

DCT-JNPT-Elephanta-DCT and Belapur-JNPT-Elephanta-Belapur costs Rs 800. Sources said that if the demand for this route

improve the demand for water taxis more ropax will be introduced in near future to Kashid and Rewas.

are also plans of getting environment friendly water taxi boats into the system. Private operators and Mumbai Maritime Board

are expected to come at a cost of nearly Rs 2 crore each. Their functionality will be tested before introducing them for commercial use.

viaduct on land on either side, with interchanges at Sewree, Shivaji Nagar at Mumbai Bay and NH-4 B at Chirle, Navi Mumbai.

Cruise tourism has potential to grow 10-fold: Sonowal

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The Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, has asserted that the Indian cruise market has the potential to grow 10-fold over the next decade, driven by rising demand and disposable incomes. India aims to increase cruise passenger traffic from 0.4 million at present to 4 million.

After inaugurating the 1st Incredible India International Cruise Conference 2022 in Mumbai on Saturday, Sonowal said, "The Government of India realises

this potential and is determined to position India as a global cruise hub with state-of-the-art infrastructure for both ocean and river cruises."

Stating that India is a magnificent cruise destination, the minister said several attractions along India's 7,500-km coastline and vast river systems are yet to be unveiled to the world. He said the global players have evinced a keen interest in promoting cruise tourism here, and with the development of the right infrastructure and adoption of modern technology, we can certainly become one of the top tourism destinations in

the world.

Sonowal said that the Centre has set up a Task Force headed by the Secretaries for tourism and shipping for development of cruise tourism. He announced the setting up of a high-level advisory committee, comprising national and international experts, to help the

Task Force in creating an enabling eco-system for the development of cruise tourism in the country.

Minister of state Shripad Naik said that four theme-based coastal destination circuits have been developed to activate cruise demand, adding that lighthouse and island development has also been undertaken to attract coastal tourists.

Further, upgradation and modernisation are being carried out at seven major ports in the country, including the flagship New

International Cruise terminal coming up in Mumbai with a total cost about Rs 495 crore. The iconic sea cruise terminal coming up at BPX-Indira Dock, is expected to be commissioned by July 2024. The terminal will have a capacity of handling 200 ships and one million passengers per annum.

Meanwhile, Sonowal and Naik laid the foundation stone for the third Chemical Berth at Pir Pau Jetty of Mumbai Port Authority to handle chemicals, including LPG.

Sarbananda Sonowal and others at the first Incredible India International Cruise Conference, in Mumbai.



Govt sets up panel to boost cruise tourism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai, May 14

UNION MINISTER SARBANANDA Sonowal on Saturday said the government has set up a high-level committee to create an enabling ecosystem for the development of cruise tourism in the country.

The committee comprises government officials and cruise industry players.

Sonowal on Saturday inaugurated the first two-day International Cruise Conference being held here.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the event, the minister said the government aims to make India the most attractive cruise tourism destination and the industry the world's largest

one in the world.

The minister for ports, shipping and waterways also informed that the government has set up a task force under the secretary in the ministry of tourism and the shipping secretary as its vice-chairman.

The high-level committee will assist the task force with its ideas and suggestions to the committee, he said. "I declare the constitution of a high-level committee comprising both government officials and national and international industry players. It will assist the task force and give it ideas and suggestions," Sonowal told reporters.

Emphasising that the purpose of the international conference is to make India a cruise tourism hub, the minister



File image of Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal

said the government will provide whatever modern infrastructure is required to attain the objective.

He also expressed hope that the state governments will also play their role in the promotion of the industry, which is seeing demand coming back after being hit during the pandemic.

"India is going to be the most attractive destination of cruise tourism, and there is no doubt about it because whatever potential we have in the coastal areas and inland waterways are now set to be explored. It is still untapped. So, we will explore it with our most modern infrastructure," Sonowal said.

India aims to increase cruise passenger traffic from 0.4 million at present to 4 million. The economic potential of cruise tourism is expected to go up from \$110 million to \$5.5 billion in the years to come, according to an official release.

