



TAMIL NADU TOURISM POLICY 2023



**DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU**



Department of Tourism
Government of Tamil Nadu



Foreword

I am immensely proud to present the first-ever Tamil Nadu Tourism Policy, a landmark initiative that aims to propel our State to new heights in the tourism landscape.

Tamil Nadu has always been a land of rich cultural heritage, breathtaking natural beauty, and warm hospitality. From ancient temples that stand as architectural marvels to vibrant urban landscapes; from serene hill stations to a stunning coastline, the State is home to a treasure trove of diverse tourism assets that have been shaped by centuries of rich history, culture, and natural beauty.

With its transformative potential, tourism has emerged as a significant driver of economic growth and employment generation across the globe. In specific, tourism has the unique ability to create employment opportunities across a broad spectrum of skills, from skilled professionals to local artisans and from trained guides to small-scale entrepreneurs.

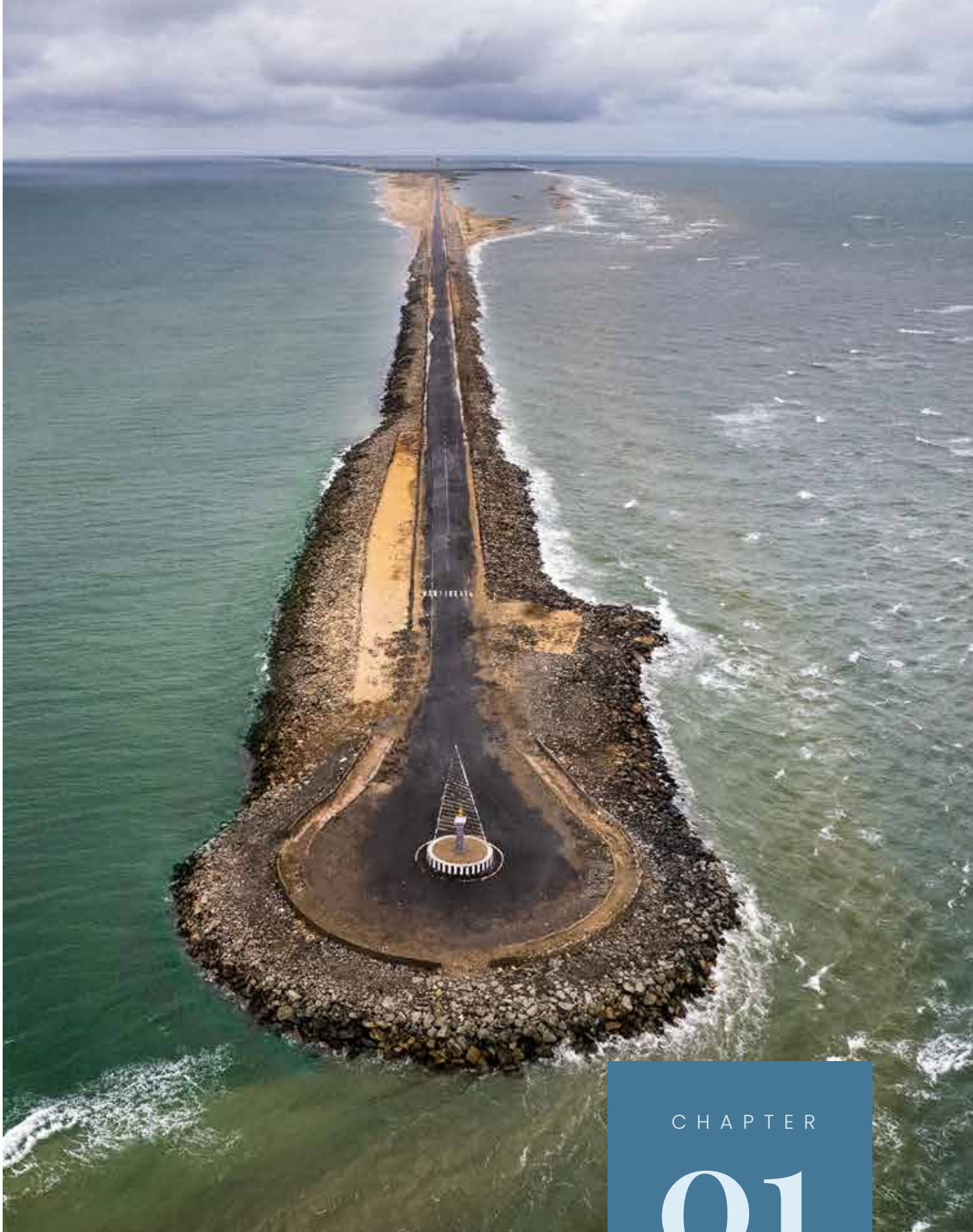
This policy has been grounded through research and comprehensive study, ensuring a robust foundation and forward-looking approach that adapts to changing times and needs. The Tourism roadmap charts our path to developing a thriving tourism landscape, outlining key milestones and strategies. By strategically diversifying its tourism offerings, investing in tourism infrastructure and expanding into untapped markets, the State seeks to leverage its unique natural and cultural assets to create new revenue streams and increase employment opportunities in the tourism sector. With this policy, the State can harness its inherent strengths and leverage the power of tourism as a vital catalyst in realizing our ambitious goal of achieving a USD 1 Trillion economy by 2030.

In this endeavour, I extend my regards to the dedicated team of experts, stakeholders, and tourism professionals who have contributed to formulating this comprehensive policy. With immense pride and optimism, I present the Tamil Nadu Tourism Policy, an instrumental milestone in our journey towards prosperity and progress.

M.K. STALIN
CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU

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CHAPTER
01

Introduction

Tamil Nadu is the homeland of one of the oldest living civilizations in the world. The ancient culture and traditions of the land are not locked away in museums but teeming in its everyday life through vibrant festivals, the Tamil language, classical and folk music & dance, sumptuous cuisines, and multifaceted cultural traditions.

The Tamil Nadu of today is as dynamic as it is steeped in history. With a firm footing in its cultural roots, the State has its eyes on the horizon. Here one can see skylines interspersed with both gleaming office towers and ancient temple gopurams. It is only here that one can go from bustling modern manufacturing hubs to enjoying laid-back classical Carnatic music and Bharatanatyam performances; from reading poems and ballads in one of the oldest classical languages in the world to attending literary fests buzzing with contemporary authors.

Tamil Nadu offers a microcosm of the many landscapes of the subcontinent. Here you can stand at the very ends of India where three oceans come together; start your day among the mist-clad tea gardens of the Nilgiri ranges and spend the same evening among the high surfing waves at Kovalam; explore some of the most colourful and pristine coral reefs in India at Rameswaram and go bird-watching at any of the state's many natural reserves; take in the architecture of the ages, from the monumental Dravidian monuments of the Cholas, Pandyas, and Pallavas to the many surviving Colonial settlements of the British, French, and Danes; trace the epic journeys of the mythical heroes of the Ramayana; experience the magnificence of the majestic Jallikattu festival; collect priceless handicrafts, from the gleaming silks of Kanchipuram to the organic forest produce of the Western Ghats. These are only some of the stories that lie in wait in Tamil Nadu.

With Tamil Nadu's diverse geographical, cultural, ethnic, and historical landscapes, one trip is simply not enough. On each visit, the state reveals a different facet of its colourful tapestry – awe-inspiring temple architecture, timeless music and dance forms, pristine beaches, verdant natural beauty, colourful cultural traditions, delectable flavours, unique handicrafts, and the warm hospitality of the Tamil people.

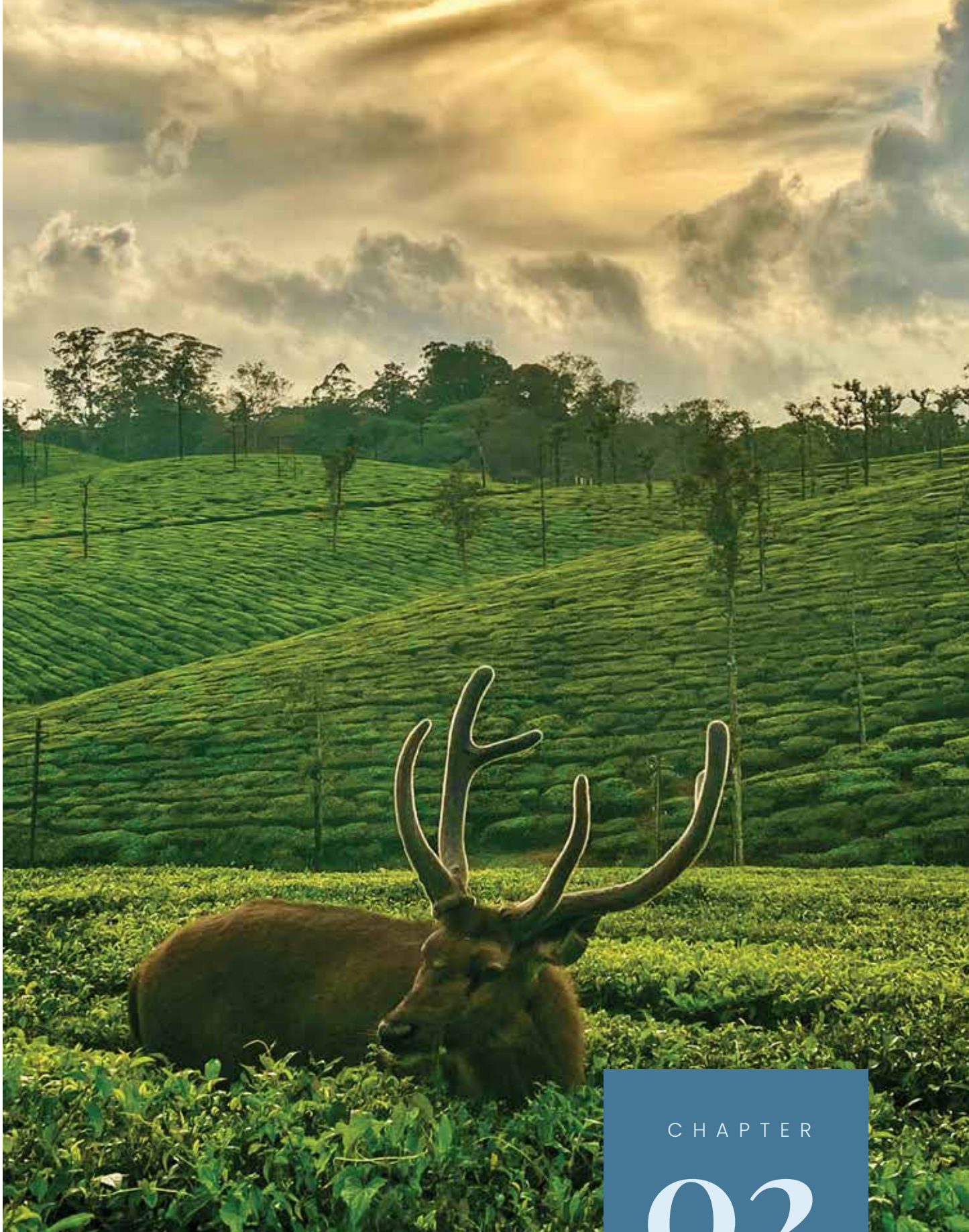
Tamil Nadu offers something for everyone – a place to meet many friendly faces who embrace their ancient culture with a modern perspective; a land for spiritual healing; a region interspersed with large hubs of commercial activity; a spot for tranquillity; a treasure trove of adventurous experiences. Tamil Nadu casts a spell like no other place, charming visitors not with manufactured attractions and hollow gestures, but with spell-binding soul and sincerity.

Embracing its profound cultural traditions and historical roots, as well as its potential to become a global hub for experiential tourism, it's time for Tamil Nadu to reimagine itself, share its myriad extraordinary, unique, and authentic narratives with the world, inviting all to visit and discover their own stories.



Airavatesvara Temple, Darasuram – A UNESCO World Heritage Site

Tea Plantations in Valparai



CHAPTER
02

Guiding Principles

The state of Tamil Nadu is endowed with a rich variety of natural and cultural attractions, ranging from its temple towns and heritage sites to hill stations, waterfalls, and national parks. The State boasts of some of the grandest examples of Dravidian architecture, such as the famous Shore Temple of Mamallapuram, the Brihadeeswarar Temple of Thanjavur, the Meenakshi Amman Temple of Madurai, and the Ranganathaswamy Temple of Srirangam. Tamil Nadu is blessed with 6 UNESCO World Heritage sites and 400+ Archaeological Society of India monuments and sites. It is home to the Nilgiris Mountain Range – part of a UNESCO-recognized natural site and one of India's 3 ecological hotspots for species endemism. Furthermore, the state has 37 protected areas extending over 7,000 sq km and a 1,000+ km long coastline packed with beaches, mangroves, coral reefs and more.

Today, Tamil Nadu is the second largest economy in the country, with a GSDP of ~USD 300 billion and is also India's most urbanized state, with almost 50% of its population living in urban areas. Tamil Nadu has high road and rail density – higher than the national average. Further, it has 6 functional airports (out of which 4 are international airports), 2 cruise terminals and various helipads for connectivity across the state.

In order to maintain and strengthen its prominent position in India, it is crucial for Tamil Nadu's tourism sector to adapt and transform, effectively addressing the preferences and needs of the upcoming wave of tourists.

As a service sector, tourism plays a pivotal role in fueling the economic progression of Tamil Nadu. The state's distinctive blend of geographical, cultural, and environmental attributes has secured its spot as one of India's most frequented destinations, attracting an array of domestic and international visitors. However, growth in Tamil Nadu's tourism sector – in visitor numbers, investment in tourism projects and international interest – has come about predominantly organic, without coordinated planning. Furthermore, tourist expectations are constantly changing. Also, by the standards of global destinations, Tamil Nadu's tourism potential is highly under-leveraged.

To harness the plentiful tourism resources of the State and provide a tourism-led thrust to the local economy, the Government of Tamil Nadu identified the tourism sector as one of the focus areas of the state's development. The Government envisioned the Tamil Nadu Integrated Tourism Promotion Project (TNITPP) to develop all the tourism destinations of the State into an integrated network, to further enable convergence of all tourism products and services into a well-knit framework. These initiatives, along with developmental and promotional efforts taken by the Department of Tourism, have enabled the State to retain its position among the top Indian states in tourist footfalls, both domestic and foreign.

However, for the transformation of Tamil Nadu into a leading global tourism hub capable of competing on an international platform, the state needs to take defined measures to enable joint and collaborative efforts among the State Government, the private sector, and the people of Tamil Nadu. It is only with the collaborative effort of these three pillars that the tourism landscape of Tamil Nadu can realise its true potential.

For the first time, a conscious effort is being taken to create a tourism policy which puts together the state's vision and defines direction for its growth in the future.

This Tourism Policy aims to create a policy framework to move tourism into a major economic sector of Tamil Nadu, with focus on increased revenues for local economy, support to local communities and to grow tourism sustainably. The Policy proposes strategic interventions, attractive incentives, and requisite regulatory reforms to facilitate investment and incubate private participation in the tourism sector. The Policy strives to create a sustainable tourism ecosystem in Tamil Nadu and lays emphasis on providing safe and high-quality experiences for tourists.

This Policy is intended to be the determinant of strategic positioning Tamil Nadu in the global tourism market, which sets the foundations from which the sector can build. It would be a catalyst to transform the tourism industry to become a leading employer and driver of economic growth. It aims to provide the foundation with which all stakeholders can rally together to transform the tourism sector, as well as a platform to communicate Tamil Nadu's tourism values to the rest of the world.

The Tourism Policy is anchored by the principle of shared prosperity, ensuring that all parties involved in Tamil Nadu's tourism sector partake in the region's growth narrative. This approach introduces a harmonizing framework, aligning the objectives and interests of the diverse stakeholders. The ultimate aim is to collectively steer the tourism development of Tamil Nadu towards a vibrant and inclusive future.

The policy seeks to redefine the tourism landscape in order to:

- ◆ Elevate Tamil Nadu's tourism beyond its traditional allure of temples and ancient architecture and harness the unexplored potential of Tamil Nadu as a diverse tourist destination with offerings like heritage, coastal, and wildlife tourism
- ◆ Promote Tamil Nadu as a destination suitable for visits all year round
- ◆ Increase Length of Stay of Tourists
- ◆ Enable higher spending at destinations

The policy is designed on the following guiding principles:

Focusing on Destination Development

The policy aims to transition from typical focus on piecemeal infrastructure development / upgradation to holistic Destination Development, which relies on the preservation, enhancement and sustainability of the core tourism attraction of the Destinations – be it the heritage, wildlife, natural beauty, coastline etc. – and determines the destination’s development plan around this central attraction.

Protecting the tangible as well as the intangible

While past initiatives prioritized preserving physical assets like wildlife and natural reserves, this policy expands preservation efforts to intangible assets such as traditional art forms, handicrafts, dances, cuisines, and other cultural traditions tied to local livelihoods. The policy commits to safeguarding these intangible assets and reviving lost cultural and natural treasures wherever possible.

Mapping the tourist journey

The policy aims to capture their interest from their home, making their journey comfortable from the outset, crafting unforgettable experiences in Tamil Nadu, and encouraging them to share their memories and return for more.

