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National Conference of Tourism Ministers

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The one-day National Conference of Tourism Ministers concluded on 20th August 2019 in

GOVT'S BIG PUSH TO ATTRACT FOOTFALLS

- India received 10.5 million foreign tourists in 2018.
Growth has slowed this year
- Tourism ministry in 2018 had set a target to double foreign tourists by 2020
- Countries like Thailand and Singapore attract more foreign tourists than India

New Delhi.

- The conference was organized by the Union Ministry of Tourism and was attended by the State Tourism Ministers of 19 States, Secretaries of Tourism and senior officials from the States and Union Territories (UTs) who deliberated on various issues related to the **development and promotion of tourism.**
- The Tourism Minister launched the **Hindi version of the new Incredible India portal** at the conference.
 - He announced that the Arabic, Chinese and Spanish versions of the new Incredible India website will be launched next month.
 - The **new Incredible India website was launched on 14th June, 2018.** The interactive website showcases India as a holistic destination, revolving around major experiences such as spirituality, heritage, adventure, culture, yoga and wellness.
- The Tourism Minister also launched the **Incredible India Tourist Facilitator Certification (IITFC) portal** during the conference.
 - The Incredible India Tourist Facilitator Certification (IITFC) Programme is a digital initiative of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India for the citizens of India

- to become a part of the booming Tourism Industry.
- It is an online programme where one can learn about tourism at their own time, space, path and pace.
 - The successful completion of this programme would enable the learner to become a **Certified Tourist Facilitator of Ministry of Tourism**, Government of India.
- He urged all the States and UTs to open their important monuments till late night for visitors.

Recently, in order to promote night tourism, **the Culture Ministry has decided to open 10 historical monuments till 9 PM** for common visitors across the country.
 - The Tourism Minister also handed over three new Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and five new Letters of Intent (LoIs) to the prospective **Monument Mitras** at the conference.
 - The government has decided to introduce a **flexible e-tourist visa regime** for over 160 countries based on footfall, with **higher visa fee for peak season** between July and March, and a significantly **lower fee for travel during the lean season** between April and June.

The government has introduced a new five-year e-visa category for which tourists will have to pay \$80.

Source: PIB