

**Budget 2021-2022****No relief for tourism, MOT budget 18% down**

Union Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** while presenting the Budget of the country focused on building infrastructure but unfortunately had no mention on tourism and hospitality industry apart from introducing Vista Dome coaches on tourist routes. The tourism budget too has been reduced by almost 18 per cent, from Rs 2,499.33 crore in 2020 to Rs 2,032.04 crore in 2021. The FM announced Rs 1.10 lakh crore for outlay of Railways and capital expenditure along with a National Railway Plan for 2030. Additionally, more economic corridors are being planned to boost road infrastructure and tax holiday for startups has been extended by one year. The FM also announced tax exemption for LTC.

Budget would give boost to wellness tourism

Prahlad Singh Patel, Minister of State (I/C), Tourism & Culture, shared that the budget has announced the opening of wellness centres in urban as well as rural areas, which would boost wellness tourism in the country. "It is a budget of the country which will propagate the theme of Atmanirbhar Bharat further."

An opportunity lost by the Government to revive tourism

Subhash Goyal, Secretary General, FAITH, has said that the tourism industry is totally disappointed from this Union Budget. "We had many expectations and it was a great opportunity lost for the government to revive this sector. They have only indirectly talked about increasing connectivity with road and railways infrastructure and ports," he said.

**No recognition for the tourism sector in the Budget**

Pronab Sarkar, President, IATO expressed his disappointment on the Budget and said, "We had looked forward to this year's Budget with a lot of expectations for tourism sector getting due recognition. But to our dismay, there was no mention of tourism, even though the government was re-assuring Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas aur Sabka Vishwas."

Empowering for economy, but disappointing for tourism

Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI, said, "The 2021 Budget is empowering people for greater economic freedom, sound infrastructure, metro, railways, airports, and highways. However, we are very disappointed that travel and tourism has not got anything specifically, despite being a strong GDP contributor, and having a huge value chain."

**Disheartened and demotivated with the Budget**

Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, Vice President, FHRAI, has said that the Union Budget 2021 has disappointed the hospitality industry. "We are disheartened and feel demotivated in our darkest hour. We wish our government would study what other countries have done to keep tourism alive. The industry was looking forward to some relief," he added.

All suggestions from us ignored in Budget

Pradip Lulla, Acting President, TAFI, said, "The Budget is very disappointing, especially for the tourism sector. We had collectively put across many suggestions to the MOT. Unfortunately, not one has been looked into, or considered. The fiscal deficit which is 9.5 is huge and some allocation to tourism should have been given."

**Domestic tourism a concern with no funding**

PP Khanna, President, ADTOI, said, "The tourism industry is really disappointed. The Budget has proposals on railways, roads and ports, it is surprising how without any direct allocation of funds to MOT or state tourism boards, we would be able to follow Dekho Apna Desh, Incredible India and Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat?"

Heartbreaking and disappointing for industry

Vishwas Makhija, President, ATOAI, said that the Budget was simply disappointing and further heart-breaking for the entire tourism industry. "The industry was looking forward to immediate support to survive and short-term measures for critical revival but unfortunately, none of these was taken into consideration in the Budget announcement," he said.

**The tourism industry was left out in the Budget**

Riaz Munshi, President, OTOAI said the budget was very disappointing for the tourism industry since there was no mention of anything for the industry. "We have suffered the most and we should have got at least some relief. Otherwise, it's a good budget for the country, I don't know why we were left out?" he said.

Travel industry left on cliff-hanger

Sandeep Dwivedi, COO, ITQ, said, "While the proposed upcoming developments will help tourism in the long run, it is surprising to see nothing substantial was proposed to save the industry. No tax rebates, no financial support for cash-stricken businesses, no relief for short-term debts; has again left businesses in travel industry on a cliff-hanger."

**Vaccination program may help revive travel & aviation**

Ankur Bhatia, Executive Director, Bird Group, commented, "India's vaccination program may help in economic recovery. However, the Indian economy is awaiting a return to normalcy in travel and aviation. These sectors are now carrying most of the COVID-19 burden. We expect a full throttle vaccination program to bring cheer to the sector."

They don't care for tourism industry

Deepak Narula, MD, GRN Connect, said that this sector is one of the last ones to start its revival process and it needed a strong thrust from the government at such a critical time. "But it has chosen to ignore us yet again. It seems like they don't care for the tourism industry anymore. We are sorely disappointed yet again," he added.

**Nothing for hotel and tourism fraternity**

JK Mohanty, CMD, Swosti Group, shared, "We are very disappointed with the Government's budget, as nothing has been given to the hotel industry or the tourism fraternity, which employs almost 10% of the workforce and also to those living in the interiors of India, where no other industry can go and survive."

Govt has asked us to be Atmanirbhar with Budget

Harmandeep Singh Anand, MD, Jagsons Travels & Co-founder, GPS, commented, "It is pointless to follow the Budget as it does not deliver much for tourism industry. Why we are still expecting big things from our Union Budget? The government has clearly said be 'Atmanirbhar' and this time it was indeed an Atmanirbhar Budget."

