

Background Note

National Conference on Tourist Police Scheme

19th October 2022

1. Safety & security of tourists is the most important aspect in the planning of visit to any tourist destination. Ministry of Tourism is aware of the security concerns of tourists and has taken all possible measures to provide a safe and secure atmosphere, especially at important tourist destinations. MOT realizes that the perception needs to be created that India is a safe and secure tourism destination. Even a single sporadic incident of violence or crime against any tourist can jeopardize India's entire perception. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that a system of well-developed and well-organized safety and security mechanisms is evolved and visible to tourists at all important tourist destinations.
2. Police, Law and order is state subject. Therefore, it is the duty and responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations to take care of the safety and security aspects of tourists.
3. In the past, Ministry of Tourism has taken up the matter with all the State Govts/UT Admins. and has reiterated the aspect of providing a safe and secure environment to tourists. In case any such untoward incident occurs against a tourist, there should be a robust system of law & order to handle the situation and provide a satisfactory solution to the affected tourists. This will help in creating a perception of India being a safe and secure tourist destination.
4. Further, the Ministry of Tourism got a study conducted by IITTM (Indian Institute of Travel & Tourism Management), which is an autonomous institute under the Ministry of Tourism, to understand the requirement of tourist police and to recommend a driving mechanism to sensitize tourist police officers. A copy of this report titled "Functioning of Tourist Police in States/UTs & Documentation of Best Practices" has been shared with all the State Govts/UT Admins. with the request to create a separate unit of police in their respective State/UT.
5. The Ministry of Tourism has raised concern regarding the implementation of States/UTs Tourist Police with MHA on different occasions. On the request of M/o Home Affairs, a list of 25 destinations has already been forwarded to them for deploying tourist police at those destinations as a pilot project. Upon the suggestions of the Ministry of Tourism, some State Governments have also put the Tourist Police system in place in one form or another. However, there remains variation at the policy and implementation levels.
6. The Ministry of Tourism has been seeking the support of the Ministry of Home Affairs to take up the matter with the State Govts. / UT Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism had requested to incorporate the issues of safety and security of tourists as one of the agenda points of the meetings held with DGs/IGs of Police department of the State Govts./UTs. Further, the matter was also raised to Secretary (MHA) to organize a meeting at the appropriate levels of the officials of MHA, BPR&D, Ministry of Tourism, and DGs/IGs of Police department of the State Govts./UTs to set the ball rolling in the direction of the creation of Tourist Police.
7. The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) has prepared a detailed report on developing the Scheme for Tourist Police, which may act as a template for the States and Union Territories for setting up their State/UT Tourist Police. The report is very comprehensive in its analysis and recommendations and should be able to create an enabling framework for tourist safety once implemented at the pan-India level. The contents of the report cover relevant issues such as the development of Standard Operating Procedures, the setting up of Control Room Systems, the defining the role and responsibility of Tourist Police, distinct uniform for Tourist

Police personnel, training programs, and scheme for incentivization for 'Tourist Police', etc. **Salient features** of the report are:

Objectives: To suggest a replicable template for setting up of Tourist Police Wing in States and UTs. This template would specifically deal with:

- Preparation of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to be followed by the Tourist Police in States and UTs.
- Development of a training program for 'Tourist Police'.
- Suggestion for the Uniform of Tourist Police.

Recommendations of this report are:

- Tourist Police Stations should be responsible for effective working and management of Tourist Police functions to provide best services to tourists.
- Tourist Police Station can work within the jurisdiction of the District Police headed by the Superintendent of Police for all policing purposes to contain crime against tourists.
- The Tourist Police Kiosks should be located at important tourist spots and cater to the requirements of tourists
- The gender ratio of Policemen in Tourist Police is proposed to be 50:50. The deputation term should last from 2 to 3 years.
- Suitable Police procedures for Tourist Police functioning may be framed and adopted, maintaining uniformity across all States/ UTs.
- The Tourist Police personnel shall be deployed at the major tourist attractions, including monuments, entry and exit points, i.e., airport, railway stations and bus terminals, religious places, shopping areas, entertainment areas, etc., where tourists might need help.

The following shall come under the **purview of the Tourist Police:**

- To ensure no harassment is caused to the tourists by touts, beggars and cheats.
- To help tourists at the Railway Stations, Airports, Bus Terminals, important tourist places, in getting transport and providing information about Hotels/Restaurants without hassle.
- To ensure safety and security at tourist spots.
- To provide information related to tourist places in State and other adjoining areas.
- To help tourists in resolving their issues and facilitating comfortable stay.

8. The National Conference on Tourist Police would be pivotal for the implementation of 'Uniform Tourist Police Scheme' at the Pan-India Level. The conference will provide a platform for developing a comprehensive framework to create a safe and secure environment for tourists, addressing one of the most important factors for the development of tourism in India.

9. The themes covered in the conference by the domain experts from BPR&D and MHA would enlighten us about the unique safety risks of the tourists when they are in unfamiliar terrain. They will touch upon relevant issues such as the development of Standard Operating Procedures, setting up of Control Room System, defining the role and responsibility of Tourist Police, distinct uniform for Tourist Police personnel, training programs and schemes for incentivization for 'Tourist Police'. States/UTs that have implemented Tourist Police program successfully would be elaborating on their best practices.