Empowering private sector participation

Successful tourism development and promotion rely not only on government support but also on significant contributions from the private sector. The policy recognizes the value of private sector investment and expertise and aims to strengthen public-private partnerships to further Tamil Nadu’s tourism development.

Creating an identity that resonates with the local stakeholders and creates a sense of civic pride

The policy aims to re-imagine tourism as an inclusive platform that shares the stories of Tamil Nadu and its people with the rest of the world. This is expected to unite the diverse communities of Tamil Nadu, creating a sense of civic pride amongst the people of Tamil Nadu. The policy underscores the need to enlist the participation of all the people in the state, to successfully develop and promote tourism in Tamil Nadu.

Targeting higher value rather than higher footfalls

The policy acknowledges the pitfalls of mass tourism. Aiming for a larger volume of tourists is expected to have a negative impact on Tamil Nadu's resources. The policy promotes sustainable tourism, with minimal cultural and environmental impact, focusing on attracting high-value tourism rather than chasing large tourist volumes. This approach ensures a flourishing tourism economy while preserving Tamil Nadu's natural and cultural assets sustainably.

Creating authentic and memorable experiences

Tourism trends are changing, and today's tourists yearn for authentic encounters that foster genuine interaction with local communities and cultural immersion. This policy aims to leverage Tamil Nadu's unique assets to create unforgettable experiences that encourage repeat visits and recommendations to others, positioning Tamil Nadu as a preferred choice of destination.



Koodal Alagar Temple, Madurai



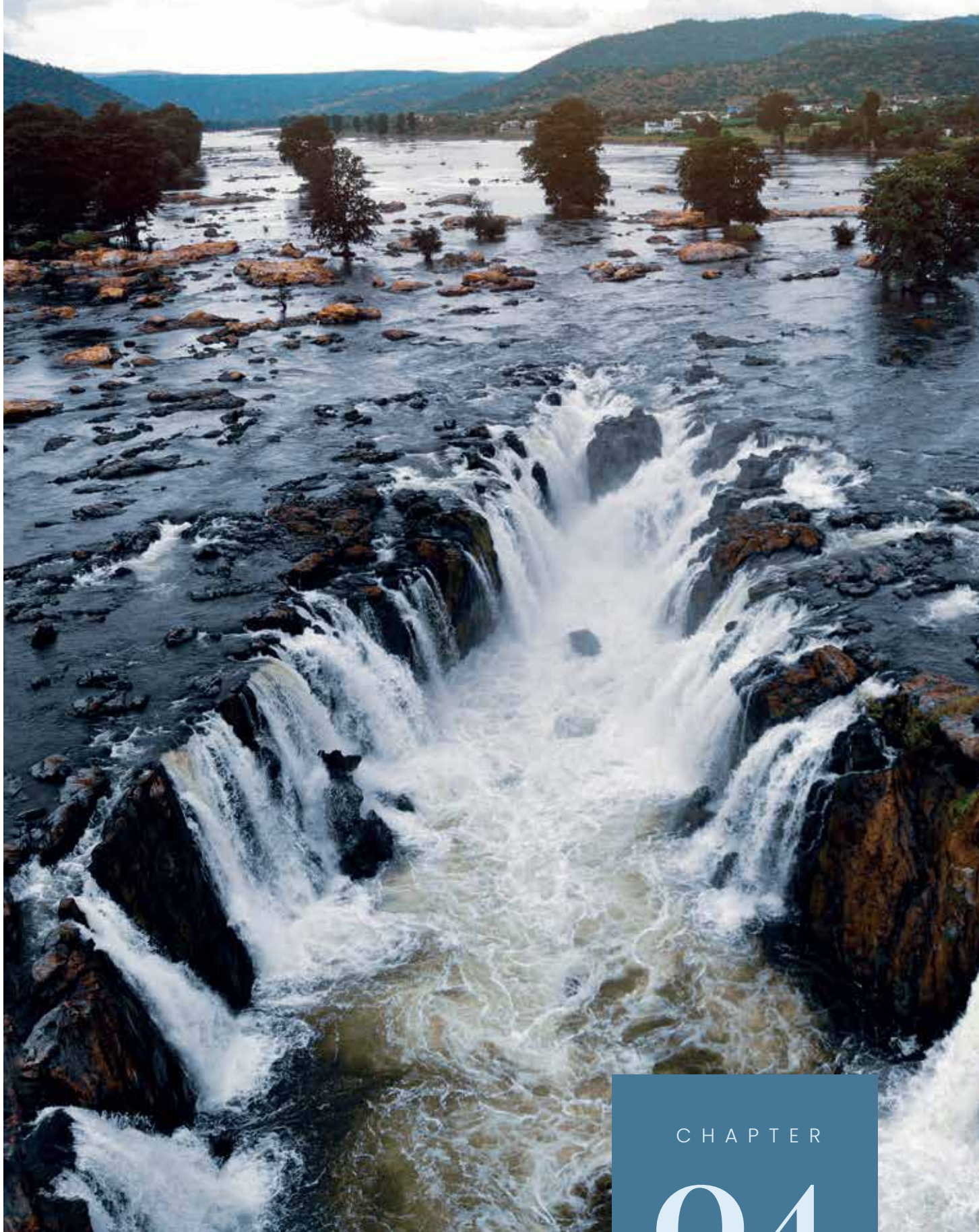
Policy Period

CHAPTER

03

This Policy shall be valid for a period of 5 years from the date of the policy notification, or till a new Policy is announced. The Government of Tamil Nadu may periodically revise this Policy from time to time.

The Government of Tamil Nadu may extend the period of this Policy as and when required. The Policy shall be applicable to the entire state and shall give direction to future schemes / works concerning Tamil Nadu's Tourism sector.



Vision, Mission & Objectives

CHAPTER

04

4.1 Vision Statement

To evolve Tamil Nadu into the most attractive experiential destination in Asia.

4.2 Mission & Objectives

Focus on Destination Development, along with its effective management and promotion

Objectives:

- a. To effectively develop, manage and promote Tourism Destinations in a sustainable and inclusive manner.
- b. To improve quality and diversity of tourism products & services and service delivery, with special focus on niche tourism segments.
- c. To improve quality of infrastructure and amenities that visitors to Tamil Nadu encounter across their journey through the state
- d. To stimulate confidence in visitors about safety, comfort, memorable experiences, convenience and secure journey through Tamil Nadu.

Offer extraordinary experiences leveraging the people, vibrant living cultures, diverse natural locations, ancient traditions, and history of Tamil Nadu

Objectives:

- a. To maintain and promote existing cultural and heritage tourism attractions.
- b. To value, conserve and enhance the natural bounty of Tamil Nadu, including the environmental diversity of hills, mangroves, forests, and beaches.
- c. To incubate and promote niche tourism segments.
- d. To raise awareness and understanding of Tamil-ness amongst tourists and Tamilians.

Pamban Bridge, Ramanathapuram



Creation of a dynamic and responsive tourism ecosystem

Objectives:

- a. To curate outreach programs, effectively targeting high value tourists from existing and potential origin markets.
- b. To leverage technology as a key instrument for achieving effective tourism growth, planning and monitoring across the value chain.
- c. To create an enabling framework for private sector investments and establish mechanisms to support industry-driven initiatives & entrepreneurship in tourism.
- d. To establish an effective, empowered, outward-focused tourism institutional structure, which can support the growth of tourism in the State.

Inclusive and sustainable tourism growth leading to livelihood opportunities

Objectives:

- a. To increase economic value of the existing tourism ecosystem with balance and sustainability.
- b. To foster tourism-led economic growth for prosperity and revenue generation in the State.
- c. To encourage sustainable development in tourism, aimed towards achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.
- d. To ensure balanced tourism growth, spreading benefits of tourism to local communities in all parts of Tamil Nadu, by fostering skill development and creating employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.



4.3 Goals

Tamil Nadu shall be positioned as a place for memorable, authentic, and diverse tourism experiences.

Targets for the next five years

Tourism to contribute to at least

12%

of State GSDP annually.

To reach

5 lakh

followers on official social media handles of Department of Tourism, Tamil Nadu.

Tourism and its supporting industries to employ

25 lakh

people in Tamil Nadu.

To reach

5 lakh

downloads of TN Tourism App.

Tamil Nadu to attract investment of

INR 20,000 crore

in tourism.

To have virtual Tourist Information Centres across all Anchor Tourism Sites in Tamil Nadu.

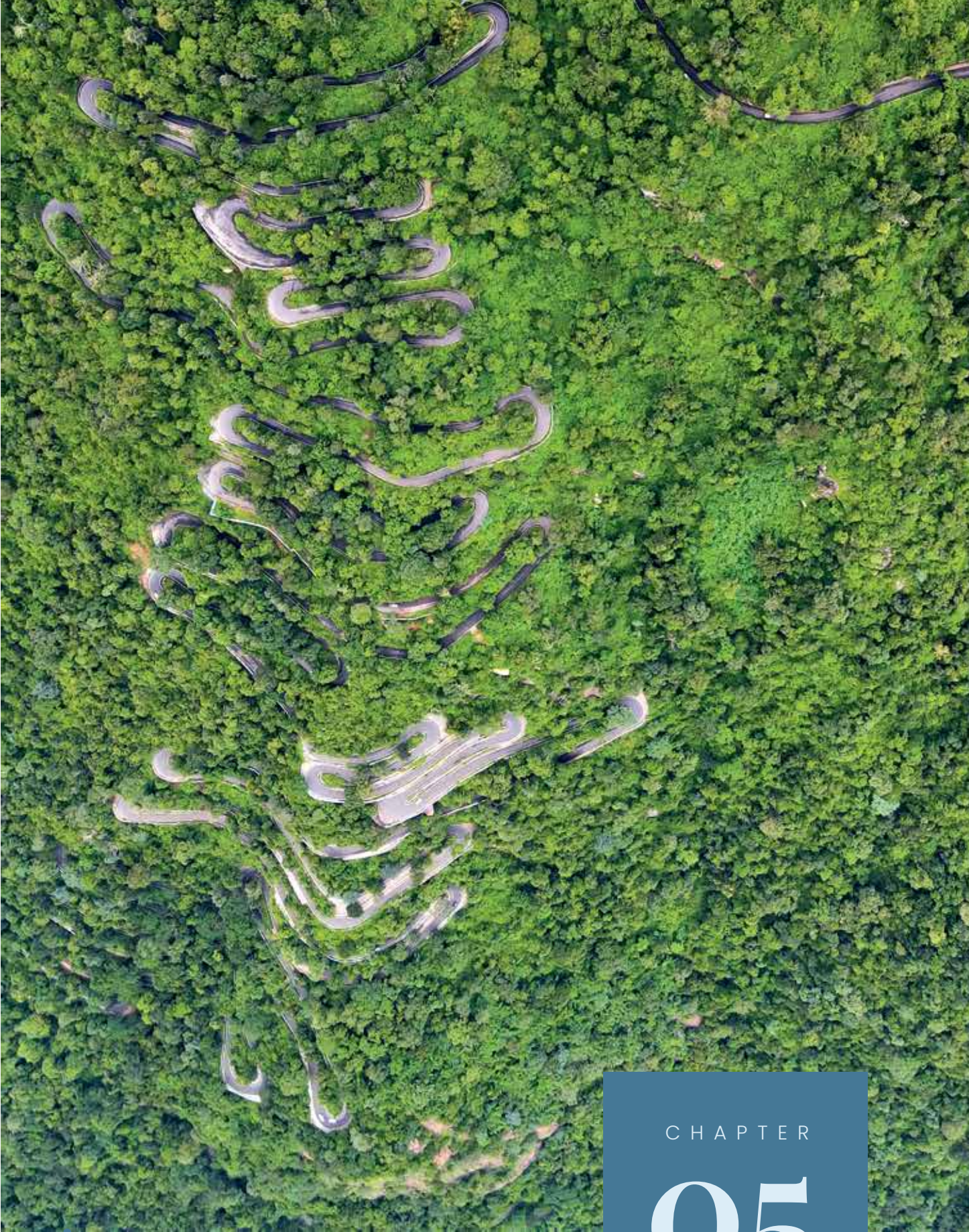
To facilitate skill development of

3 lakh

workers in tourism and its supporting industries.

To ensure that all Anchor Tourism sites in Tamil Nadu are technologically equipped for enhanced tourist safety and convenience.

Hairpin bends at Kolli Hills



Tourism Roadmap

CHAPTER
05



Priority Tourism Segments



Tourism Infrastructure



Promoting Investment in Tourism



Tourist Facilitation



Capacity Building



Community Led Growth



Responsible Tourism



Branding, Outreach, and Publicity



Digital Initiatives and Analytics



Bharatanatyam

Priority Tourism Segments

CHAPTER
06

Tamil Nadu is a land of captivating experiences. Tamil Nadu, an enchanting realm of endless narratives, proclaims itself as "The Land where Stories Never End". Through this Policy, the State aims to harness its dynamic cultural, natural, and heritage resources, creating an unforgettable showcase that offers visitors immersive experiences. The Department intends to concentrate efforts on the following Themes over the Policy period:

- 1) Adventure Tourism
- 2) Recreation Tourism
- 3) Caravan Tourism
- 4) Rural and Plantation Tourism
- 5) Coastal Tourism
- 6) Cultural Tourism
- 7) Medical and Wellness Tourism
- 8) Religious Tourism
- 9) Eco Tourism
- 10) MICE Tourism
- 11) Heritage Tourism
- 12) Film Tourism

6.1 Adventure Tourism

The lakes, hills, coastline and terrain of Tamil Nadu hold great potential for adventure activities. The diverse geographical landscape can offer attractive opportunities for the following categories of adventure tourism:



In-water Adventure Tourism



In-land Adventure Tourism



In-sky Adventure Tourism

The Department has received interest from activity operators for organising adventure activities across various parts of the State. Through this policy, the Department endeavours to facilitate such operators and create a mechanism for guided adventure tourism operations. The Department has issued a Scheme for the Registration of Adventure Tourism Operators in Tamil Nadu to streamline and standardise the operations of adventure tourism in the state.

Guidelines have also been issued by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, for adventure tour operators. The Department shall encourage the licensed operators in Tamil Nadu to follow these guidelines and adhere to strict safety protocols.

6.2 Recreation Tourism

Given the rising demand for leisure spaces, the Department aims to establish or encourage the establishment of expansive recreational facilities in popular tourist areas such as Chennai, Ooty, Rameswaram, Kanniyaakumari, Madurai, Trichy, and Coimbatore. These amenities may encompass Theme Parks, Golf Courses, Sports Facilities, and other recreation centres that attract huge footfalls.

Theme Park Tourism

Theme Parks are large entertainment enterprises that include a mix of offerings like rides, shows, games, etc. The Department envisages creating one large-format Amusement Park, similar to global theme parks like Disney and Universal Studios, with an area of at least 100 acres on the out-skirts of Chennai. The Amusement Park shall be developed through private sector participation.

Golf Tourism

Tamil Nadu has several golf courses, largely located in hilly areas, which offer picturesque views of the hills and plantations. These golf courses attract significant numbers of visitors from surrounding towns and expatriates living in Chennai and Coimbatore. The Department shall engage with golf courses located in hilly regions for the development of accommodation facilities, which can be promoted as part of recreation tourism.

Sports Tourism

Sports tourism is one of the fastest growing forms of recreation tourism. This includes tourists travelling to participate actively in sports as well as to attend sports events. The Department shall engage with the operators of key sports properties in the State to assist and align marketing efforts.

6.3 Caravan Tourism

Caravan tourism has gained immense popularity globally, owing to the freedom, flexibility and safety it provides with respect to itineraries and accommodation. Caravan is a unique concept of 'holiday and home on wheels', used for the purpose of travel, accommodation as well as leisure. It allows tours even to locations lacking developed hospitality infrastructure. This new facet of tourism attracts a wide range of market segments including young people, families, senior citizens, and international tourists. Further, since the onset of COVID, this segment of tourism has gained further attention as it limits physical interaction and offers the required safety bubble.

However, one of the essential pre-requisites for Caravan tourism is the presence of a sufficient number of Caravan Parks, providing a place where Caravans can stay overnight in allotted spaces with basic or advanced amenities and facilities like charging points, toilets, waste disposal facilities etc. The Department of Tourism has issued a Scheme for Registration of Caravan Tour Operators and Caravan Parks to promote and facilitate development of caravan parks at exotic locations across Tamil Nadu.

6.4 Rural & Plantation Tourism

The pristine countryside of Tamil Nadu holds a lot of potential to allow an immersive experience for visitors. Also, the numerous plantations in Tamil Nadu's hills have thousands of stories which can form a part of a traveller's memoir. The farms and agricultural practices of rural areas also offer educational tourism, where visitors can interact with farmers and obtain immersive learning. The culture, cuisines, greenery, vibrant festivals, and life of rural areas can together form an unforgettable experience for tourists. This further provides an opportunity to generate employment and a strong revenue source for villagers.

Home Stays

Homestays in rural areas, referred to as Countryside Stays, shall be promoted and encouraged where tourists / visitors can stay with the homeowner and families to experience their daily routine, traditions, customs, etc. Such accommodation projects shall be given special incentives under the Homestay Scheme and shall be marketed / promoted on Tourism website.

