



**Embassy of India
The Hague**

PRESS NOTE

'DISCOVER INDIA'

(Indian Tourism Promotion Event, 20 March 2025)

As a part of the outreach activities and to promote Indian tourism in the Netherlands, the Embassy of India in The Hague organized a tourism promotion event titled 'DISCOVER INDIA' on 20th March 2025 at the Hotel Van der Valk, Wassenaar. The event is aligned with Hon'ble Prime Minister's campaign on promotion of tourism into India. The campaign projects India as an attractive tourist destination by showcasing different aspects of Indian culture and history like yoga, spirituality, culinary delights, etc. The event was conducted in hybrid mode to enable participation of resource persons from India. The event was attended by around 30 people, including tour operators operating in the Netherlands, who consider India as a tourist destination and promote India to their clients.

2. The program commenced with the opening remarks by the Ambassador of India to the Netherlands H.E. Mr. Kumar Tuhin who extended a warm welcome to the participants, encouraging the Indian diaspora and friends of India to actively foster and strengthen bonds of friendship. He emphasized the importance of enhancing people-to-people connections, promoting cultural exchange, and building bridges of mutual understanding and collaboration. The Ambassador shared his personal experience of visiting the Maha Khumbh Mela which was attended by over 600 million devotees. He highlighted the increase in number of tourist visas issued by the Embassy and mentioned.

3. The Ambassador stated, "As per the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the tourism sector contributed approximately 9.2% to India's GDP and employed over 42 million people in 2023. Projections indicate that by 2029, this number will increase to 53 million, making tourism one of the most vital employment generators in the country". He elaborated that one of the biggest factors behind the growth of Indian tourism is the rapid infrastructural development. The Ambassador remarked that India boasts world's second largest road network and fourth largest rail network showcasing the ease of travel and connectivity within the country, positioning it as a destination of exceptional accessibility. He briefed the participants about the 'Chalo India' campaign launched by the Government of India and how the campaign seeks to harness the power of people's involvement in promoting tourism, with a special focus on engaging the Indian diaspora. Ambassador highlighted the 43 UNESCO World Heritage sites in India and a diverse array of niche tourism offerings. He also addressed various facets of the tourism sector, including wellness and spiritual tourism, eco-tourism, medical tourism, wildlife tourism, as well as cruise and coastal tourism.

3. Mr. Rajesh Kumar Sinha, Attaché with the Embassy of India, gave a presentation about the different types of visas issued by the Government of India to promote tourism into India. Mr. Sinha also cleared the queries from the participants about the visas and their approval process.

4. The event had an exclusive presentation by the Founder Director of LaLa Foundation Ms. Noreen van Holstein. Ms. Holstein shared profound insights gained from her extensive experience living in India over many years.

5. Mr. Manas Prakash, AVP (Tourism) at Invest India, shared a concise summary of investment opportunities in India in the tourism sector for stakeholders interested in expanding their presence. Mr. Prakash highlighted India as an emerging tourism destination and mentioned its competitive edge in tourism. Additionally, he shared the details about Moonshot projects for Indian Tourism like Dharoi Destination development, Heritage preservation and monetization-UNESCO, MICE tourism etc.

6. Columnist & Author; and former Executive Director of Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), Dr. Himanshu Talwar emphasized over India's profound and diverse art and cultural heritage, positioning it as the cornerstone for the nation's tourism industry. Dr. Talwar elaborated on the Indian Philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," which translates to "The world is one family." He emphasized on global unity, interconnectedness, and shared humanity.

7. The roundtable discussion ended with a fruitful feedback and brainstorming session wherein the participants expressed their views and gave suggestions about how India can be marketed as a prominent tourist destination.

8. The event concluded with a networking session which provided opportunities to all the participants to engage with experienced people from the tourism industry. The participants were also requested to share their suggestions and feedback over email.

9. The Embassy's specially curated display at the event featured the 'One District, One Product' (ODOP) initiative, offering a captivating glimpse into India's rich cultural and artisanal heritage. The display highlighted a diverse range of iconic products, including handwoven textiles, pottery, wooden crafts, and regional spices, each representing the rich cultural history of India's districts. Participants had the opportunity to learn about the stories behind these products and discover how these crafts are contributing to local livelihoods and the global marketplace.

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