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86 MoUs worth Rs 15k crore signed during 1st tourism summit can create jobs

New Delhi: The first Incredible India Tourism Investors' Summit witnessed signing of 86 pacts worth around Rs 15,000 crore for the development of tourism and hospitality projects.

The first investment summit for tourism held in India came to a resounding close today with several announcements being made to promote investments in the sector.

This summit will be organised annually to boost tourism in the country. Besides, there are plans to set up an investor facilitation desk and task force to promote tourism.

"We will assist and support investors for making India the tourist destination of choice," a statement by industry body CII quoted Tourism and Culture Minister Mahesh Sharma as saying.

He was speaking at the valedictory session of the 'Incredible India Tourism Investors Summit (IITIS) 2016' organised by the Ministry of Tourism in partnership with the CII and the Tourism Finance Corp.

The Minister assured the support and assistance of the Ministry of Tourism for investment projects.

He referred to the tourist helpline in 12 languages and highlighted that a portal is being opened for inviting suggestions. "Let us join hands to give tourists a memorable experience," Sharma said.

Among the major announcements are: institutionalisation of IITIS to be held annually with the next summit to be organised in September 2017; setting up of a task force headed by Secretary, Tourism, with membership from relevant ministries, states, and industry associations to undertake strategic planning and setting up of an investor facilitation desk to handhold investors and facilitate projects.

Besides, such meets will be organised in states with the support of the Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Secretary Vinod Zutshi said at the valedictory session.

States like Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Uttarakhand and Chattisgarh exchanged 86 MoUs during the session and many more are in the pipeline, aggregating close to Rs 15,000 crore, the statement said.

Gujarat exchanged MOUs worth around Rs 9,000 crore, Karnataka with Rs 2,600 crore, Rajasthan Rs 1,000 crore, Uttarakhand Rs 500 crore and Chhattisgarh Rs 12 crore.

Also B R Shetty group is keen to invest Rs 450 crore and Costa Cruise Rs 750 crore, Triveni Singapore close to Rs 800 crore in the country.

Global Director, Trade and Competitiveness, World Bank Cecile Fruman noted that the tourism sector is among the top sectors with potential to create jobs.

The World Bank is supporting India's Buddhist Circuit development and will provide support for sustainable tourism development including through funds, she added.