Experiential Resorts

Large-scale Experiential Resorts are a key focus of the Policy. The Department shall encourage development of Experiential Resorts across rural / remote areas which can offer visitors to experience the countryside of Tamil Nadu.

Plantation Tourism Projects

Owners of fruit orchards, tea-plantations etc., shall be encouraged to provide tourism offerings. Such tourism offerings may include eco-huts, tasting rooms (wine, tasting, fruit tasting, juice tasting, etc.), walk-through tours, art & craft sessions, small-scale processing units (fruit candy, ice-cream making, dairy products, cheese making, etc.), photo booths, live-stock feeding, retail / souvenir shops, etc.

Tea, Coffee & Spice Tourism

The Nilgiris, Yercaud and other hill stations host splendid tea and spice plantations which can be promoted as part of tourism trails. The Department shall engage with these tea / spice plantations to provide packaged experiential tours to tourists with offerings like stay at tea / spice gardens, plucking of tea leaves, tea-tasting sessions, tea / spice interpretation centre, visit to tea making unit / spice processing unit, etc.

A strong necessity for promotion of rural and plantation tourism is sensitization and building community awareness about benefits of tourism and necessary skill development. The Department, in coordination with the Department of Horticulture and Plantation Crops, shall launch community awareness programmes. Skill development training shall also be available for villagers at Skill Training Centres empanelled by the Department. The villagers can get skilled across various modules like cooking, hospitality, arts & crafts, English speaking, housekeeping etc., which can enhance their attractiveness as a host.

6.5 Coastal Tourism

From the northernmost Marina Beach, which is the world's second longest urban beach, to southernmost tip of Indian mainland, the Kanniyakumari Beach, the confluence of 3 oceans (Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea), Tamil Nadu's ~1,000 km coastline offers a plethora of experiences.

Naturally, coastal tourism is a focus tourism segment in Tamil Nadu.

Development of Water Sports

Beaches like Covelong, Rameshwaram and Ariyaman are most suitable for sea-side water-based activities like surfing, speed boats, water-skiing, etc. Water-sports infrastructure shall be encouraged to be set-up by private operators across these locations. In order to ensure conservation of beaches, water sports areas shall be demarcated separately from beach areas.

Blue Flag Status

The Department shall identify selected beaches which can envisage maintenance of selected beaches with clean, hygienic standards with a target of certain selected beaches being certified as Blue Flag beach, or equivalent.

The Department shall also focus on developing and promoting the two emerging sub-segments of Coastal Tourism:

Cruise Tourism

Domestic sea cruises constitute a niche market and cater to rising recreational needs of the affluent class in India. While the sector is nascent in India, it holds tremendous potential. The Department envisages to launch Cruise facilities on various stretches on the Chennai – Rameswaram – Kanniyakumari and Chennai – Port Blair route. Jetty infrastructure shall be developed at these places after identification of suitable spots. Private cruise operators shall be encouraged to start cruise services on these stretches.

Short-haul Ferry Tourism

Similarly, short-haul leisure ferries shall be encouraged by the Department for plying in the sea and on lakes in the State. Leisure journeys may include speed boats, slow ferries, seaplanes, amphibious boats and hovercrafts. Private operators shall be given Activity Operator Licenses for operations of such water journeys. Feasibility of development of a

Fishermen Community

The Department shall endeavour to promote tourism activities on the coastline, without negatively impacting the local fishing communities in the area. Fishermen markets shall be developed at beaches with high tourism potential to provide an organized area for sale. Also, skill training shall be conducted to give opportunities to fishermen who can benefit from tourism development.

Conservation

Conservation of beaches shall be a key focus area, wherein sand and water quality shall be maintained through appropriate crowd control measures, garbage disposal, etc.

Marina and launch of cruise operations from Covelong shall also be evaluated.

Aquatic/ Underwater Tourism

Rameswaram / Kunthukal Islands offer unexplored marine life which offer opportunities for underwater / aquatic sports for tourists. Activity Operators Licenses shall be issued by the Department for operating scuba diving and snorkelling activities at these locations.

6.6 Cultural Tourism

Tamil culture is showcased in its cuisine, festivals, dance forms, music, clothing & attire, way of living, prayer forms, rural life, arts & craft and architecture. The Department shall endeavour to encourage tourism activities which promote this culture in various forms.

Culinary / Gastronomy Tourism

Tamil Nadu is known for its culinary variety and spices. The Department shall endeavour to popularize Tamil Nadu's cuisines through Food Festivals organized across various parts of the State and the country.

Arts & Crafts Tourism

Tamil Nadu is celebrated for its diverse array of visual arts and handicrafts, which include items made of brass and bronze, stone sculptures, wood carvings, saree weaving, embroidery, pottery, paintings, and jewellery. The Department aims to recognise and honour the artisans and workers involved in the handicraft industry through tourism awards and accreditations. In partnership with the Handlooms, Handicrafts, Textiles and Khadi Departments, marketing support will also be provided for these handicraft products through certifications.

Music & Performing Arts Tourism

The creation of suitable spaces and facilities is essential for showcasing the rich Tamil culture, encouraging artistic performances, and promoting training related to Tamil art and culture. The Department, in partnership with the Department of Culture, will establish amphitheatres, auditoriums, and cultural haats to host such arts and cultural performances. These developments will be supported by funding under various schemes of the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

A Music & Dance Museum shall be set up in Chennai, which would be an interactive museum to showcase various arts, dance and music forms practised in Tamil Nadu. The Museum shall also have performance spaces, art galleries and workshops for the promotion of these art forms. Further, it will also host a "Kollywood Gallery", housing interactive exhibits to showcase Tamil Cinema, its history, milestones, and famous actors.

Events Tourism

A Calendar of Events shall be developed by the Department with details of various fests, including those promoted by the State Government. Regional and local festivals shall be promoted on the tourism website. Major festivals shall be popularized on national and international platforms. The Department is planning to foster significant cultural events, which will be orchestrated by private event organizers. Moreover, the Department will provide assistance to site agencies and district authorities in arranging various local festivals and events throughout the year at tourist sites across the state.

Indigenous Tourism

The Department shall support and promote projects, services and offerings which showcase authentic Tamil culture and provide marketing support on tourism website.

6.7 Medical and Wellness Tourism

Healthcare is one of the fast-growing segments of tourism comprises both travel for mainstream medical services as well as wellness tourism, thus covering both modern and traditional systems of medicine and capturing a large market. The sector is being prioritised even at a national level, under the “Heal in India” campaign, along with efforts directed towards strengthening the ecosystem for Medical and Wellness Tourism. Tamil Nadu, with its state-of-the-art modern healthcare infrastructure as well as its historical connection to the “Siddha” system of medicine, is well-positioned to develop and promote this segment of tourism.

Medical Tourism

Tamil Nadu has a strong historical connection and relevance to medical tourism. Today, the State is internationally recognized as an affordable and state-of-the-art healthcare provider for patients from across seas and borders. Considering the importance of Medical Tourism, the state government has already established a Medical Tourism Information Centre and a core committee of medical experts to oversee visitor needs. Medical tourism focuses on clinical as well as associated non-clinical services like post-operative care where patients might need accommodation and other facilitation. This segment involves hospitals, insurance agencies etc., which are supported by the Department of Health & Family Welfare.

The Department of Tourism, on its part, recognizes the importance of medical tourism as an important tourism segment. Domestic and foreign medical tourists contribute to the state's tourism through their stay and their visits to other tourist destinations.

Towards this, the Department shall take up following steps:

- ◆ Accreditation and recognition of tourism enterprises working in medical tourism promotion in the state, especially tours & travel agencies, online travel agencies (OTAs), and Medical Value Travel Facilitators (MVTFs). Partnerships with these bodies shall ensure that the state can play an active part in streamlining efforts for the development of the medical tourism value chain, including forming necessary policies/schemes. In some cases, where NABH has already accredited MVTFs, such existing accreditations shall be used and extended to the state.
- ◆ Marketing of medical service providers (hospitals, healthcare operators) on tourism websites, along with their performance details for easy access by potential medical tourists.

Wellness Tourism

The State has strong potential to be developed as a wellness tourism destination – with its legacy of Siddhar medicine and a multitude of suitable destinations for nature stays, such as forests, beaches, lakefronts, etc. Wellness tourism is also a relatively low CAPEX segment which holds high potential for local employment opportunities. The Department shall encourage and regulate the development of wellness centres, ayurveda retreats, spas and herbal gardens in the state through private participation.

Towards this, the Department shall take up following steps:

- ◆ Training and skill development support
- ◆ Accreditation and recognition of tourism enterprises working in wellness tourism promotion
- ◆ Registration and classification of wellness service providers
- ◆ Curation of innovative packages through industry partnership
- ◆ Marketing and promotion of attractive wellness tourism packages, in collaboration with registered service providers

Medical and Wellness Tourism Scheme shall be launched by the Department towards the development of medical & wellness tourism in Tamil Nadu, in line with the National Strategy and Roadmap drafted by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Efforts shall be directed towards promoting Tamil Nadu under “Heal in India” brand while setting up enabling regulatory and institutional frameworks for Medical and Wellness Tourism.

6.8 Religious Tourism

Tamil Nadu, globally recognized for its grand temples and sacred sites significant to a diverse range of faiths such as Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Jainism, and Buddhism, seeks to reimagine religious tourism. Through this Policy, it aims to craft compelling tour packages catering not only to pilgrims but also to tourists keen on exploring religious mythologies and

the fascinating architectural features of temples, churches, mosques, and other spiritually meaningful locations.

The Department shall formulate and popularize itineraries which can be of tourist interest like:

Land of Overarching Gopurams

capturing the monumental temples of Tamil land and covering the temple hubs - Chennai, Kancheepuram & Tiruvannamalai.

The Great Living Chola Temples

covering Brihadeeswara Temple in Thanjavur, Airavatesvara Temple in Darasuram and the temple in Gangaikonda Cholapuram, encapsulating a very distinctive period of Chola history and Tamil culture.

Temple itineraries like Nava Tirupati

covering a set of nine Hindu temples dedicated to Lord Vishnu located in Tiruchendur-Tirunelveli route.

The Department shall also formulate and popularize pilgrimage trails like:

Ramayana Trail

capturing the epic journey of the heroes of the Ramayana covering Ramanathauram, Srirangam, etc.

Buddha Trail

capturing the sites of significance to Buddhists covering various sites in Kancheepuram, the supposed birthplace of Bodhisattvar, Kaveripoompattinam etc.

Other popular pilgrimage trails

such as the Velankanni Trail, Jain Monuments Trail, etc.

The Department shall collaborate with Tamil Nadu Transport Department to provide air-conditioned tourist buses on the routes covering the itineraries/ trails. Also, private tours and travel operators shall be encouraged to provide services on these routes.

The Department shall also launch a program "Aanmeega Payanam" offering a comprehensive tour package for the elderly (60+ years) and all age groups who wish to visit major temples and religious sites in Tamil Nadu.

6.9 Eco Tourism

Tamil Nadu has vast eco-tourism potential with its national parks, mangroves, coastline and flora & fauna across hill stations. The Nilgiri mountain range is also an international biosphere reserve and a UNESCO world heritage site.

Eco-tourism activities like camping, birdwatching, trekking, and boardwalks shall be encouraged at these eco-destinations. Tamil Nadu already has a Tamil Nadu Eco Tourism Policy-2017, floated by the Forest Department for the development of eco-tourism sites. The Forest Department will promote Eco-Tourism only in Tiger Reserves, Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks and Reserve Forests, as well as activities which would be run by the local Eco-Development Committees (EDCs). The Department of Tourism shall anchor all other eco-tourism related activities, including continuing activities it is already doing outside those in the core protected areas. The Department of Tourism shall promote all eco-tourism-related activities, in consultation with the Forest Department. For all eco-destinations, the guidelines in the Eco-Tourism Policy 2017 shall hold and remain applicable.

6.10 MICE Tourism

The sector of Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions (MICE) is a specialized area that is among the most rapidly expanding segments in the global tourism industry. Chennai, with its large manufacturing capacity, automobile sector and flourishing IT industry, has a strong presence of corporates which generates potential for huge MICE demand – potentially hosting large conventions in these sectors and pulling in attendees from across the world. The Department aims to:

- ◆ Facilitate development of organised venues for MICE Tourism
- ◆ Boost MICE tourism in Tamil Nadu through establishing collaborations with tour operators at both international and national levels.
- ◆ Facilitate smooth transportation for out-of-town delegates, local travel and tour agencies will be prompted to assist hotels and venues hosting MICE events.
- ◆ Promote Destination Weddings: The Department acknowledges this as a significant opportunity given Tamil Nadu's large global diaspora and its wealth of scenic wedding locations. In collaboration with private players, the Department will devise Destination Wedding Packages, further highlighting these offerings on the tourism website.

6.11 Heritage Tourism

The story of Tamil Nadu is not complete without mentioning the magnificence of the Chola, Pallava, and Pandya empires, relics and remnants of which are still prominently visible in the rich architecture of Tamil temples, majestic forts and rock temples.

Moreover, Tamil Nadu has also got a significant history as the site of the former colonial settlements of European empires – British, French, Dutch and Danish. Majestic and daunting forts, stately colonial buildings and relics like museums, churches and other government buildings are spread all across the coastline from Chennai to Nagapattinam and some parts of the mainland as well.

These historical monuments are currently maintained by various departments, including the State Archaeology, the Archaeological Survey of India and the HR&CE Department. The Department of Tourism has chosen important sites across the State and prepared a list of sites which hold the highest potential for tourism promotion. Master Plans for these sites have been prepared with a focus on heritage conservation, improvement in basic tourism amenities and tourist engagement.

The Department is committed to promoting the creation of tourist products that reflect Tamil Nadu's rich history and culture, offering visitors an immersive and authentic experience. The initiatives in this regard would include:

Promotion of Heritage Walks and Eco-Friendly Tours

Heritage tours are an excellent means of engaging tourists, promoting community involvement in heritage conservation, and increasing awareness of the state's heritage assets. The Department encourages private tour operators to arrange heritage walks or Segway and bicycle tours around sites with significant heritage value. Local community involvement in these activities is strongly promoted.

Revitalizing Heritage Homes

Owners of private heritage properties are motivated to renovate their interiors and transform these spaces into visitor accommodations. The Home Stay Scheme will offer incentives for such heritage stays, fostering a more personalized and authentic tourist experience.

Repurposing Government Heritage Properties for Tourism

The Department plans to repurpose unused, vacant, or dilapidated historical buildings located in strategic locations for tourism purposes. These buildings could be converted into heritage cafés, heritage hotels, or guest houses. The Department intends to take over such properties from the relevant state departments for these purposes.

6.12 Film Tourism

Tamil Nadu has a diverse range of scenic natural locations, architecturally rich monuments and long coastlines, ideal for shooting of films and documentaries. The months of October – March are ideal for film shooting in coastal locations, while hill stations in Tamil Nadu are year-round attractions.

The Department envisages to promote film tourism across all segments – Bollywood, Kollywood, Documentaries, TV Productions, Foreign Movies & Shows and other regional movies. A Film Tourism Scheme shall be separately launched by the Department outlining guidelines and incentives for film shooting in Tamil Nadu.

The Big Temple, Thanjavur – A UNESCO World Heritage Site



CHAPTER
07

*Tourism
Infrastructure*

Tourism infrastructure is a crucial aspect of the visitor's journey, significantly impacting their overall experience. Tourism infrastructure constitutes the tangible side of the tourism ecosystem which a visitor encounters during their journey and hence holds a key role in the overall experience of the visitor. The Policy envisions both enhancing and upgrading the existing tourism infrastructure, along with the establishment of new, greenfield projects.

The objectives of this Policy are concentrated on enhancing tourism infrastructure, with the following goals:

- ◆ Transformation into an Integrated Tourism Hub: The aim is to make Tamil Nadu a holistic and unified tourism experience, rather than a collection of individual tourist sites.
- ◆ Holistic Development Approach: Tamil Nadu will take a concerted and inclusive approach towards enhancing the overall tourism infrastructure across the state. Comprehensive development of destinations encompasses a broad range of activities, including the planning, development, and maintenance of facilities and amenities.
- ◆ Modernizing Tourism Sites: This includes re-imagining and upgrading each tourist location, taking into account the desires and anticipations of today's global tourists. Constant improvements in the tourism infrastructure are crucial to stay aligned with the latest global trends and satisfying the evolving demands of modern travellers.
- ◆ Guaranteeing a Seamless Journey: The objective is to provide a frictionless, end-to-end travel experience throughout Tamil Nadu. Each interaction point in the tourist's journey should offer convenience, comfort, and safety.

7.1 Tourism Gateway Hubs

Existing towns/cities with good quality urban infrastructure shall be developed as Gateway Hubs, from where the visitor to Tamil Nadu can initiate their journey.

These Gateway Hubs shall offer world-class standard facilities and amenities to visitors like:

- ◆ Connectivity to other parts of the country and foreign markets
- ◆ Tourist facilitation and assistance
- ◆ Tourist amenities like ATMs, foreign exchange, shopping etc.
- ◆ Easy mobility
- ◆ Good quality hospitality spaces.

