

THE  HINDU

# BusinessLine

## Cabinet to decide next month on National Tourism Policy

Policy to create jobs  
for youth, increase  
country's share in  
global tourism

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

New Delhi, July 22

The Union Cabinet is expected to take a decision next month on the new National Tourism Policy, which aims to create jobs and increase the country's share in global tourism, a top government official said on Wednesday.

Tourism Secretary Lalit K Panwar said the ministry has already circulated the draft policy for inter-ministerial consultation.

"The draft policy is already on the website. Nearly 25 ministries have sent their comments to us. We expect to sub-

mit the suggestions before the Cabinet by next month," Panwar said. He was speaking at a function on tourism at Ficci.

The secretary said the main thrust of the policy is to create jobs for youth as India has a huge advantage of a demographic dividend.

The new policy aims to increase India's share in global tourism, which is at 0.64 per cent at present.

### E-visa

Talking about e-tourist visa, which was launched in November, Panwar said the facility has already been extended to 77 countries and another 73 countries will be notified soon as the ministry has requested the Home Ministry in this regard.

The Centre plans to extend

the scheme to 150 countries by the end of the financial year. The top beneficiaries of this facility include the US, Russia and Korea.

Enumerating 14 initiatives of the government to promote tourism, he said the ministry is in the process of opening up Indian Culinary Institutes in Noida and Tirupati.

"Five such institutes will be opened in the country," he said, adding a 24X7 helpline number has been created and MoUs signed with the countries which the Prime Minister has visited so far in his tenure.

### New campaign

He also said India will launch the 'Incredible India 2.0' campaign and eminent ad filmmaker Prasoon Joshi has been inducted in this project.

# Business Standard

## Tourism Min for extending loan repayment schedule for hotels

Press Trust of India | New Delhi July 22, 2015 Last Updated at 17:28 IST

The Tourism Ministry today pitched for extension of loan repayment schedule to help hotels tide over the current cash crunch.

Citing Leela Hotels as an example, Tourism Secretary Lalit K Panwar said the company is facing financial problems and deserves to be supported to help it come out of the crunch.

"Most of the entrepreneurs in tourism are feeling the cash crunch, the repayment schedule for the investment and for the long (term) bond is too steep, a classical case is Leela Hotel for example. They are having lot of problem because of this very tight repayment schedule..."

"I had three rounds of discussions with Secretary - Finance and Revenue. We have said that why are you not supporting. They (Leela Hotel) just want (more time for loan repayment)," he said here at a Ficci function here.

Panwar said it is a "reasonable and genuine demand" from them for extension of loan repayment period to about 15 years instead of eight years.

"Why we are not able to agree. He is not a defaulter after all... He is Leela. So we are supporting. I quoted Leela because this is a classic case. Leela is a very good brand of our hospitality industry and they are suffering only because of myopic lending policies," he said.

The Finance Ministry should "ask the bankers just to enhance the repayment schedule, that's all. Just one single measure can give comfort to our investors. We are working on that".

The Secretary also asked the industry to take the loan repayment schedule issues with the government.

"I will also ask people from tourism fraternity to create pressure in their own way," he said, adding "we have asked the Finance Ministry to look at the issue. Lending rates and schedule should be pragmatic," he said.

For the fiscal ended March, 2015, hotel Leelaventure registered a consolidated net loss of Rs 415.84 crore. It had reported a net loss of Rs 441.50 crore in previous financial year.

Further, he said that during the last fourteen months, the Prime Minister has visited 25 countries and has mentioned about tourism over 100 times.

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By PTI | 22 Jul, 2015, 05:57PM IST

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Further, he said that during the last fourteen months, the Prime Minister has visited 25 countries and has mentioned about tourism over 100 times.

"Whatever Prime Minister says, he follows it up with real actions. And the biggest example of this was declaring China eligible for e-tourist visa.

"There was some resistance from various quarters giving that status to China but the Prime Minister announced it in China," he added.

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## FICCI organizing tourism investors meet in Delhi

ANI | New Delhi July 22, 2015 Last Updated at 13:12 IST

Taking further the decision and commitment of "Make in India" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Ministry of Tourism in partnership with FICCI and Tourism Finance Corporation of India is organizing the first ever Tourism Investors Meet in Delhi.

