

Tourism Sustainability Summit 2025: A Vision for India's Growth and Sustainability

At the Tourism Sustainability Summit 2025, Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat underscored the tourism sector's potential to become India's largest GDP contributor. Addressing industry leaders and policymakers, he emphasized the need for sustainable expansion, climate resilience, and local community involvement to ensure long-term growth.

Tourism: A Key Engine for Economic Growth

Speaking at the summit, organized by the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) in New Delhi, Shekhawat highlighted tourism as a critical pillar of India's economic development. As the Indian economy continues to expand, the tourism sector presents unparalleled opportunities for job creation, infrastructure development, and cultural exchange.

However, he also acknowledged the growing challenges posed by climate change, pointing out that phenomena like glacier shrinkage demand immediate intervention. Calling for a collective industry effort, he stated:

“If we set clear targets and work towards them, we will achieve success in both tourism growth and sustainability.”

Artificial Intelligence and Sustainable Tourism

Suman Billa, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, addressed the increasing role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in transforming tourism services. He noted the rise of AI-driven apps, which enhance tourist experiences through personalized recommendations, smart navigation, and automated customer service.

Billa also reiterated India's ambition to become the world's third-largest tourism destination by 2047, urging the adoption of global best practices to ensure sustainable expansion. He stressed the need to empower local communities, preserve cultural heritage, and integrate eco-friendly tourism models.

Madhya Pradesh: Leading the Way in Rural & Tribal Tourism

Sheo Shankar Shukla, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Madhya Pradesh, showcased the state's pioneering initiatives in promoting rural and tribal tourism. Through homestay programs and the development of tourism villages, Madhya Pradesh is creating authentic, community-driven experiences for visitors.

Shukla also highlighted the state's rich cultural legacy, boasting 14 UNESCO World Heritage sites, and its new focus on cruise tourism as part of a broader strategy to attract diverse travelers.

A Collaborative Approach for the Future

The summit served as a crucial platform for collaboration, bringing together policymakers, industry leaders, and sustainability advocates. Discussions centered on eco-friendly tourism, AI innovations, and responsible travel practices, reinforcing India's position as a global tourism powerhouse.

As the industry evolves, India's tourism sector is poised for exponential growth, ensuring that economic progress aligns with cultural preservation and environmental responsibility.