In short-term, the following shall be developed as Gateway Hubs:

- ◆ Chennai
- ◆ Tiruchirappalli
- ◆ Madurai
- ◆ Coimbatore
- ◆ Kanniyakumari

The Department may notify more cities/towns as Gateway Hubs.

Development at Gateway Hubs:

- a) **Allocation of Smart City Funds:** An allocation of 5% from the Smart City funds will be dedicated to enhancing tourism infrastructure in primary Gateway Hubs.
- b) **Streamlined Transit with HOHO Buses:** The convenience of tourists will be ensured with the deployment of Hop-On-Hop-Off (HOHO) buses to connect the airports, railway stations, and major tourism sites in Gateway Hubs. This operation will be outsourced to private entities, with the Department deciding the number of routes and buses based on market research.
- c) **Emphasizing Cleanliness and Hygiene:** Social awareness campaigns focusing on the cleanliness and hygiene of public spaces will be initiated. The responsibility of maintaining cleanliness and hygiene will fall under the purview of the Urban Local body.
- d) **Establishment of Tourism Information Centres (TICs):** TICs including virtual kiosks will be established at strategic locations, such as airports, railway stations, bus terminals, and key tourism sites.
- e) **Security Measures:** Ensuring tourist safety, CCTV monitoring and tourism security personnel will be deployed at tourism sites.
- f) **Digital Map and Guidebook Availability:** High-quality digital maps and guidebooks indicating significant tourism attractions, routes, and the locations of amenities such as TICs and ATMs will be published.
- g) **Banking and Foreign Exchange Services:** ATMs, banks, and foreign exchange centres will be conveniently located on all major tourist routes, markets, airports, railway stations, and bus terminals in the city.

The Department shall host an annual competition across Gateway Hubs and assess the above performance parameters on various indices to encourage good practices. A performance-based grant of INR 2 Crore shall be provided to the winning local body based on the results of the annual competition. Guidelines for the competition shall be published by the Department from time-to-time.

7.2 Destination Development

The State is endowed with rich natural and cultural attractions, ranging from its temples and heritage sites to hill stations, waterfalls, and national parks. Conceptual master plans for about 300 tourism sites across Tamil Nadu have been prepared and approved by the Department covering Culture and Heritage Sites, Hills and Hill stations, Nature Trails, Coastal Sites and Temples. Out of these, sites will be taken up for development in a phased manner.

Further, the Department has identified Anchor Tourism Sites, out of the above list of 300 sites, which need to be taken up on priority for improvement of tourism infrastructure. These sites hold high attraction value, high levels of popularity and are well known among locals. Such sites are envisaged to be developed into world-class attractions with high levels of service quality and are spread across all geographical clusters and categories of sites.

The list of Anchor Tourism Sites shall be published by the Department. To ensure smooth execution of the works, the Department will actively coordinate with these government departments and agencies.

The identified tourism infrastructure improvement projects at the sites shall be implemented using funds from the Department of Tourism / urban local bodies / district authorities / centrally sponsored schemes (like Swadesh Darshan, PRASAD etc.)/ Multilateral funding / private sector participation.

These Anchor Tourism Sites shall ensure a world-class experience for the visitor, comparable to the best destinations across the world. All Anchor Tourism Sites shall be developed with focus on accessibility, experience and sustainability.

■ Accessibility

Enhancing Connectivity: The Government of Tamil Nadu will work towards improving the connectivity of remote locations that are not well connected via road or rail infrastructure.

Accessibility: For differently-abled individuals, significant physical infrastructural improvements such as walkways, ramps, elevators, and accessible toilets will be made at all major tourist spots to ensure their accessibility.

Signage Improvement: Directional, informative, descriptive, and safety signs in Tamil and English, and if necessary, other foreign languages will be installed at various points across all key tourism sites. Descriptive signages will also have braille inscriptions to assist visually impaired individuals.

■ Experience

Cleanliness and Sanitation: The agency in charge of the specific site shall be responsible for maintaining cleanliness. A public consciousness program will be initiated at all important tourism sites to promote the upkeep of public spaces and their sanitation.

Enriching Visitor Experience: All important tourism sites will have amenity blocks that provide essential facilities like toilets, changing rooms, drinking water stations, help desks, cafeterias, rest areas, shoe stands, cloakrooms, and souvenir shops to enhance the visitor's experience.

Security Enhancements: All important tourism sites will have CCTV surveillance at key corners and access points, a 24*7 control centre, and a dedicated tourism security force. Adequate lighting shall be ensured through Streetlights installed on all access roads and corners for night-time security.

Implementing Tech Innovations: Wi-fi will be available at select points for all visitors at nominal rates. Additionally, barcode scanners for maps, audio-video guides, etc., will be made available to enhance visitor information. All key sites will be integrated with the Tamil Nadu Tourism App to offer real-time updates and information.

■ Sustainability

Engaging the Local Community: Designated areas for local vendors and shopkeepers to sell their products will be created at these tourism sites. The local community will be encouraged to occupy these vendor areas, which are highly visible to tourists and visitors, via incentives.

Visitor Management: Measures will be put in place for managing the crowd during peak seasons. These measures include online ticketing, real-time updates on crowd levels, planned circulation systems, barricades, signage, and an automatic footfall counter. Every site will also have dedicated parking facilities.

Promoting Sustainable Practices: Green initiatives such as daylight/movement sensors in corridors, solar energy usage, solar-powered street lights, water-saving fixtures, and rainwater harvesting will be encouraged at all key tourism sites.

Furthermore, the Department will establish a Destination Management Framework to proficiently oversee the management of large and multifaceted sites that involve numerous stakeholders. Recognising that multiple central / state bodies such as ASI, urban local bodies, PWD, Forest Department etc may be involved in the development of destinations, the Tourism Department shall efficiently coordinate with various government departments.

7.3 Wayside Amenities

Wayside amenities shall be developed every 50-60 km across the State/ National highways in the state to facilitate comfortable and convenient transit of visitors from one part of the state to the other.

Wayside amenities shall be developed through:

- a) Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Model for Department-Owned Land
- b) Collaboration with Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH): In line with MoRTH's "Policy Guidelines for Development of Wayside Amenities"
- c) Private sector initiatives on private lands to create way-side amenities

A "Scheme for the Establishment of Wayside Amenities" shall be issued by the Department for detailing the operational guidelines.

7.4 Private-Sector-Led Tourism Projects

Tourism infrastructure development is encouraged through private participation. Tourism Projects, both greenfield and brownfield expansion projects shall be incentivised in the Policy.

A list of eligible tourism infrastructure which shall be covered and incentivized under this Policy is provided in Chapter 15.

Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) and Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)

To streamline the efforts of tourism infrastructure development under this Policy, the Department shall support private sector investments across tourism projects located in certain geographies titled "Focus Tourism Destinations" and certain corridors titled "Focus Tourism Corridors" only. The Department shall publish the list of FTDs and FTCs from time to time.

Further, a list of "Priority FTDs" may be published by the Department, which shall be eligible for additional financial support/ incentives under this policy from time to time.

Tourism Hubs

Private participation in the development of large-scale tourism projects is encouraged by the Policy. Tourism Hubs are envisaged as mixed-use tourism-centric projects which can be taken up by the private sector. These Tourism Hubs shall reduce pressure from existing high-footfall sites and create a wider package of tourism offerings in the state in the long term.

Tourism Hubs shall have the following key attributes:

- ◆ Good connectivity:
 - ✧ Presence of an airport within a 100 km radius of the site.
 - ✧ Presence of State / National highway within 5 km of the site.
- ◆ Contiguous land of at least 10 acres.
- ◆ Entailing fixed capital investment (excluding land cost) of at least INR 300 Cr.
- ◆ Presence of key infrastructure to support power, water, sewage/ solid waste disposal and telecommunication requirements of the community and expected visitors.

Tourism Hubs may be developed by the private sector on their own land, where the Government of Tamil Nadu shall strive to provide support as listed in this Policy. The Department may also invite private participation in the development of Tourism Hubs under the “Scheme for Tourism Infrastructure development through PPP”.

Community-Led Hospitality Infrastructure

Homestays / bed and breakfast establishments are an excellent means of improving hospitality infrastructure in many tourism sites where full-fledged hotels are not viable. Also, homestays provide an opportunity for tourists to explore the authentic culture and hospitality of Tamil people.

The Department of Tourism has launched the Scheme for Registration of Bed & Breakfast and Homestays for registration of these establishments. Further, marketing and promotion support shall be provided to registered Homestays on the tourism website.

The Department shall provide guidance to homeowners for the establishment of Bed and Breakfast / Homestays and to make them more attractive to guests.

The Department shall also undertake sensitization of local communities and skill development workshops to encourage homeowners / operators to develop additional skills like cooking, hospitality, housekeeping, English speaking etc., which can help make their Homestays more successful.

Traditional Cuisine





CHAPTER
08

*Promoting Investment
in Tourism*

The Department envisages the private sector to play a key role in tourism development and promotion in Tamil Nadu, leveraging private sector capital and expertise. The synergy between the public sector and the private sector has been a major force in stimulating tourism competitiveness. In this context, the Department shall adopt investor-friendly measures to unleash the investment potential presented by Tamil Nadu tourism. Further, recognising the importance of small and mid-sized units, the Department will provide support and incentives to MSME equivalent units in the tourism sector, encouraging their growth and attracting more investments.

8.1 Private Sector Investment

8.1.1 Enhancing Private Sector Participation

To ensure effective public-private partnerships, the Department will clearly define the roles played by the public and private sectors, focusing on policy formulation, marketing, regulation, investment, and service quality. It is envisaged to increase private investment and facilitate effective partnerships.

Public Sector

- ◆ Identifying and creating viable opportunities for tourism development within Tamil Nadu.
- ◆ Public investment aimed at creating and enabling core infrastructure.
- ◆ Developing comprehensive policies and strategies to promote sustainable tourism growth and development in the State.
- ◆ Undertaking marketing initiatives at the destination level to attract tourists and showcase Tamil Nadu's unique offerings.
- ◆ Implementing measures and regulations to foster a business-friendly environment and encourage private sector investments in the tourism sector.

Private Sector

- ◆ Mobilising resources for the development of tourism infrastructure in Tamil Nadu.
- ◆ Identifying and investing in projects with strong commercial potential to enhance the tourism landscape.
- ◆ Developing new and innovative tourism products and experiences to cater to the diverse interests of tourists.
- ◆ Taking responsibility for the efficient operation and management of tourism services and facilities to ensure a seamless visitor experience.
- ◆ Focusing on providing exceptional and memorable experiences to tourists, ensuring their satisfaction and repeat visits.
- ◆ Collaborating with the public sector to jointly market Tamil Nadu's tourism offerings and attract a larger audience of potential visitors.

Effective public-private partnership is essential for the success of any tourism development initiative. To leverage the private sector efficiencies, expertise and experience, various tourism projects can be implemented and/or operated through private sector partnerships. To facilitate private sector investments, the Department shall, in conjunction with TNIDB and TNIFMC, provide well-defined private sector activation and PPP frameworks. The selection of the private sector investor shall be based on a fair and competitive bidding process.

CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) – The Department shall leverage schemes such as “Adopt a Heritage” initiated by the Government of India, which allows corporates to use CSR funds to operate and maintain monuments.

8.2 Ease of doing Business

8.2.1 Single Window Clearance

The Single Window Portal hosted under Guidance (an undertaking of the Government of Tamil Nadu) shall be used for the purpose of obtaining one-stop single window clearances for private sector projects. The Guidance facilitation mechanism shall ensure submission of supporting documents, enable communications between the competent authority and the applicant, monitor the status of the application and facilitate their time-bound disposal.

8.2.2 Tourism Facilitation Cell

Guidance Tamil Nadu is the nodal investment agency of the government of Tamil Nadu and has a dedicated Biz Buddy help desk for investors.

The Department of Tourism shall constitute a Tourism Facilitation Cell within the Department to assist Guidance Tamil Nadu to monitor and promote tourism investment within the state. The Cell works towards investment promotion, facilitation and monitoring of private sector investment in tourism, including the following:

- ◆ Attracting fresh investments in the tourism sector.
- ◆ Undertaking project monitoring and review of the existing Private/ PPP projects in the State.
- ◆ Identifying new marketing and promotion efforts required to engage with tourists and new markets.
- ◆ Handholding support to private sector investors; assistance in receiving approvals and coordinating with various government agencies.
- ◆ Publishing periodical reports on the development of tourism in the State.

8.3 Outreach & Recognition

8.3.1 Investors Summit

A dedicated segment for tourism shall be created in the Investors Summit held by the Industries Department and in Global Investors Meet, with the objective of illustrating the investment potential of Tamil Nadu tourism to the investor community. The segment shall feature not just the Department of Tourism, but officials from multiple departments involved in tourism, interacting with industry stakeholders, real estate developers, private equity players, financial institutions, multi-lateral funding agencies and others.

8.3.2 Reach Industry Summit

The Department of Tourism shall organise Reach Industry Summit across each Gateway Hub to receive industry feedback about the Policy and its effectiveness in tourism development and promotion. Tourism enterprises shall be invited to attend the summit. The summit shall be organised every 6 months, in rotation at every Gateway Hub.

8.3.3 Tamil Nadu State Tourism Awards

The Department of Tourism shall present the Tamil Nadu State Tourism Awards to various tourism stakeholders annually as a part of the World Tourism Day celebrations. These awards will encourage tourism entrepreneurs and potential tourism stakeholders operating tourism related activities in the State. The awards will be presented to various tour operators, airlines, accommodation units, restaurants, guides and other tourism enterprises contributing positively to the promotion of tourism in the state. By fostering healthy competition, these awards will stimulate innovative ideas for further enhancing the tourism industry in the State.



Surfing at Kovalam Beach



Tourist Facilitation

CHAPTER
09

The Department acknowledges the importance of establishing and overseeing a comprehensive network of tourism-related services that enhance Tamil Nadu's tourism offerings. The State's tourism facilitation strategy seeks to guarantee a consistent standard of service by incentivizing and effectively monitoring tourism stakeholders.

9.1 Tourist Security Organisation

Tamil Nadu is one of the safest states in India. Cities such as Coimbatore and Chennai have consistently been ranked as the safest cities for women in India. Continuing this tradition of prioritising safety and security, the Department shall deploy trained personnel to ensure tourist security at all major tourist destinations in Tamil Nadu. This is especially important in the context of foreign travellers and solo women travellers. Special care shall be taken to ensure safety of women and child tourists with the deployment of female staff at all tourist police stations.

The tourism security force shall be trained to effectively resolve tourist issues. They shall be trained in languages, tourist etiquette, behaviour and other required soft skills. Further, the personnel shall not just provide security but also guide tourists on matters of itineraries, site locations and available offerings in whatever way possible. To do so, training shall also be provided on basic information of tourist sites, itineraries, and operation of TN Tourism Platform.

9.2 Tourist Information Centres

Tourist Information Centers (TICs) will be set up at key locations, offering interactive multimedia, augmented reality, and visitor conveniences. Many of these TICs will be unmanned virtual kiosks for efficiency, operating through public-private partnerships and closely monitored by the Department for quality service. These TICs will be set up at transit points, Anchor Tourism Sites and Gateway Hubs.

9.3 Quality Assurance And Accreditation

The Department shall strive to provide a quality assurance framework, to standardise tourism products and services. It shall explore:

- ◆ **Feedback-based Rating:** Tourists will provide feedback through an online questionnaire on the Tamil Nadu Tourism app. All registered and accredited enterprises must encourage customers to participate. The results will be used to rank tourism service providers.
- ◆ **Activity Operator License:** Operators at Anchor Tourism Sites must obtain an Activity Operator License, and detailed guidelines will be provided by the Department to regulate activities at these sites.

- ◆ **Registration:** The Department shall take adequate efforts to bring tourism stakeholders under the organised sector. It shall develop online systems for the registration of all tourism service providers (travel agents, tour operators, guides, etc.), with the aim of achieving 100% registration. Registration shall help the Department in maintaining a database of all stakeholders (establishments/ performers/ service providers, etc.) involved in the tourism ecosystem of Tamil Nadu. The Department shall specify the procedure and requirements for registration – such as having a valid trade license (if applicable), adequate capital, income tax registration, etc. A clear strategy shall be prepared to maximize registration, which may include incentives, disincentives/ penalties, promotion, publicity programs etc.
- ◆ **Accreditation and Categorisation:** Tourism enterprises will undergo accreditation and be classified into different categories based on service quality and premium offerings. Accreditation agencies will conduct inspections, and niche service providers will receive special attention. Accredited enterprises can use the Tamil Nadu Tourism logo or tagline. The Department will issue SOPs to ensure quality in tourism services, outlining guidelines for accredited enterprises.

The Department will have the authority to conduct inspections and audits of all registered and accredited tourism enterprises at its own discretion.