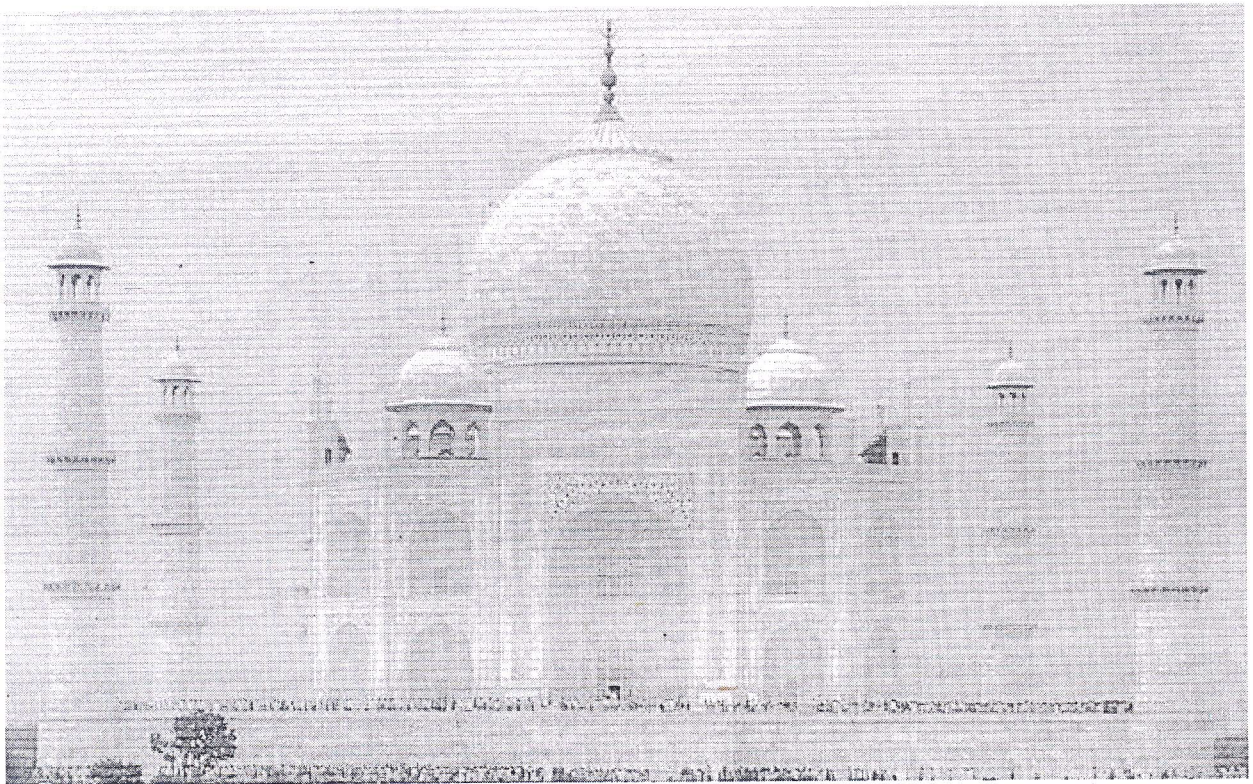
The two-day event beginning today will focus on interactive conclave, one to one meetings where by exhibiting destinations will be showcasing their policy and facilities with respect to soliciting investment in tourism infrastructure through pre-scheduled structured face to face business meetings between the state governments and prominent investors.





## Union Cabinet May Discuss National Tourism Policy Next Month

All India | Press Trust of India | Updated: July 22, 2015 14:14 IST



Taj Mahal in Agra. (image used for representational purpose)

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Tourism Secretary Lalit K Panwar said that the ministry has already circulated the draft policy for inter-ministerial consultation.

"The draft policy is already on website. 25 ministries have already sent their comments to us. We expect that next month we will be able to put it before the Cabinet," Mr Panwar said.

He was speaking at a function on tourism at FICCI.

The Secretary said the main thrust of the policy is to create jobs for youth as India has a huge advantage of demographic dividend.

The new policy aims to increase India's share in global tourism from current the 0.64 per cent.

Talking about e-tourist visa, Mr Panwar said the facility has already been extended to 77 countries and another 73 countries would be notified soon as the ministry has requested the Home Ministry in this regard.

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# FINANCIAL EXPRESS

## Govt to roll out six tourist circuits soon

The government will soon launch six tourist circuits in a big way to provide a boost to the sector. "Our aim is to create better infrastructure for facilitating tourists to visit more places," tourism minister Mahesh Sharma said at a tourism investors' meet organised by FICCI in New Delhi on Thursday. He said the government has finalised a blueprint for the growth of tourism and more tourist circuits will be added soon. "We will be launching six tourist circuits soon. They are a Ramayan circuit, desert circuit, eco circuit, wildlife circuit and rural circuit," Sharma said.

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He said the government has finalised a blueprint for growth of the sector and more tourist circuits will be added soon.

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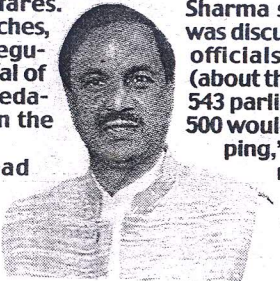
## Sharma flip-flops on capping airfares

By **Mail Today Bureau** in New Delhi

IN ANOTHER flip-flop, minister of state for civil aviation Mahesh Sharma said on Thursday that the government is looking at ways to curb predatory airfares.

"There could be three approaches, including through aviation regulator DGCA Directorate General of Civil Aviation), to prevent predatory pricing ways," he said on the sidelines of an event here.

On Tuesday, Sharma had informed the Rajya Sabha that the government is not considering formulation of



*MoS for civil aviation Mahesh Sharma.*

a mechanism to curb predatory pricing of air tickets. Airfares are not regulated by the government as they are determined by the interplay of market forces, he had said in a written reply.

Sharma said on Thursday that the issue was discussed during a meeting of senior officials last month. "Even if we talk (about the issue) in Parliament, out of the 543 parliamentarians, I am sure, at least, 500 would say that there should be a capping," he said adding efforts would be made to take airlines into confi-

dence on the matter. "We will request them if the share from predatory pricing is very less then why don't hold it."

Meanwhile, civil aviation minister Ashok Gajapathi Raju dubbed the 5/20 regulation as a pain in the neck. Under the regulation, only domestic airlines in operation for, at least, five years and with a fleet of minimum 20 planes are allowed to fly on international routes. "I, for one, would like to get rid of it. I think it has to go. It is an outdated thing. It is like a dinosaur and dinosaurs are heavier. When you wear it in the neck, it is a pain in the neck," he said while responding to a query about 5/20 norm during Tourism Investors Meet here.