



STRENGTHENING OF DIGITAL INITIATIVES FOR HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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With a view to bring in more transparency, accountability and improved service delivery, the Ministry of Tourism introduced an online system of receiving, processing and conveying/ granting approvals for classification of Accommodation Units and recognition of Tourism Service Providers. Applications can be filed at the portal of **National Integrated Database of Hospitality Industry (NIDHI+)**, i.e. nidhi.tourism.gov.in. This online process has also been integrated with a payment gateway.

As a part of the Ministry's continuous endeavours to make travel for tourists safe and secure, the Ministry of Tourism has set up a **24x7 Multi-Lingual Tourist Helpline** on the toll free number 1800111363 or on a short code 1363, which is now available in 12 Languages including 10 international languages for domestic and foreign tourists to provide support service in term of information relating to **Travel in India** and to offer appropriate guidance to tourists in distress, while travelling within India.

The Ministry of Tourism launched a **Handbook on Industry Status to the Tourism and Hospitality Sector** in September, 2024. This has been circulated to the State Governments/UT Administrations for adapting into their industry/tourism policy.

e-Visa scheme is now available to the nationals of 175 countries valid for entry through 33 designated airports, 19 designated seaports and 4 land ports.

The Government introduced a simplified GST structure with significant rate reductions across key sectors of trade and commerce, including the hospitality sector, with effect from 22.09.2025. The implemented Goods and Services Tax (GST) reforms are set to transform India's tourism sector, making travel more affordable and accessible for both domestic and international tourists.

The highlights of the GST reforms affecting the tourism and hospitality sector are listed as follows:

- i. The GST on hotel rooms priced below ₹7,500 per day has been reduced from 12% to 5% without Input Tax Credit (ITC).
- ii. GST on buses with a seating capacity of over 10 persons has been cut from 28% to 18%.
- iii. GST on art and cultural goods has been lowered from 12% to 5%, providing direct support to artisans and sculptors.
- iv. Consumer durables, Food and related items: Most of the food and related consumables are now having reduced GST at 5 percent or some have nil GST. Similarly, many items used in hospitality such as TVs, refrigerators, ACs etc. are having reduced GST positively impacting the sector with reduced cost of operations and capital expenditure.

This information was given by Union Minister for Culture and Tourism Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in a written reply in Lok Sabha today.

M Annadurai

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