9.4 Security

The Department shall work towards making Tamil Nadu a safe destination for tourists by publishing a set of safety guidelines to be adopted at all tourist sites and locations of tourist convergence, aiming to build a public perception of Tamil Nadu as a safe and reliable destination, amongst both domestic and foreign tourists. The guidelines shall include the following key measures:

- ◆ To further strengthen safety protocols, prominent signages will be displayed.
- ◆ Through the Tamil Nadu Tourism application location-based safety tips, an emergency hotline, and information about nearby tourist police stations and other support will be extended.
- ◆ During peak seasons, additional checkpoints and hot desks will be set up to improve security measures.
- ◆ Ample lighting and installation of CCTV cameras at strategic locations

9.5 Well Being

The policy ensures that the Department places ample emphasis on providing a clean, hygienic experience for tourists. The Department will release Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the upkeep of tourism infrastructure, such as:

- ◆ A proper waste management system will be implemented, including the provision of adequate dustbins and improvements in waste collection capacities and frequencies. Efforts will be made to eliminate single-use plastics, especially in eco-tourism sites.
- ◆ Adequate washroom facilities will be provided and hygiene at these facilities will be improved. Information signs will be installed to clearly indicate the proper etiquette for maintaining washroom hygiene.
- ◆ Healthcare infrastructure, including both primary and secondary facilities, will be made available at all tourist sites.
- ◆ Strict enforcement of penalties will be carried out in case of unacceptable nuisance activities by tourists or residents.

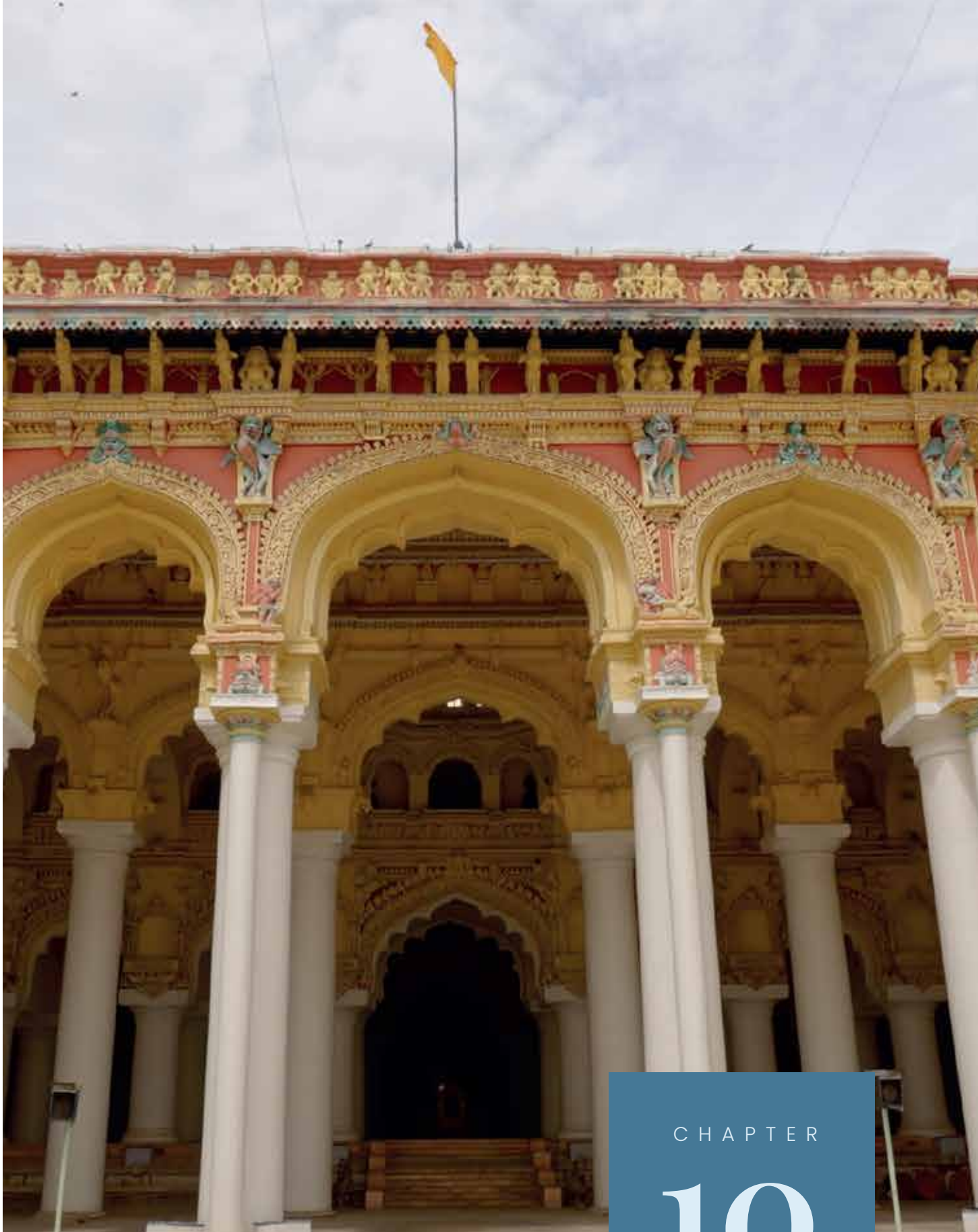
The Department shall collaborate with industry bodies and stakeholder associations to ensure strict compliance with the issued guidelines.

9.6 Grievance Resolution

A 24x7 Central Control Room has been set up in Chennai to handle tourist queries, hotline requests, and distress calls. The hotline number will be prominently displayed at tourist sites and establishments. Complaints from tourists will be given priority and promptly addressed. Any instances of tourist exploitation will be swiftly and firmly dealt with to ensure their safety and well-being.

9.7 Accessibility

Tourism sites shall be socially inclusive and include facilities for Divyang visitors, braille-enabled signages, facilities for kids and separate washrooms.



Responsible Tourism

CHAPTER
10

Responsible tourism focuses on reducing negative environmental, economic, and social impacts on tourist activities and pushing towards increasing a positive impact. The Tourism sector has a huge stake in realizing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations, especially Goals 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth), 12 (Responsible Consumption & Production) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

This policy recognises and appreciates that sustainable tourism is a concept that needs to be applied to all segments and themes of tourism in Tamil Nadu. The Department envisages sustainability to be a major driving principle in all its activities and initiatives.

The Department shall undertake required initiatives to coordinate with multiple stakeholders by synchronising the efforts to create positive impact. Alignment with the National Tourism Policy shall be sought in achieving sustainable tourism. Furthermore, sustainable practices shall be incentivised.

10.1 Reducing Tourism Impact

To foster environmentally responsible tourism and ensure the sustainability of tourist experiences, a series of measures will be implemented to reduce the impact of tourism on the environment:

Decongesting Mass Tourism Hubs: By introducing satellite nodes, popular destinations can be decongested, reducing the pressure on these areas and enabling travellers to explore lesser-known locations, promoting an equitable distribution.

Formulating Guidelines for Stakeholders: Comprehensive guidelines will be established for tourists, local communities, and civic authorities. These guidelines will focus on minimising the negative impact of tourism activities on the environment, particularly in eco-sensitive regions.

Supporting Sustainable Tourism Projects: Financial assistance will be provided for tourism initiatives that set the utmost importance on environmental protection. Rainwater harvesting programs, the use of renewable energy sources, and effective waste management will be incentivised to promote eco-friendly practices. Tourism initiatives that implement the requirements of the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) or the **Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA)** will be acknowledged for their commitment to sustainability.

Promoting Low Impact Activities: Low Impact tourism is an innovative form of tourism where the Millennial and Gen Z segment, who seek unique, original, and eco-friendly experiences, can be targeted. Some of these activities and destinations shall be identified by the Department to be promoted as niche tourism projects.

10.2 Promoting Awareness Among Stakeholders

Empowering Tourism Service Providers

- ◆ Enlisting private sector players, including hotel owners, tour operators, and transport services, to play a pivotal role in safeguarding the environment and promoting sustainable choices among tourists.
- ◆ Mandating sustainable practices for all tourism enterprises, with training offered for solid waste management, water conservation, and energy efficiency.
- ◆ Encouraging tourism stakeholders to raise awareness among both tourists and local communities about the importance of sustainability.

Community Engagement

- ◆ The Department will facilitate active engagement between local authorities and communities to foster awareness regarding environmental sustainability and cultural preservation through impactful campaigns.
- ◆ Implementing standardised frameworks that incorporate indigenous knowledge and practices, ensuring a cohesive approach across the state.
- ◆ Providing mentoring and financial support to empower the local community, amplifying the impact of awareness campaigns.
- ◆ Encouraging district-level competitions to incentivise the protection of environmental and cultural heritage.

Equipping Tourists with Information

- ◆ Launching a multilingual and multi-media campaign which emphasises environmental sustainability and encourages responsible behaviour among tourists will be launched.
- ◆ Establishing a program to encourage travellers to actively engage in conservation efforts and collaborate with institutions to preserve sensitive tourism destinations.

10.3 Certification Framework

A comprehensive framework shall be formulated by the Department to evaluate tourist enterprises and initiatives, meticulously evaluating their sustainable practices. Energy efficiency, climate sensitiveness, water conservation, waste management, biodiversity preservation, cultural heritage preservation, cultural understanding, sustainable designs, and involvement of the community shall be taken into consideration during the evaluation.

The Department will reward significant contributors in sustainability with certifications. Additionally, exceptional dedication in green practices will be acknowledged through tourism awards, celebrating and promoting a greener and more sustainable future for the tourism industry.

10.4 Sustainability Monitoring

- 1. Statewide Clean-Up Program:** A dedicated program will be implemented to ensure cleanliness and proper waste disposal in public areas surrounding tourist sites.
- 2. Penalties for Violations:** Stakeholders found in violation of guidelines or regulations will be subjected to penalties to enforce compliance and responsible behaviour.
- 3. Continuous Review:** The Department will establish a mechanism to continuously review and enhance tourism management guidelines, promptly implementing recommended actions for effective and sustainable tourism practices.
- 4. CCTV Surveillance and Tourism Security:** Anchor Tourist Sites will benefit from increased onsite monitoring and enforcement of regulations through the deployment of CCTV surveillance and tourism security personnel.

By implementing these monitoring measures, the Department strives to create a cleaner, safer, and more sustainable environment for tourists.



Community Led Growth

CHAPTER
11

The development of tourism in any destination must bring about positive economic, social, cultural, and environmental impacts on the local community. To ensure the realisation of tourism's potential in generating income and employment, collaborative efforts will be made, involving various stakeholders such as sectoral entities, local and state-level authorities, the private sector, and the local community. The active participation and acceptance of the local community are fundamental prerequisites for the successful development of tourism in the destination. While the Department acts as a facilitator for local development, enabling and supporting initiatives, the local communities assume a central and proactive role in driving progress and shaping the future of tourism in the region.

The policy aims to ensure an authentic display of the State's unique communities while ensuring a balanced distribution of tourism benefits as well as the conservation of the State's natural and cultural resources.

From this perspective, the Policy shall include:

1. Communities that are integral to Tourism, including Coastal & Fishing communities, Hill & Tribal communities, Farming communities and Arts & Crafts communities
2. Communities that enable Tourism, such as hospitality partners and employees.

11.1 Information, Education And Communication

The focus will be on raising awareness among local communities about the income and employment prospects presented by tourism. Simultaneously, the tourism industry will be educated about the skill sets available within the local community and the advantages of employing locals and supporting local products.

Awareness programs will be conducted for communities, covering job opportunities in traditional tourism, entrepreneurship opportunities, available resources, and support from NGOs. Pilot projects will be developed, and support will be sought from schools for organizing school tours.

Special emphasis shall be given to emerging tourism themes like Rural & Plantation Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Heritage Tourism and Eco-Tourism. For instance, special efforts shall be made, in coordination with the School Education Department, towards the development of educational tours to agricultural farms, forest treks, dams, etc. for greater awareness and sensitization amongst students at all public schools in the State.

The Department shall aim to achieve neat and clean tourist places which attract more foreign & domestic tourists. Regular campaigns and drives shall be organised to mobilise the local communities and increase participation in the maintenance of cleanliness & hygiene around tourist destinations.

11.2 Community And Tourism Associations

Quality community involvement adds to the State's tourism value with experiential offerings. Potential mutually-beneficial associations between communities and tourism activities include:

Community-Led Events & Festivals

Tamil Nadu has numerous unique and colourful local events scattered across the calendar year. These include religious/ cultural festivals, local sporting events, food festivals, etc. With adequate promotion and curation, these community-led events and festivals shall be promoted as tourist attractions. These would also help in diminishing the seasonality in tourism, spreading tourist visits across the year.

Immersive Stays / Homestays

Traditional homes, such as Agraphams, Chettiar mansions, traditional Madras houses, etc., can be developed as tourist accommodation facilities. These could be transformed into homestays where the tourists are hosted by a traditional family or themed boutique hotels in refurbished traditional homes. Tamil Nadu shall promote the development of homestay tourism by setting standards for homestay offerings, and adopting regulations to legalise and support the homestay segment.

Art Performances & Workshops

Tamil Nadu is home to several classic and folk arts, including Classical dances, Folk dances, Street theatre, Classical music, etc., many of which are highly revered the world over. The State's legacy in the performing arts shall be leveraged by developing them as experiential tourism offerings, from developing / promoting events to hosting workshops for interested tourists.

Handicrafts / Products of Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu has many rich arts and crafts traditions kept alive over centuries. Some of these have received due recognition via promotion, IP protection (GI marks), and community activation. However, there is still great potential to be harvested in terms of more in-depth associations with tourism as well as showcasing more such traditional arts and crafts. Tamil Nadu, through its various platforms, shall actively promote the state's vibrant cultural resources and showcase them to maximum effect as unique tourism products.

Plantation Tourism

Rural and plantation tourism has been identified as a focus tourism segment of this Policy. Community players shall be encouraged to come forward and use their plantations, farms and rural backdrops for setting-up tourism-oriented facilities.

11.3 Inclusivity

The Policy strives to ensure inclusive tourism development across the state with equal participation from women, SC/ST, Divyaang in tourism workforce and employment.



Capacity Building

CHAPTER

12

Human capital is one of the critical resources of the tourism ecosystem. With the growth of tourism in recent years and its recognition as an emerging industry, the need to develop and train human resources in various segments of tourism services has been widely recognised. Various benefits are associated with the development of a quality human resource pool for rendering tourism and related services, including enhanced tourism experience, higher credibility & sense of safety and increased employment avenues for the general population. In this regard, Tamil Nadu Tourism will take significant steps to cultivate a proficient and well-trained workforce.

12.1 Capacity Building Infrastructure

To foster abundant and high-quality human capital, the Department will establish a comprehensive training and professional education system in the State. While few dedicated government institutes provide professional courses in tourism & hospitality services, the capacity of the training and skill development infrastructure needs to be augmented to meet industry demands. Thus, for maximum outreach and creation of an efficient resource pool spread across varied services, a pyramidal approach shall be inculcated in the training system.

12.1.1 Community Education Drives

Periodic Education Drives shall be conducted to build a large pool of workforce with basic skills, suitable for a large number of entry-level jobs in various segments. The Department shall organise organised Guide Training programs and campaigns like “Virundinar Potruthum” (welcoming guests) to imbibe tourist-friendly culture in tourism service providers. The scope of these drives shall be expanded to incorporate varied skill sets and tourism-based communities. This shall include programs to deliver skills like cleanliness, basic service techniques, etiquette, communication skills, first aid, business skills, etc.

Such drives shall be organized periodically at major tourism hubs and rural (community-led) tourism hubs, with activity-based modules designed for basic services. The Department shall deliver these trainings free of cost, with the help of authorized training service providers or NGOs.

12.1.2 Satellite Training Centres

Satellite Centres shall be set up in rural and tribal hinterlands to impart quality training to create a trained resource pool of service personnel engaged in tourism and related activities. This includes service providers requiring basic formal training, like waiters, receptionists, monument guides, etc. Special modules shall also be designed for niche tourism services and offered in relevant satellite training centres.

The Department shall provide training on a subsidised basis, with the help of certified privately-run institutes set up as satellite training centres. Existing institutes, offering skill-based courses and vocational training in other trades, shall be encouraged to offer more tourism-related courses like Housekeeping, Catering, etc.

The Department shall empanel selected private institutes across the state to act as Satellite Training Centres.

12.1.3 State-level Training Institutes

State-level training institutes (The Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology & Applied Nutrition in Chennai and The State Institute of Hotel Management & Catering Technology in Tiruchirappalli) shall be strengthened to produce an efficient resource pool of industry professionals and experts that perform services of high strategic value. This includes regional guides, chefs, adventure tour operators, etc.

In this context, the Department shall strive to expand the scope of state-level institutes via the introduction of courses for new and niche products. A steering committee shall be set up in these institutes in concert with the private sector for developing more courses reflecting market trends and for developing internship opportunities.

Renowned private and government institutes in the state like IIT Madras, NIT Trichy, University of Madras, Anna University, etc., shall also be partnered with for enhancing the reach of training at a state-level.

12.2 Assessment of Skill Gap and Course Design

Anticipating the potential growth of tourism in Tamil Nadu, there is an opportunity to create valuable employment opportunities and enhance the overall visitor experience in the state. To achieve this goal, the Department aims to strategically plan and invest in developing a skilled and capable workforce. As part of this effort, regular skill gap studies will be conducted to assess and comprehend the evolving requirements of this dynamic industry which shall aid in identifying areas for skill development and training, ensuring that the human capital base remains aligned with the demands of the tourism sector.

