbh model shows that clean, well-managed public spaces not only enhance visitor satisfaction but also generate local economic opportunities,” he said.

He also flagged a shift in traveller demographics and expectations. Younger tourists are prioritising safety, cleanliness, seamless connectivity and digital convenience. Meeting these expectations is critical to sustaining growth, he added.

Highlighting tourism’s cost-efficiency in job creation, Singh said generating one job in the sector requires an investment of roughly Rs 2 lakh to Rs 10 lakh, compared to Rs 10–25 lakh in manufacturing, Rs 50 lakh–Rs 1 crore in automobiles and up to Rs 5 crore in heavy industries like steel or petrochemicals.

“This makes tourism one of the most employment-intensive sectors,” he said.