

## **Goa opens for domestic tourists as 250 hotels permitted to resume operations**

Goa Tourism Minister Manohar Ajgaonkar announced that the coastal state will be open to tourists starting today July 2, as 250 hotels have been granted permission to resume operations. Goa, one of the country's most popular tourist destinations, has remained shut for travellers since the nationwide coronavirus-induced lockdown was imposed in March.

The Tourism Department has so far granted permission to 250 hotels, which can operate in keeping with the standard operating procedures (SOPs) put in place by the state government. It will be mandatory for tourists to pre-book their stay at hotels, which have received the Tourism Department's approval, he said.

Hotels and homestays that have not registered with the department to reopen business will not be allowed to entertain guests or offer online bookings, Ajgaonkar said.

Moreover, tourists will either have to carry COVID-19 negative certificates to enter the state, or will have to get tested at the border and undergo quarantine at a state-run facility till their results arrive.