The Department shall consult experts and reputed organisations in travel and tourism trade to understand the existing and future market requirements for trained / skilled workforce. Based on the findings of the skill gap study, a Human Resource Development (HRD) Plan for the tourism sector shall be formulated and strategic efforts shall be undertaken accordingly.

Further, courses and the syllabus shall be designed based on the findings of the study. The courses may include refresher programs, short-term courses, on the job training, curated skill development courses and courses focusing on niche tourism sectors. These initiatives aim to bridge skill gaps and enhance the quality of tourism services in Tamil Nadu, contributing to overall growth and development in the industry. In addition to training for tourism-specific soft

and hard skills, programmes shall also focus on developing business skills among individuals. This shall include training curriculums for business fundamentals that shall enable local communities to produce and supply products that are demanded by the tourism industry.

12.3 Industry and Academic Partnerships

The Department shall partner with reputed industry players as well as national and international academic institutions for the development of its skilling and training infrastructure. Partnerships shall be pursued for efficient growth of human capital base for tourism and travel in the state:

- ◆ Industry-oriented and placement-linked skill training programmes.
- ◆ Placement and internship opportunities.
- ◆ Scholarships, sponsorships and joint research projects.
- ◆ Support in curriculum development.
- ◆ Network of private training institutes in the hinterland to deliver training to basic service providers.

12.4 Implementation

12.4.1 Spreading Awareness

To ensure the growth of the tourism industry is accompanied by the development of skilled human capital, there will be organized publicity campaigns aimed at presenting job opportunities within the tourism and hospitality sectors while emphasizing the potential career paths available in these fields.

12.4.2 Student Engagement Programme

The Department will offer internships to students who have received training at state-level institutes. Additionally, the Department of Tourism (DoT) will actively encourage Hoteliers, Travel Operators, and Tour Agents to hire trained and certified individuals, promoting better absorption of skilled workforce within the tourism sector. This approach aims to create a platform for career advancement and hands-on learning for those seeking opportunities in the tourism industry.

12.4.3 Skilled Personnel Mandate

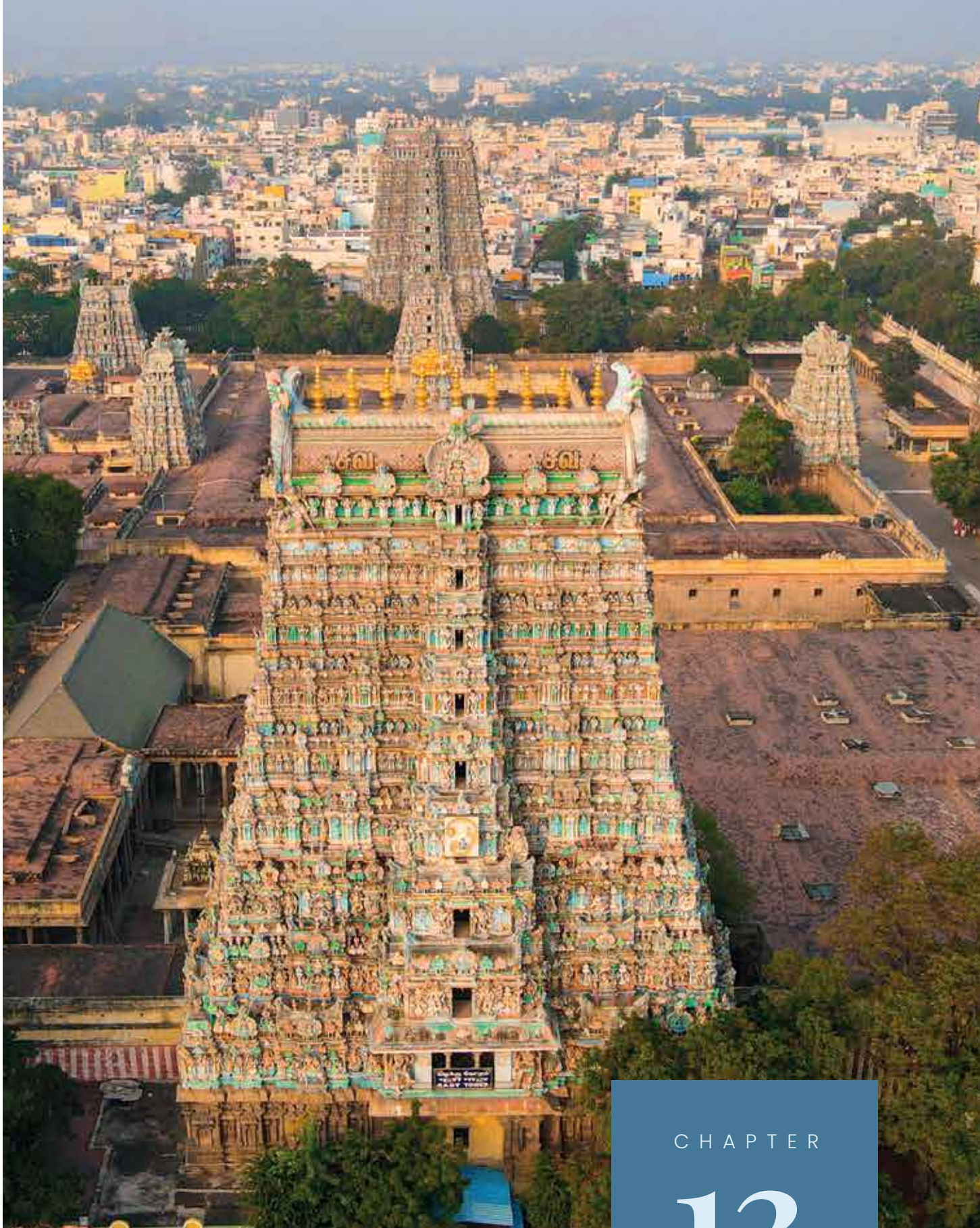
To generate a demand for a skilled workforce and to ensure the successful implementation of skill development and training programs, industry players must adhere to mandatory requirements for trained personnel, both in terms of quantity and quality. These requirements will be applicable to various accreditations, certifications and PPP projects.

12.5 Emphasis On Skill Enhancement For MSMEs And Tourism Facilitators

The policy seeks to create a more competitive and resilient tourism and hospitality sector by empowering MSMEs and individual facilitators through targeted training and skill development initiatives. By equipping them with the necessary knowledge and tools, the policy aims to foster innovation, adaptability, and sustainable growth within the industry. The focus is on providing training and skill development support to enhance their entrepreneurial, management, and technological capabilities.

Anamalai Tiger Reserve





Branding, Outreach & Publicity

CHAPTER
13

The marketing strategy of Tamil Nadu Tourism is to look Outward-In, i.e., to identify target source markets which need to be tapped and to tailor the marketing campaigns to reach out to the target audience.

Through this Policy, the Department envisages significantly expanding its marketing and promotional efforts, including formulation of tailored campaigns to reach out to target domestic and international markets. Market specific campaigns and marketing channels shall be used to reach out to each of the target source markets, including curation of language.

13.1 Branding

Tamil Nadu has all the necessary ingredients to develop into the most attractive and diverse experiential destination. The state's tourism brand shall be promoted with the following storyline:

“Tamil Nadu – where stories never end”

Land of Unforgettable Experiences

From thriving urban life of modern cities to the unbroken traditions of the classical arts, from ancient spirituality to adrenaline-pumping adventure sports, Tamil Nadu offers a diverse range of unique experiences.

Host of Undiscovered Spots

From the virgin beaches of the Coromandel to the lush green peaks of The Nilgiris, from living temple towns to pre-historic ruins, Tamil Nadu has many secrets to share with the world.

Home to Vibrant Cultures

Tamil Nadu's heart resides in the unique lifestyles of diverse people – from the Todas in the forest to the silk weavers of Kancheepuram, from the painters in Thanjavur to the discerning urbanite in Chennai.

Treasure of Living History

From the towering monuments of the Cholas to the architectural finesse of the Pallavas and the unearthed civilization of Keeladi, history comes alive in Tamil Nadu's preserved heritage and its unbroken traditions.

Melting Pot of Cuisines

From the classic Tamil breakfast to the mouth-watering biriyani of Dindigul, from the sweetmeats of Tirunelveli to the sumptuous cuisine of Chettinad, Tamil Nadu is a paradise for foodies.

The branding and marketing efforts made through this Policy shall seek to reposition Tamil Nadu Tourism brand with the given storyline.

13.2 Outreach & Publicity

The Department recognizes the necessity of an integrated approach to efficiently reach potential tourists in a constantly evolving digital ecosystem. In order to increase its scope, the Department has established a comprehensive four-pronged strategy that combines conventional and contemporary marketing channels, including Digital Outreach, Conventional Marketing, Social Media Platforms, Large-scale Mega Events and strategic collaborations.

13.2.1 Digital Outreach

60% of the global population today are internet users and this number is growing fast (an annual rate of ~7.4%). The average internet user spends about 3 hours online each day. Further, the share of internet users is much higher in the target markets. Thus, digital marketing is a powerful tool to reach out to the target audience. Hence, an important goal for the Tourism Policy is to make Tamil Nadu uniquely stand out in its category or create a niche offering which would appeal to a targeted tourist cohort. As part of a robust digital marketing strategy, Department of Tourism will implement Targeted Pay-Per-Click ads, Search Engine Optimisation techniques, and compelling content on the tourism website. Through these measures, it may draw attention to Tamil Nadu's charm and beauty, encouraging tourists from around the world to come experience its attractions. The Department shall also engage a digital marketing team to develop and implement a targeted digital marketing strategy for the state, which can help integrate PPC and SEO strategies with the tourism website.

13.2.2 Social Media Marketing

Social media promotions are effective, particularly with younger travellers, because it consists of personal communication from friends and trusted peers, and hence register a high degree of trust. Travel is also one of the most shared topics on popular social networks (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram).

The Department adheres towards creating a captivating tourism brand that utilises social media to interact with travellers in the Millennial and Gen Z generations. The framework for interaction is established through active participation on Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook.

The Department plans to augment its efforts in this direction on priority. A dedicated marketing team shall be onboarded, which shall have experts from the industry who can lead the social media marketing of Tamil Nadu on various platforms like Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, etc.

With an active presence, frequent updates, and swift responses, the Department keeps the audience captivated and informed. Engaging in conversations, responses to queries, reposting user-generated content, and participating in trends and live streaming events foster meaningful connections among fellow travellers. By producing high-quality HD images and videos, featuring diverse tourism activities, themes, and hidden treasures of the vibrant state the Department can attract potential visitors. Authenticity is at the core of the strategy, showcasing real Tamil

Nadu experiences through user-generated content. The sources of the travel information provided in the platforms are verified to be valid and credible.

Further, the Department shall engage travel Influencers i.e., Instagrammers and YouTubers who have a large follower base and hence carry a brand. The content (pictures and videos of their personal experience at travel destinations) posted by them can help market the Tamil Nadu brand to potential tourists located at far-flung locations, where traditional marketing campaigns may not be effective. Notable influencers shall be invited by the Department to write reviews and post Tamil Nadu tourism content on their accounts.

13.2.3 Conventional Marketing

Despite the dominance of digital platforms in the marketing sector, conventional marketing continues to be extremely valuable. The Department will deploy an array of offline marketing strategies to ensure greater exposure.

Print Advertisements in Multiple Languages: Frequent promotions through newspapers, in-flight magazines, travel, and lifestyle magazines, to communicate with travellers. The Department shall collaborate with various magazines like Outlook, India Today, Travel Heights and Hello 6-E. Also, during international travel marts, promotional materials are curated in multiple languages.

Engaging Television Advertisements: Promotion of destinations through short and engaging commercials to broadcast on multiple channels. The Department of Tourism shall engage with international platforms to showcase State's offerings.

Experience Centers: At high-footfall tourist locations, interactive experience centres are to be developed to provide tourists with the Tamil culture and traditions. Tourist Information Centres shall be developed at Anchor Tourism Sites and major landmarks in Gateway Hubs, as unmanned virtual kiosks to assist, inform, and seek feedback from tourists.

Captivating Out-of-Home (OOH) Strategies: Intriguing advertisements and billboards at prominent tourist attractions including airports, will captivate tourists during their journey.

Souvenir Merchandising: Effective branding with "Tamil Nadu Tourism" through souvenirs including coffee mugs, magnets, key chains, wall art, coasters, and more shall be introduced.

Presence at Trade Fairs: Presence at renowned travel expos and trade fairs on an international scale to showcase , to the wonders of Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu currently participates in World Travel Mart, Arabian Travel Mart etc, to promote Tamil Nadu in the international arena.

Empowering B2B Channels for Global Reach: The Department is actively pursuing strategic alliances, focusing on establishing dynamic B2B channels for amplified offline marketing, with a particular emphasis on targeting foreign tour operators. This shall also include event sponsor ships with prestigious events and leading online streaming platforms to showcase

the captivating allure of Tamil Nadu Tourism on a grand stage. To further incentivise active participation, enticing incentives will be extended to private tours and travel agencies.

An action plan for offline marketing is being prepared under the Policy with short, medium, and long-term outlooks to achieve desired targets for marketing outreach. Assistance from a professional marketing agency shall be taken for the implementation of the action plan and strategy, at domestic and international platforms.

13.2.4 Events

An important part of brand creation for Tamil Nadu is to leverage the existing traditions and culture and package them into attractive products for tourists. Creating themed events is an effective way to achieve this goal. Tamil Nadu currently hosts some significant festivals like Tamil Nadu International Kite Festival, Tamil Nadu International Balloon Festival, Chennai Vizha- an international handlooms and handicrafts fest and Indian Dance festival to entice its visitors.

Mega Events

Mega Events shall be planned in Tamil Nadu, to act as major tourist magnets, which can symbolize the region and build great recall via promotions and associated acts. It is recognized that such large events shall not only pull large footfalls to the region where they are organised but also provide multi-fold downstream benefits to the local economy, generating employment for hotels & restaurants, local businesses, tours & transport operators, local craftsmen, artisans, shopkeepers, etc.

Mega Events shall be conceptualised, curated, financed, and organised by private-sector event organisers. The Department may also invite proposals for organising and hosting a Mega Event around a defined concept. Incentives and concessions shall be provided under this Policy for hosting, organising and sponsorship of Mega Events.

Detailed operational guidelines shall be published by the Department, from time to time, outlining the process of organising the Mega Events. Selection of events shall be at the discretion of the Department.

The following support shall be extended on a case to case basis:

1. The Department may provide sponsorship / subsidy / grant to organisers based on the event proposal and schedule.
2. Free-of cost marketing on TN platform and published material.

Annual Events Calendar

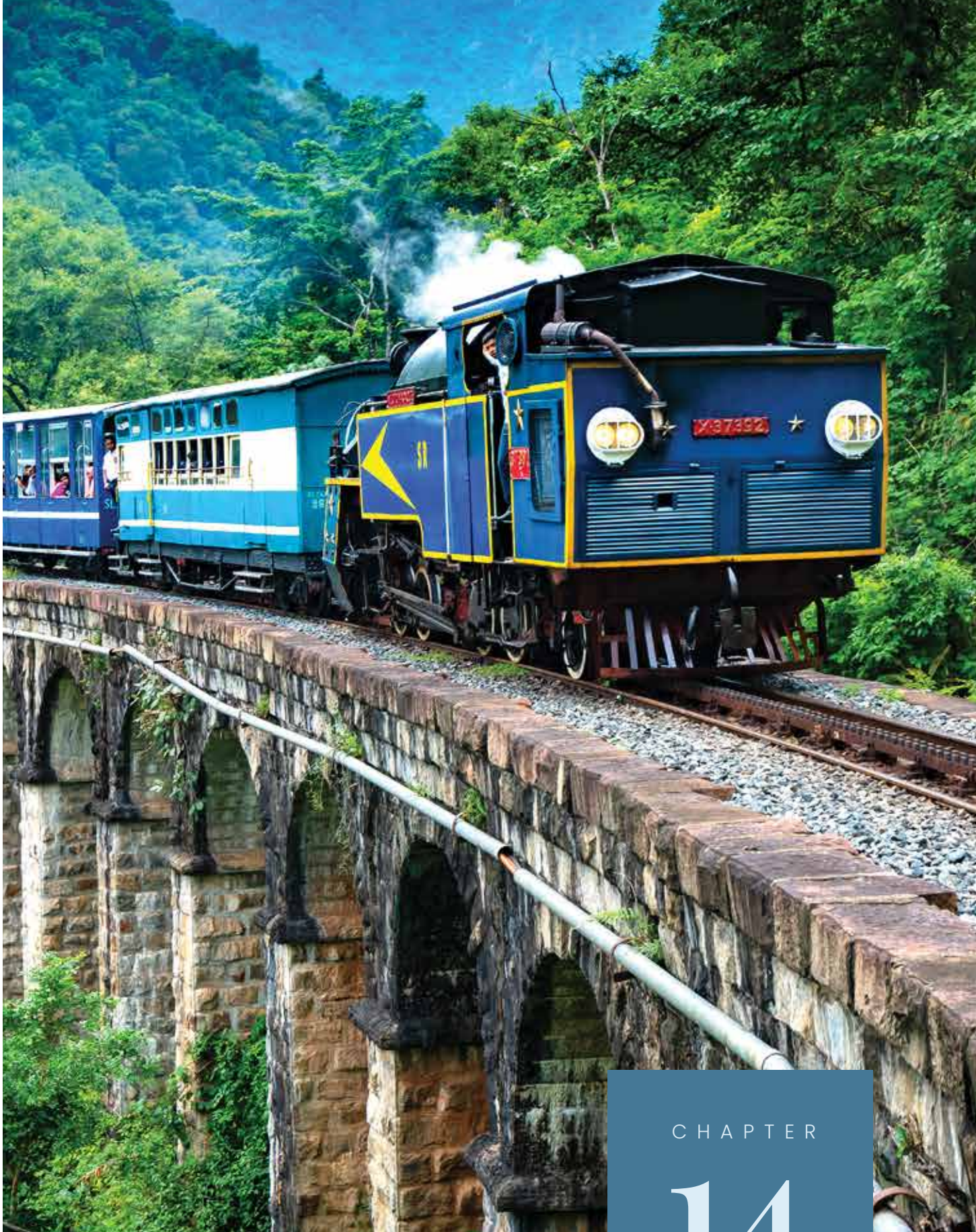
Tamil Nadu has numerous unique and colourful local events scattered across the calendar year. A curated calendar of events will highlight the traditional and vibrant festivals of Tamil Nadu, showcasing its rich cultural heritage. By analysing off-season and peak season patterns, the calendar aims to attract tourists year-round, diversify tourism offerings across

regions, and promote lesser-known destinations to prevent overcrowding. The Calendar of Events shall be published by the Department on its website and social media handles and updated every month with latest updates on events and activities being hosted across the State. The Calendar shall aim to become a comprehensive, one-stop source of information about interesting tourism activities and events happening across the state and sponsored / organised by the Department of Tourism and its undertakings.

