



G20 Series #16

India's G20 Presidency

First G20 Tourism Working Group Meeting
 (Rann of Kutch – February 07-09, 2023)

(Ministry of Information & Broadcasting)

February 28, 2023

"There is a lot of potential for job generation through tourism. We can create opportunities for millions of youths through tourism."

- [PM Shri Narendra Modi](#)

The first meeting of the Tourism Working Group under India's G20 Presidency was held from February 07-10, 2023 in Rann of Kutch, Gujarat. The meeting included two side events, an inaugural session, and two days of working group meetings on the five identified priorities, along with a series of bilateral meetings and excursion visits.¹

Five priority areas in the tourism sector have been identified during India's G20 Presidency, which will constitute the key building blocks for accelerating the transition of the tourism sector and will achieve the targets for the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The five priority areas are as follows:²



Five priority areas in the tourism sector

Green Tourism: “Greening of the tourism sector for a sustainable, responsible and resilient tourism sector”

¹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1897923>

² <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1896741>

Digitalization: “Harnessing the power of digitalization to promote competitiveness, inclusion, and sustainability in the tourism sector”
Building Skills: “Empowering youth with skills for jobs and entrepreneurship in the tourism sector”
Tourism MSMEs: “Nurturing tourism MSMEs / Startups/ private sector to unleash innovation and dynamism in the tourism sector”
Destination Management: “Rethinking the strategic management of destinations towards a holistic approach that delivers on the SDGs”

First G20 Tourism Working Group Meeting

The first Tourism Working Group Meeting under G20 hosted by the Ministry of Tourism on February 07, 2023, was preceded by *a side event of a panel discussion on ‘Rural Tourism for Community Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation’*. The Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and DoNER Shri G. Kishan Reddy delivered the keynote address at the day's side event.³



Delivering the keynote address the Minister said that it was a matter of great honour and responsibility for India to assume the G20 Presidency at this critical moment when the world is facing several challenges. The Minister highlighted that India is focused on using tourism as a vehicle for achieving Sustainable Development Goals during India's G20 Presidency. Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, Shri G.K Reddy said that " The soul of India lives in its villages", and thus by showcasing our villages, the country's way of life, its spiritual and cultural heritage, and natural beauty is being showcased. Shri G. Kishan Reddy also said that self-reliant villages will lead to a self-reliant India.⁴

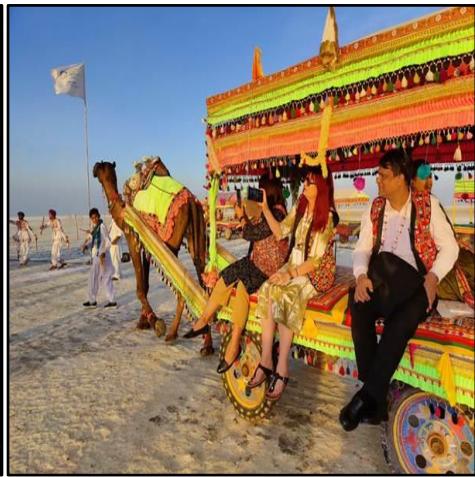
The panelists held discussions and made presentations highlighting the best practices, success stories, prospects, opportunities, and issues in the field of Rural Tourism.

The delegates arrived in Dhordo on February 07 and were given a warm, colourful, and traditional welcome which included performances by folk artists at the tent city, Dhordo, Rann of Kutch. Later in the evening, the delegates were taken to White Rann in beautifully decorated camel carts with vibrant folk music and dance performances all along the way. The delegates enjoyed the

³ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1897070>

⁴ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1897070>

beautiful sunset and took photographs with the G20 logo. The enthralling cultural night in which various folk dances were performed by artists was followed by a delectable dinner.⁵



⁵ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1897320>

The inaugural session was graced by the Chief Minister of Gujarat Sh. Bhupendra Bhai Patel, the Union Minister of Tourism, Culture, and DONER Sh. G. Kishan Reddy; and the Union Minister Shri Parshottam Rupala, Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.⁶

At the inaugural session, the Indian dignitaries shared their views on Indian tourist destinations, steps taken by the government to promote tourism, the safety of tourists, digitization in the tourism sector, and tourism's impact on the local economy and employment. During the working group meeting, discussions were held on the identified five priority themes under the Indian Presidency.

On February 09, a *second side event* was organized on the theme, '**Promotion of Archaeological Tourism: Discovering shared Cultural Heritage**'. Speakers at the panel discussion shared their views on the conservation of Archaeological Sites and the challenges faced at such sites. They highlighted the benefits of promoting archaeological tourism for the empowerment and sustainable livelihoods of local communities. In his concluding remarks, Shri Arvind Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, said that Archaeological tourism could provide sustainable socio-economic development of local communities.

Yoga session at sunrise at White Rann

During their stay at Dhordo Tent City, the delegates had an opportunity to attend a Yoga session at sunrise held at the picturesque White Rann. The delegates also visited the ancient Harappan Site Dholavira, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where they were briefed about the effective and efficient water management practices that were followed at Dholavira. In addition, the delegates were introduced to the local Kutchi art and traditions. They enthusiastically joined the folk artists in a dance performance during the cultural evening.



⁶ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1897923>

Before their departure, the delegates paid a visit to the state-of-the-art Smritivan Earthquake Memorial Museum in Bhuj on February 10.



Briefing media persons in New Delhi on February 11, 2023, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism Shri Arvind Singh informed that all the five key priority areas set for the deliberations were endorsed by all the G20 Member countries, Invitee countries, and International Organisations. There was a consensus among the participating countries that the priorities set by India are in the right direction.⁷

Going forward, the Tourism Working Group will reconvene for three more meetings, including a Ministerial, which will take place in Goa. A Ministerial Level Communiqué and the Goa Roadmap for Tourism as vehicles for achieving Sustainable Development Goals are the planned deliverables.

References:

- PIB Press Release on [All the 5 key priority areas set for the deliberations endorsed by all Member countries](#) dated February 11, 2023.
- PIB Press Release on [The meeting of 1st Tourism Working Group under India's G20 presidency concludes](#) dated February 10, 2023.
- PIB Press Release on [The 1st Tourism Working Group Meeting begins](#) dated February 07, 2023.
- PIB Press Release on [1st Tourism Working Group Meeting under G20 to start](#) dated February 06, 2023.
- <https://twitter.com/g20org/status/1623522083874672640?s=20&t=hCVIIx096FcjsMnBeAN8yw>
- <https://twitter.com/g20org/status/1622438605087191042?s=20>

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⁷ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1898366>