

National Mission for Alternative Destinations

Dekho Apna Desh Campaign 2.0

A Mission for Distribution of Tourism Demand and Promotion of Lesser-known Destinations

27th September, 2026

On the occasion of World Tourism Day, Union Minister for Tourism and Culture Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat launched the **“National Mission for Alternative Destinations” – a mission for distribution of tourism demand and promotion of lesser-known destinations under Dekho Apna Desh Campaign 2.0**. The Mission seeks to promote tourism-ready, lesser-known destinations across India to diversify domestic tourist flows, improve visitor experience and create opportunities for local communities and tourism enterprises.

Domestic tourist visits in India have registered more than threefold growth at a compound annual growth rate of around 12 per cent. This growth has increased pressure on several established destinations through congestion, seasonal price spikes, traffic and civic infrastructure stress, and pressure on fragile ecosystems. The Mission seeks to address these challenges by encouraging travellers to explore suitable alternative destinations.

Shri Suman Billa, Additional Secretary and Director General, Ministry of Tourism, made a presentation on the Mission during the event. In partnership with States, Union Territories and tourism industry stakeholders, the Mission will identify, prepare, package and promote lesser-known destinations as alternatives or complements to destinations experiencing high tourist pressure.

Four pillars of the Mission

1. Selection of destinations: States and Union Territories will nominate tourism-ready destinations with a distinct appeal, adequate infrastructure and accommodation capacity to receive additional visitors, and willingness to share tourism data. The pilot themes will cover hill and mountain alternatives, coastal and waterfront alternatives, heritage and cultural destinations, and regional pilgrimage alternatives.

2. Packaging of tourism products: Selected destinations will be developed into bookable tourism products and themed itineraries integrating accommodation, transport, food, experiences and local activities. The packages will connect artisans, self-help groups, guides,

food vendors and cultural groups with tourism opportunities, enabling greater participation by local communities.

3. Joint promotion: Destinations will be promoted through coordinated campaigns with States, Union Territories and industry partners. A “Social Media First” approach will bring together online travel agencies, tour operators, hotels, influencers and user-generated content to build awareness and encourage travel to the selected destinations.

4. Data-driven management: A national tourism monitoring dashboard or framework will support destination management by tracking tourist footfall, carrying capacity and visitor feedback. Partnerships with hotels, online travel agencies, ticketing platforms, telecom and payment providers, and local stakeholders will support this monitoring.

Industry partners endorsed the Mission during the event, noting its alignment with the broader vision and priorities of tourism stakeholders. They observed that it is expected to diversify India’s tourism ecosystem, create additional employment and livelihood opportunities for local communities, and offer tourists a wider range of distinctive experiences.