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Soon, Narmada cruise from Nandurbar to Statue of Unity

State Expects ₹1 Lakh-Cr Investments Over 10 Years, Aims To Create 18 Lakh Jobs

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tax rebates are other attractions for aspiring project developers in the tourism and hospitality sectors. In case of smaller projects like caravan, adventure, beach shacks, agro, or ecotourism, minimum eligibility period to attract concessions has been kept at lowest three years," the policy says.

The hotel industry in the state has welcomed the policy. "This progressive framework, aimed at positioning Maharashtra as premier global tourist destination, is a game-changer for our industry. Additional FSI, relaxed building restrictions to expedite projects, capital subsidies, SGST reimbursement, electricity duty exemptions, and interest subventions on loans are some of the key requirements of the industry and we believe, once implemented, will be a big boon to state's tourism and hospitality sector."

Pradeep Shetty, **CHIEF, HRAWI** state has announced the development of 50 sustainable special tourism destinations across the state to help generate jobs for the local population. The major themes that have been identified for tourism under the programme include: (i) Culture and Heritage (ii) Spiritual Tourism (iii) Adventure Tourism (iv) Eco-Tourism (v) Wellness Tourism (vi) MICE Tourism (vii) Rural Tourism

number of visitors to 31 crore. The state planning department has already set a target of 1 trillion US dollars for economic development of the state and the tourism sector has a critical contribution to play by attracting investments and providing direct and indirect employment opportunities.

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(viii) Beach Tourism (ix) Cruises—Ocean & Inland tourism and (x) Niche Tourism.

River cruise tourism is an emerging niche within the broader cruise industry and Maharashtra, with its network of rivers, has the potential to develop this segment further. Maharashtra is home to several rivers, including Narmada, Godavari, Vashisi, Savitri, Krishna and Tapi. Passengers can explore local villages, historical sites, and experience traditional Maharashtra hospitality, cuisine and arts along the riverbanks. The state's rivers flow through diverse landscapes, including wildlife sanctuaries. River cruises can offer ecotourism opportunities, like bird watching, nature walks and visits to conservation areas. The riverine regions of Maharashtra are known for agriculture, and river cruises can integrate agritourism. Unlike sea cruises that may be seasonal due to monsoons, river cruises can potentially operate year-round, weather permitting," the policy stated.

To implement the policy, tourism department has planned a special task force. Its tasks will include identifying top tourist destinations that attract

high influx of tourists and deploying Tourism Mitra, officers, providing essential information to tourists and visitors on local customs, culture and attractions in the vicinity, assisting in ensuring sustainable (eco-friendly) practices, offering security to women, and monitoring adventure activities for safety.

Besides bringing in technical know-how, managerial, and organisational skills through private sector, the policy aims at doubling tourist inflow by developing destinations and tourist infrastructure and encouraging tour operators. MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions) and destination wedding operators are largely being aimed at through the policy.

Seeking private participation to offer world-class services by developing residential tourism sector to attract international tourists and thus create a complementary environment for the state's revenue is the target, suggests the policy that emphasises enhancing innovation, productivity, and the sector's competitiveness through the use of digital technologies and new tourism products and services.

MAHA SETS SAIL TO BECOME 'TOP TOURIST SPOT'

What policy ENTAILS
Pune, and Nagpur divisions, can be developed as major tourist attractions, with small- & medium-sized budget cruises, floating houseboats, etc.

State plans tourism jetty in Ratnagiri, Raigad & Thane districts. Locations identified are **Veldar, Kasind, Arnaia fort, Janjira fort, Padmadurg, Suvarnadurg, Underi and Durgadi**

Rural, experiential,agri, spiritual, caravan, eco-friendly are some of major tourism themes, with aim at creating alternative livelihood opportunities for local community

Inclusion of state's Sardar Sarovar portion from Nandurbar (Toranmal base) to Statue of Unity in ongoing luxury river cruise project between Gujarat and MP

Inclusion of Vashisi river for budget river and local ferry cruises

Inland water bodies, i.e. dams of Konkan, Nashik,



Mandatory regulations at tourism zones



- No use of single-use plastics or styrofoam/thermocol cutleries, etc. Penalties for violations
- Drinking water/vending machines, public conveniences, waste disposal bins in every 2,000 sqm area
- Must showcase/display artefacts, photos, souvenirs, etc. of local area, cuisine, destinations, culture, etc.
- Control room with CCTV coverage of major tourist spots and for sports/adventure activities
- 24x7 tourist police helpline: 24x7 fully equipped ambulance on call
- Adequate street lighting and landscaping
- 100% Wi-Fi coverage