13.3 Strategic Collaborations

The Department encourages partnerships with stakeholders across the tourism value chain through the following strategies:

- ◆ Engage with local and international tour operators, establishing partnerships to promote tourism offerings of the State in key source markets.
- ◆ Collaborate with other state tourism departments to create mutually beneficial relationships, facilitating roadshows and integrated Multi-Modal Connectivity to promote inter-state tourism.
- ◆ Partner with Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) to curate specialised tours and itineraries that highlight the unique attractions of Tamil Nadu.
- ◆ Utilise travel forums such as TripAdvisor and National Geographic Traveller to tailor content and promote specific themes of Tamil Nadu, enhancing its visibility among global travellers.
- ◆ Forge collaborations with Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Overseas Tourism India Office, Embassies, Consulates, etc. to organise publicity campaigns and tap into Indian and overseas media for extensive promotion of Tamil Nadu's tourism offerings.
- ◆ Curated literature and branding material shall be circulated to the partners through regular workshops and interactions, in order to enact a uniform marketing and promotion strategy for the state.
- ◆ Further, the Department shall invite, organise, and sponsor familiarisation workshops, tours and visits for eminent travel writers, Instagram & YouTube influencers, travel agencies, photographers etc. who can spread the word about Tamil Nadu tourism.



Digital Initiatives & Analytics

CHAPTER
14

Embracing digital media and communications shall help the State's tourism offerings to become more accessible for today's generation and remain relevant for longer. In this context, this Policy envisages the prevalent usage of digital channels for various purposes, including outreach, visitor facilitation, grievance redressal, monitoring and research. Understanding the potential of digital technologies and the significance of MSMEs, the Department also aims to improve the efficiency, market outreach, service quality, and profitability of these MSMEs.

14.1 Digital Initiatives

14.1.1 Emerging Technologies In The Tourism Landscape

With the advent of the digital age, technological advancements are penetrating all spheres of the tourism landscape, including the enhancement of tourist services and the overall visitor experience. To keep up with global destinations and emerging tourism trends, Tamil Nadu tourism shall support various digital initiatives and emerging technologies:

- ◆ A comprehensive digitisation effort will be undertaken to capture and showcase Tamil Nadu's major tourism assets, with a special focus on its historical and cultural sites. This will create a publicly accessible repository of high-resolution photos, three-dimensional models, and virtual tours, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the State's captivating hotspots.
- ◆ Innovative services and experiences, such as digital signs, way finders, audio-visual guides, virtual reality, and augmented reality, will be integrated to provide visitors with unique and immersive experiences. These cutting-edge offerings will add a touch of modernity to the traditional tourist journey.
- ◆ The Department will actively identify and support start-ups and emerging technologies that have the potential to enhance Tamil Nadu's tourism prospects.

14.1.2 Tamil Nadu Tourism Platform

Envisioning the adoption of the latest global technologies, an integrated Tamil Nadu Tourism Platform is planned, amalgamating a tourism website and an app for the promotion and facilitation of tourism. This platform shall disseminate information to both tourists and potential visitors, accredit verified tourism service providers and industry players, and generate revenue by enabling bookings for travel, accommodation, and experiences. In addition, the platform will ensure high levels of data privacy and security. Registered tourism enterprises/projects must display Tamil Nadu Tourism's brand kit, including a barcode scanner, at their reception to redirect visitors to the Tamil Nadu Tourism Platform. The Department shall collaborate with the private sector to enhance the development, operations, and management of the website and app.

Tamil Nadu Tourism Website

The Department has revamped its tourism website. The website will act as a "one stop destination" and offer straightforward travel information, helpful logistical details and tips that will assist visitors simplify the travel process. The website will be further developed to be accessible globally and available in the languages of all target markets.

Tamil Nadu Tourism App

With high levels of smartphone penetration, a smartphone application would be able to serve as a preferred touchpoint for the destination among visitors. The Department is currently developing the Tamil Nadu Tourism App which is envisioned to offer functionalities beyond information dissemination and deliver a seamless experience for the tourist.

14.1.3 Digital Innovation Cell

A Cell will be established under the Department to manage digital projects and strategies, social media, user support, cybersecurity, and integrations. The activities of the Digital Initiatives Cell will be outsourced to a professional private entity with expertise in content management, website development, and app maintenance.

14.2 Analytics

14.2.1 Tourism Analytics

Tamil Nadu shall leverage technology to facilitate data-driven planning and monitoring. In this context, the State shall establish a system to accurately collect and analyse data for informed decision-making. The overall analytics mechanism shall also monitor the ground-level implementation of policy reforms and other tourism initiatives.

System of collection & analysis of on-ground information

The Department shall roll out a system of data collection and interpretation. This shall include regular tracking of visitor footfalls and periodic surveys at tourism destinations, to assess the potential and issues at tourism sites across Tamil Nadu. The Department shall also seek to partner with tourism service providers and other industry players to incorporate a system of data collection.

The system shall help understand tourist behaviours and preferences, identify key issues, and provide guidance for planning and policy decisions.

Tourism Dashboard

A centralised tourism dashboard shall be formed to provide real-time data and metrics related to tourism, including tourist footfalls, receipts, popular attractions, accommodation occupancy, project implementation status, fund utilisation, and other key indicators. It helps stakeholders in the tourism industry make data-driven decisions, monitor performance, and identify trends for strategic planning and improvement.

14.2.2 Analytics Cell

An Analytics Cell will be established to manage the information system, generate statistics, and conduct a thorough analysis. This cell will be responsible for developing and maintaining tourism statistics for the State, ensuring a robust and reliable data framework to support informed decision-making and strategic planning in the tourism sector.



CHAPTER

15

Incentives for Tourism Sector

The Government of Tamil Nadu aims to provide incentive packages to support enterprises and projects in the tourism sector, as outlined in this chapter. These incentives are designed to encourage and facilitate the growth of tourism-related businesses and initiatives in the state, contributing to the overall development and prosperity of the tourism industry.

15.1 Categorization For Determining Incentives

For the purpose of administering incentives defined under this policy, three Categories of enterprises / projects in the tourism sector have been identified. The Category shall be determined based on the proposed investment in Eligible Capital Assets to be made within a standard investment period of 4 years AND based on the turnover of the enterprise.

Category	Criteria for categorization
A	Investment in eligible capital assets up to (& including) INR 50 crore and Annual turnover not exceeding INR 250 crore. Category A Projects will be classified into Micro, Small and Medium based on criteria defined in the MSME Policy*.
B	Investment in Eligible Capital Assets of more than INR 50 Crore and upto (& including) INR 200 Crore
C	Investment in Eligible Capital Assets of more than INR 200 Crore

*Micro Projects: Investment in ECA not exceeding Rs. 1 Crore and turnover not exceeding Rs. 5 Crore.

Small Projects: Investment in ECA not exceeding Rs. 10 Crore and turnover not exceeding Rs. 50 Crore.

Medium Projects: Investment in ECA not exceeding Rs. 50 Crore and turnover not exceeding Rs. 250 Crore.

Different set of incentive quantum, application & disbursement process shall be applicable for each of the three Categories.

15.2 Eligible tourism projects

Investments in the following types of tourism projects shall be supported under this Policy. Projects / enterprises engaged in tourism projects, which qualify as per the below eligibility, shall be eligible for availing incentives under this Policy. For the purpose of eligibility, those projects / enterprises which are new as well as those going for expansion / diversification shall be considered. Single Window clearance will be provided to all the tourism projects which are eligible in the Tourism Policy.

S. No.	Type of Tourism Projects	Eligibility Requirement	Location Requirement
01	Amusement Park / Theme Park	Entertainment centres equipped with indoor / outdoor games, entertainment shows, sports facilities and /or recreation activities, spread over a minimum land area of 15 acres and with: Minimum covered indoor entertainment / sports facility of size: 20,000 sqft AND/OR Minimum number of outdoor rides (dry or wet): 30	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)

S.no	Type of Tourism Projects	Eligibility Requirement	Location Requirement
02	Heritage Hotel	Classified as Heritage Basic or above category as per guidelines of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India Minimum number of keys:10	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)
03	Experiential Resort	Minimum land area: 5 acres Minimum number of keys: 20 Classified as 3 star and above category for Hotels or 4 star and above category for Time Share Resort, as per guidelines of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)
04	Eco-Hut / Camp / Tented Accommodation	Minimum land area: 0.5 acre Minimum number of tents / camps:3 Registered as per "Scheme for Registration of Camping Operators" by the Department of Tourism, Government of Tamil Nadu.	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)
05	Ropeway*	Connecting places of tourist importance	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)
06	Wellness Resort	Unit engaged in delivering AYUSH related services for mind and body health, with: Minimum number of guest rooms: 20 Minimum number of well-trained staff: 20 Minimum number of full-time AYUSH-trained experts with relevant certifications: 2 At least 5 of the listed common guest facilities: Conference Centre, Gym, Sports Complex, Yoga Hall, Restaurant, Library, Ayush Therapy facility.	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)
07	Oceanarium / Aquarium	Unit engaged in display of aquatic life to tourists with minimum investment in Eligible Capital Assets (of oceanarium / aquarium component): INR 10 Crore	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)
08	Golf Course	Minimum 9-hole golf course Minimum land area: 15 acre Minimum area of club house: 5,000 sqft Minimum number of guest rooms: 2 Minimum facilities: Restaurant, indoor sports and common toilets.	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)

S.no	Type of Tourism Projects	Eligibility Requirement	Location Requirement
09	Plantation/Farm Tourism Projects	<p>Minimum land area of plantation : 5 acres Minimum built-up area: 5,000 sqft Minimum number of guest rooms: 5 Offering at least 3 of the following services – cafe, interpretation centre, souvenir store, produce conversion centre Having a variety of botanically rich plantation, medical herbs, fruits, tea, spices, etc. accessible to tourists</p>	Anywhere in the State
10	Museums	<p>A structure built to conserve and/ or exhibit work of art, science, history, culture and/or heritage in a covered premises. Minimum built-up area: 20,000 sqft Minimum number of exhibits: 50</p>	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)
11	Adventure Tourism Project	<p>With requisite infrastructure, equipment and trained staff, along with appropriate safety and rescue set-up, and meeting all requirements laid out in “Scheme for Registration of Adventure Tourism Operators” by the Department of Tourism, Government of Tamil Nadu. Adventure Tourism Project shall include in-land, in-water and inair adventure activities like mountain climbing, bungee jumping, zip-line, river cruise and other activities covered therein. Minimum on-field staff strength:10 people</p>	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)
12	Cruise Tourism Project	<p>“Cruise tourism project” shall entail procurement and deployment of cruise vessels and adequate manpower & hospitality services for operations of a domestic cruise service, with: Minimum number of cruise vessels: 1 Minimum capacity of cruise: 350 pax, excluding crew Minimum number of guest rooms in the cruise vessel: 100 Minimum facilities on the cruise vessel: Gym, Swimming Pool, Restaurant, Bar, Open deck vessel should be built as per internationally accepted safety standards. The route for cruise travel shall have both start and end termination points within Tamil Nadu.</p>	Projects may be located anywhere in Tamil Nadu
13	Caravan Tourism Project	<p>“Caravan tourism project” shall entail Premises which have necessary parking, vehicle charging, stay / accommodation, entertainment / recreation facilities for parking of caravan vehicles Registered as per “Scheme for Registration of Caravan Tour Operators and Caravan Park Operators” by the Department of Tourism, Government of Tamil Nadu.</p>	Projects should be located within Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) or Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs)

*Ropeways are eligible for Viability Gap Funding

The list of Focus Tourism Destinations (FTDs) & Focus Tourism Corridors (FTCs) will be selected by a high-level committee comprising of the Secretaries of the following departments:

1. Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments Department
2. Revenue Department
3. Finance Department
4. Environment and Forests Department
5. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Department

15.3 Incentives for Category A Projects

The following incentives offered under the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Policy will be applicable for eligible enterprises / projects in the tourism sector:

- i. Capital Subsidy
- ii. Additional Capital Subsidy
- iii. Interest Subvention
- iv. Payroll Incentive
- v. Quality Certification Incentive

Any other Incentives extended to the MSME sector will also be applicable to Eligible Tourism Projects.

15.3.1 Capital Subsidy

Enterprises / projects can avail capital subsidy in the form of reimbursement of a share of their investment in Eligible Capital Assets. Capital Subsidy shall be applicable as below:

Terms	Category A
Percentage of Investment in ECA	25%
Maximum quantum of Capital Subsidy	Micro enterprises – INR 25 Lakhs; Small & Medium enterprises – INR 1.5 Crore

Note:

Disbursement of Capital Subsidy shall be as per applicable guidelines of the MSME Policy.

15.3.2 Additional capital subsidy

Enterprises / projects selected for availing Capital Subsidy as above, shall also be eligible for Additional Capital Subsidy, in the form of reimbursement of an additional share of investment in Eligible Capital Assets. Additional Capital Subsidy shall be applicable as per the criteria and corresponding terms outlined below:

Additional Capital Subsidy for Category A Projects	
Percentage of investment in Eligible Capital Assets:	
Promoted by Women / SC/ST / Transgender / Divyaang persons (Note: The eligible entrepreneur shall be the founder / co-founder and shall hold at least 26% stake in equity shareholding of the legal entity which has promoted / owns the tourism project.)	5% of ECA, subject to maximum INR 5 Lakhs
Incentive for Scaling up (Applicable to all existing MSEs undertaking expansion/ diversification)	5% of ECA, subject to maximum INR 25 Lakhs
Additional Capital Subsidy for Micro Enterprises	10% of ECA, subject to INR 5 Lakhs

Note:

- Only projects / enterprises approved to receive Capital Subsidy shall be eligible for consideration for Additional Capital Subsidy.
- Disbursement of Additional Capital Subsidy shall be as per applicable guidelines of the MSME Policy.

15.3.3 Interest Subvention

Enterprises / projects, both new and going for expansion, can avail receive interest subvention for the tourism projects, subject to a maximum ceiling and for a maximum period of 6 years.

Interest Subvention shall be applicable as below:

- Interest Subvention shall be offered as per Tamil Nadu MSME Policy, as below:
 - Up to 5% interest subvention on loans of up to INR 5 Crore towards technology upgradation or modernisation scheme. Ceiling on total interest subvention shall be INR 25 Lakhs.
 - Up to 5% interest subvention on loans of up to INR 2 Crore obtained under Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises Scheme of Government of India. The Ceiling on total interest subvention shall be INR 20 Lakhs.
 - The same enterprise / project may be selected for both of the above, if applicable.
- Interest Subvention shall be provided only after timely payment of loan interest.

15.3.4 Payroll Incentive

Enterprise / projects in Category A shall be eligible for incentives in the form of reimbursement of costs towards employers' contribution to Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) as outlined below:

Terms	Category A
Reimbursement offered	Up to INR 24,000 p.a. per employee
Reimbursement Duration	Three years from COD

Note:

- Payroll Incentive shall be applicable to only those applicants who provide employment to more than 20 persons.
- Payroll Incentive shall be applicable as per MSME Policy.

15.3.5 Quality Certification Incentive

Enterprises / projects in Category A shall be eligible for quality certification incentives in the form of reimbursement of costs towards obtaining quality certifications, as outlined below:

Terms	Category A
Reimbursement offered	Up to 100%
Ceiling on reimbursement per applicant	Rs. 2.00 lakh for National Certification & Rs.10.00 lakh for International Certification

Note:

- Applicants shall be eligible for costs associated with quality certification, as below:
 - Cost of certification (registration, application fees and other payments to certifying authority)
 - Cost of associated consulting, limited to 50% of cost of certification.
- Only quality certifications recognised by the Department shall be eligible.
- Reimbursement shall be disbursed upon submission of proof of obtaining certification.

15.4 Incentives for Category B Projects

The policy provides for the following incentives to eligible projects:

- i. Capital Subsidy
- ii. Sustainability Initiatives Initiative
- iii. Payroll Incentive
- iv. Quality Certification Incentive

15.4.1 Capital Subsidy

Enterprises / projects can avail capital subsidy in the form of reimbursement of a share of their investment in Eligible Capital Assets. Capital Subsidy shall be applicable as below:

Terms	Category B
Percentage of Investment in ECA	5%
Maximum quantum of Capital Subsidy	INR 3 Crore

Note:

Disbursement of Capital Subsidy shall be as per applicable guidelines of the Industrial Policy.

15.4.2 Sustainability Initiatives Incentive

The Government of Tamil Nadu lays special emphasis on sustainability in tourism. Enterprises / projects implementing sustainability measures shall be eligible for reimbursement of a share of capital costs associated with implementing such measures, as outlined below:

- a. Installation of rainwater harvesting measures
- b. Restoring water bodies by de-silting defunct water bodies within the premises
- c. Installation of mechanised systems for sewage cleaning and zero liquid discharge solutions
- d. Installation of renewable energy generation
- e. Use of Passenger and Utility Electric Vehicles for the transport of goods and personnel within the facility premises and EV buses for the transport of personnel from and to the facility.
- f. Installation of Wastewater treatment and recycling systems using technologies such as Activated Sludge Process (ASP), Membrane Bio-Reactors (MBR), Reverse Osmosis (RO), etc. to increase supply and use of treated water.

- g. Installation of Smart Solutions/IoT for Water and Wastewater to reduce dependency on manpower, enhance business continuity and remote operations using smart meters/ pumps/ sensors, data analytics, and cloud solutions.
- h. Installation of onsite organic waste converter
- i. Obtaining GRIHA certification (4 star or higher) or IGBC / LEED certification (Platinum, Gold, or Silver).
- j. Installation of pollution control devices (PCD).

Terms	Category B
Maximum percentage of investment in capital cost of implementing the sustainability initiatives	Up to 25%
Ceiling on reimbursement per Project	Up to INR 25 Lakhs

Note:

- a. The disbursement of Sustainability Initiatives Incentive shall be made upon operationalisation of sustainability measures.
- b. Projects / enterprises shall also receive special mention on TN's tourism website and its promotional content and marketing collaterals published on national and international platforms.

15.4.3 Payroll Incentive

Enterprise / projects in Category B shall be eligible for incentives in the form of reimbursement of costs towards employers' contribution to Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) as outlined below:

Terms	Category B
Reimbursement offered	Up to INR 24,000 p.a. per employee
Reimbursement Duration	Three years from COD

Note:

Payroll Incentive shall be applicable to only those applicants who provide employment to more than 20 persons.

15.4.4 Quality Certification Incentive

Projects in Category B shall be eligible for quality certification incentives in the form of reimbursement of costs towards obtaining quality certifications, as outlined below:

Terms	Category B
Reimbursement offered	Up to 100%
Ceiling on reimbursement per applicant	Rs. 2.00 lakh for National Certification & Rs.10.00 lakh for International Certification

Note:

- a. Applicants shall be eligible for costs associated with quality certification, as below:
 - Cost of certification (registration, application fees and other payments to certifying authority)
 - Cost of associated consulting, limited to 50% of cost of certification.
- b. Only quality certifications recognised by the Department shall be eligible.
- c. Reimbursement shall be disbursed upon submission of proof of obtaining certification.

15.5 Incentives for Category C Projects

For Category C projects, a structured package of subsidies will be provided on a case-to-case basis.

15.6 Electricity tariff at Industrial rate to tourism enterprises

New Hotel Projects in Focus Tourism Destinations will be eligible for electricity tariff rebate (i.e. the difference between commercial tariff and industrial tariff) for a maximum period of three years subject to the condition that the rebate shall not exceed 10% of the Eligible Investment in Fixed Assets.

Projects in Category C, on a case-to-case basis, will be eligible for reimbursement of electricity tariff difference (difference between applicable tariff and industrial tariff) for a maximum period of 3 years subject to the condition that the project should employ a minimum of 50 people as verified through EPF payment certificates.

15.7 Definition

15.7.1 Eligible capital assets

“Eligible Capital Assets” or “ECA” shall mean and include site-level infrastructure (fencing, construction of internal roads, and other basic infrastructure facilities); structures & buildings; plants, indigenous & imported plant & machinery, material handling equipment; mechanical, electrical & plumbing installations, fixtures, furniture & fittings; utilities including waste treatment facilities, transformers, generators, captive power plants, etc., and other supportive facilities installed for use in the premises and includes installation charges.

All capital assets should have been paid for and should be owned or leased by the project, provided that the duration of such lease shall be:

- ◆ For building, no less than 10 years; and
- ◆ For all other fixed assets – no less than half the estimated residual lifetime of the asset (where such residual lifetime shall be estimated by a licensed engineer, in the manner that may be specified by the Government of Tamil Nadu, from time to time).

Capital assets that are leased shall be valued at the Net Present Value of said assets, as on the date of execution of the lease deed or date of MoU (if applicable), whichever is later, using a discount rate of 10%, or as may be notified from time to time, provided that the lease is executed within the investment period.

All capital assets should be used and installed only within the Project Site.

ECA shall not include:

- ◆ Pre-construction expenses and cost of consultant
- ◆ Capitalized interest
- ◆ Working capital
- ◆ Land
- ◆ Intangible assets including, without limitation, intellectual Property rights and goodwill

In case of Cruise Tourism Project and Caravan Tourism Project, ECA shall also include ship / vehicles, as applicable. Similarly, ropeway cabin shall be included as ECA in Ropeway Tourism Project.

In case of Adventure Tourism Project, ECA shall include the cost of equipment.

In case of Expansion projects, the ECA shall be counted only for the expansion component, as per the calculation outlined above.

15.7.2 COD

“COD” shall mean Commercial Operations Date when the Tourism Project / Enterprise start operations.

15.7.3 Investment Period

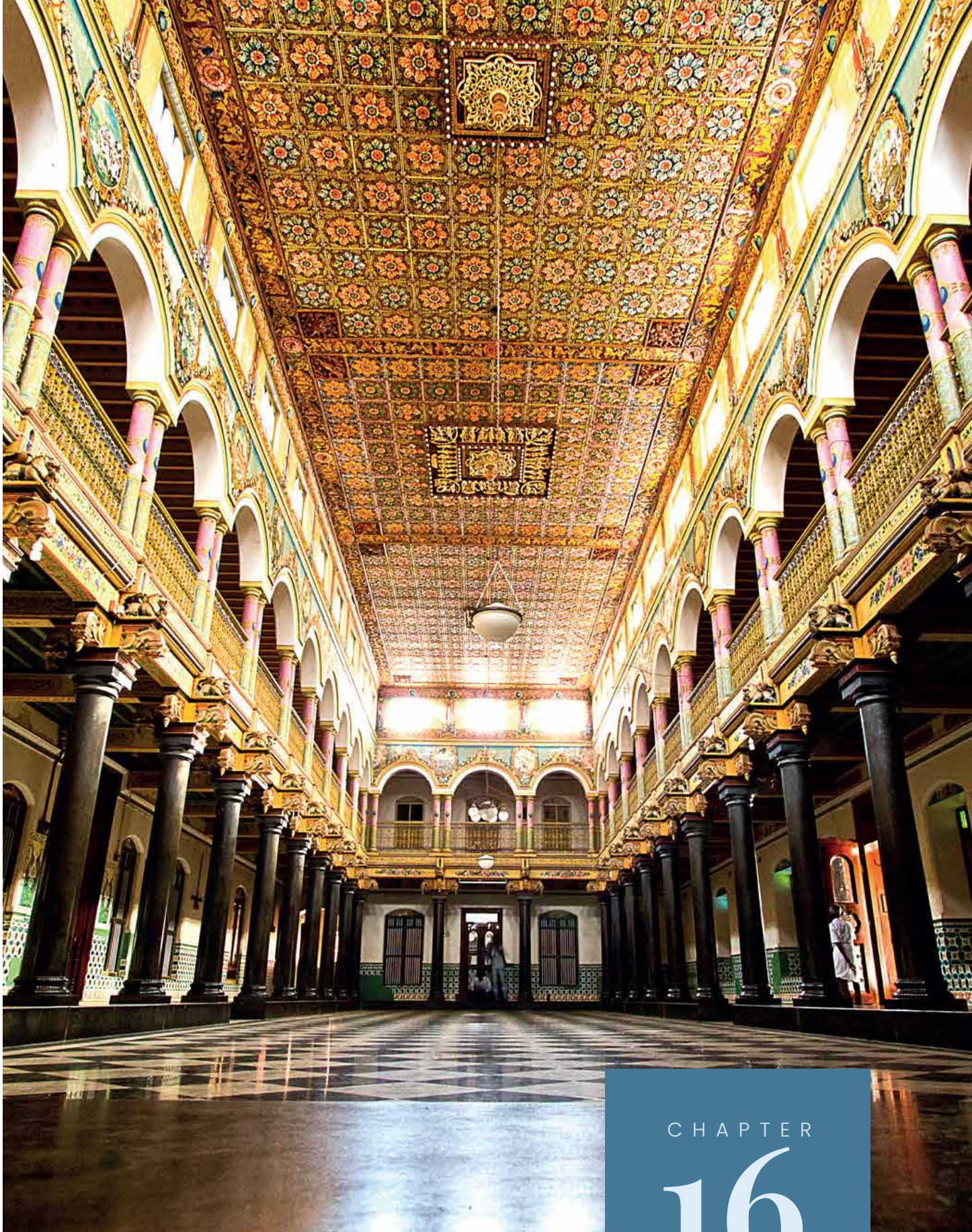
“Investment Period” refers to the actual continuous time taken by the Project from the commencement investment/ sanction of the G.O./date of MoU, till the completion of the investment commitment. The Investment Period can be lesser than the standard investment period of 4 years.

15.7.4 Enterprise

“Enterprise” shall mean an undertaking or a business concern or any other establishment, by whatever name called, engaged in providing or rendering any service or services related to tourism sector.

15.7.5 Tourism Project

“Tourism project” shall mean a project, comprised of physical assets (including land if applicable), and engaged in providing or rendering services related to tourism sector.



Implementation of Policy

CHAPTER
16

The Department of Tourism shall be the nodal body in charge of implementation of this Policy. The Department may choose to assign any other body for the implementation of the Policy from time to time.

The Government of Tamil Nadu shall institute requisite frameworks to facilitate a conducive environment for effective implementation of projects & schemes under the Tamil Nadu Tourism Policy. With this intent, government bodies shall be constituted as described herein.

16.1 Key Institutions

16.1.1 Tourism Apex Committee

A state-level Apex Committee shall be constituted under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu. The primary functions of the Apex Committee shall include:

- ◆ Overseeing the implementation of Tourism Policy.
- ◆ Approving any changes to the Policy.
- ◆ Inter-departmental coordination and convergence with allied sectors for effective implementation of tourism projects & schemes envisaged in the Policy.
- ◆ Speedy resolution of issues pertaining to Policy implementation, particularly inter-departmental issues.

The Apex Committee shall meet once every 6 months. The decisions taken by the Apex Committee shall have a bearing on all state departments and tourism stakeholders. The constitution of the Apex Committee shall be as follows:

- ◆ Chief Secretary (Chairperson)
- ◆ Secretary, Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments Department (Member Secretary)
- ◆ Secretary, Planning and Development Department
- ◆ Secretary, Finance Department
- ◆ Secretary, Transport Department
- ◆ Secretary, Public Works Department
- ◆ Secretary, Environment and Forests Department
- ◆ Secretary, Handlooms, Handicrafts, Textiles and Khadi Department
- ◆ Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department
- ◆ Secretary, Rural Development & Panchayat Raj Department
- ◆ Secretary, Highways & Minor Ports Department
- ◆ Secretary, Information Technology Department
- ◆ Director, Department of Archaeology
- ◆ Other members as required, on a case-to-case basis, may be co-opted as special invitees.

The decision of the Apex Committee shall be final and binding on all concerned.

16.1.2 Department Of Tourism

The Department of Tourism shall be the implementation and administration agency for the Policy. All applications for incentives shall be made to the Department of Tourism.

Policy Cell

The Department of Tourism shall constitute and staff a Policy Cell, headed by the Director of Tourism, which shall be responsible for:

- ◆ Administration of the Policy.
- ◆ Approval of incentives not covered under the MSME Policy or Industrial Policy of the state government.
- ◆ Monitoring the disbursement of funds, and tracking associated compliance, for all support extended under this Policy to Tourism Projects.
- ◆ Acting as a knowledge bank for all support offered under the Policy.

16.1.3 Guidance Tamil Nadu

Investment promotion for Tourism Policy shall be done by Guidance Tamil Nadu. Guidance shall also enter into MOUs if required.

16.1.4 MSME Department

The MSME Department shall be responsible for the sanction and disbursement of incentives for Category A enterprises / projects as outlined in this Policy under the relevant guidelines of the MSME Policy of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

16.1.5 Industries Department

The Industries Department shall be responsible for the sanction and disbursement of incentives for B & C enterprises / projects as outlined in this Policy under the relevant guidelines of the Industrial Policy of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

The Secretary, Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments Department (or his designated official) shall be included as a member of the Inter Departmental Committee of the Industries Department for approval of tourism enterprises / projects.

16.2 Procedure For Availing Incentives

The process for availing financial assistance under this Policy shall be separate based on Category of enterprise / project:

A. Category - A

Application: Enterprises / projects in Category A shall apply for support as applicable under this Policy to the Department of Tourism via the application portal on the Tamil Nadu Tourism website. The applications shall be submitted in the prescribed format, through the online

portal of the Department. Responsibility for completeness of the proposal shall lie with the applicant. The application shall be accompanied by supporting documents, as outlined in the Operational Guidelines published by the Department from time to time.

Inspection – Policy Cell under the Department of Tourism shall verify the eligibility and completeness of the application. In case required, the Policy Cell may request the applicant for additional documents / revised documents. Based on the completeness and correctness of the documents, the Department of Tourism shall declare the application as Eligible or Rejected.

Forwarding to MSME Department – The Department of Tourism shall forward the Eligible applications received by it, to the MSME Department for sanction and disbursement of incentives.

Sanction and Disbursement – The sanction and disbursement of incentives shall be done as per relevant process of the MSME Department, as per MSME Policy of Government of Tamil Nadu. The list of approved Tourism Projects shall also be displayed on the portal of the Department of Tourism and MSME Department.

B. Category - B & C

Application: Enterprises / projects in Category B and C shall apply for support as applicable under this Policy to the Department of Tourism via the application portal on the Tamil Nadu Tourism website. The applications shall be submitted in the prescribed format, through the online portal of the Department. Responsibility for completeness of the proposal shall lie with the applicant. The application shall be accompanied by supporting documents, as outlined in the Operational Guidelines published by the Department from time to time. All the applications shall come to the Department of Tourism. After detailed scrutiny and certification, the application will be forwarded to the concerned department.

Inspection – Policy Cell under the Department of Tourism shall verify the eligibility and completeness of the application. In case required, the Policy Cell may request the applicant for additional documents / revised documents. Based on the completeness and correctness of the documents, the Department of Tourism shall declare the application as Eligible or Rejected.

Forwarding to Industries Department – The Department of Tourism shall forward the Eligible applications received by it, to the concerned for sanction and disbursement of incentives.

Sanction and Disbursement – The approval and disbursement of incentives shall be done as per relevant process of the Industries Department / State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Ltd (SIPCOT), according to the Industrial Policy of Government of Tamil Nadu. The Secretary, Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments Department (or his designated official) shall be a member of the committee formed for approval of tourism enterprises / projects by the Industries Department.

The proposals which are accepted for award of support shall be notified by the Department of Tourism and the Guidance Tamil Nadu.

16.3 Operational Guidelines

Operational guidelines published by the Industries Department and the MSME Department, from time to time, shall be applicable for incentives to be approved & disbursed under the Industrial Policy and MSME Policy of the state government respectively.

For other items, the Department of Tourism shall publish suitable guidelines from time to time.

16.4 Grievance Redressal Related To Implementation Of This Policy

The State Government:

- ◆ Reserves the right to amend any provision(s) including amendment or withdrawal of any of the support mechanisms as and when necessary, from time to time under the provision of the Policy.
- ◆ Reserves the right to review the matter regarding sanction/ disbursement of support to the eligible Tourism Project and in this connection, the State Government's decision shall be final and binding.
- ◆ Reserves the right to make/ amend the necessary rules for implementation of this Policy as and when required.

In case of any conflicts, the Apex Committee may take a decision in accordance with the prevailing policy and the decision thus taken shall be final and binding on all concerned and its compliance shall be mandatory for the concerned department/ parties.

Gangaikonda Cholapuram, Ariyalur – A UNESCO World Heritage Site








Tamil Nadu
where stories never end

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