To boost the cruise tourism industry in the country, the government has taken several initiatives, including infrastructure upgradation, ratio-

nalisation of port fees, removing ousting charges, granting priority berthing to cruise ships, and providing e-visa facilities, among others, the release added.

Upgradation and modernisation are being carried out at seven major ports in the country, including the flagship new international cruise terminal coming up in Mumbai with a total cost of about ₹495 crore.

Sonowal asserted the Indian cruise market has the potential to grow 10 folds over the next decade, driven by rising demand and disposable incomes.

"The government realises this potential and is determined to position India as a global cruise hub with state-of-art infrastructure for both ocean and river cruises," he said.

Elephanta to city ropeway gets push at cruise meet

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Mumbai: Union ports, shipping and waterways minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Saturday announced a high-level advisory committee that includes members from international cruise lines, to assist the Apex Level Committee on Cruise Tourism to boost the industry across India, including Mumbai.

Probably the world's longest ropeway system to connect Mumbai to Elephanta Caves is also on, suggested a presentation made before ministers and the officials

from different cruise liners across the world at a conference in Mumbai. Archaeological Survey of India wanted ropeway station towards Elephanta to be 1km away from the caves. According to port officers, talks are underway to arrive at a mutually agreed land plot on Gharapuri island for the same and project was still on and not shelved.

Cruise tourism is one of the most vibrant and fast-growing components of the leisure industry, Sonowal said. He was addressing the first 'Incredible India International Cruise Conference

2022' organised by Mumbai Port Authority under the aegis of Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India, along with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). The event also marks the beginning of the 150th anniversary of the Mumbai port.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has accorded a huge priority to the cruise sector," he said. "India will be a magnificent cruise destination, and with the participation of global players, we will develop the sector and capture this growing market."

Speaking to mediapersons, Sonowal announced the setting-up of a high-level advisory apex committee to deliberate and anchor measures on boosting the cruise tourism sector, especially with an eye on increasing cruise calls at Indian ports, developing infrastructure, and improving the talent availability and jobs.

Sonowal said to tackle talent shortage in the sector, three cruise training academies will be set up in Goa, Kerala and West Bengal. "The Maritime India Vision 2030 aims to generate more than 2 lakh new jobs" he said.

Govt sets up committee to boost cruise tourism

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Saturday said the government has set up a high-level committee to create an enabling eco-system for the development of cruise tourism in the country.

The committee comprises government officials and cruise industry players.

Sonowal on Saturday inaugurated the first two-day International Cruise Conference being held here.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the event, the minister said the government aims to make India the most attractive cruise tourism destination and the industry the world's largest one in the world.

The Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways also informed that the government has set up a Task Force under the Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and the Shipping secretary as its vice-chairman.

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comprising both government officials and national and international industry players. It will assist the Taskforce and give it ideas and suggestions," Sonowal told reporters.

Emphasising that the purpose of the international conference is to make India a cruise tourism hub, the minister said the government will provide whatever modern infrastructure is required to attain the objective.

He also expressed hope that the state governments will also play their role in the promotion of the industry, which is seeing demand coming back after being hit during the pandemic.

"India is going to be the most attractive destination of cruise tourism, and there is no doubt about it because whatever potential we have in the coastal areas and inland waterways are now set to be explored. It is still untapped. So, we will explore it with our most modern infrastructure," Sonowal said.

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PTI

Sonowal announces setting up of committee to boost cruise tourism

MUMBAI: Cruise tourism is one of the most vibrant and fast-growing components of the leisure industry, said Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal.

He spoke at the 1st Incredible India International Cruise Conference 2022 organised by the Mumbai Port Authority under the aegis of Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, along with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

“Prime Minister Narendra Modi accords a huge priority to the cruise sector”, he said, adding, “India will be a magnificent cruise destination, and with the participation of global players, we will develop the sector and capture this growing market”.

Speaking to the media persons, Sonowal announced the setting up of a high-level advisory

committee – which would include international cruise lines as members - to assist the Apex committee on Cruise Tourism to deliberate and anchor measures on boosting the cruise tourism sector, especially with an eye on increasing cruise calls at Indian ports, developing infrastructure, and improving the talent availability and jobs. Secretary, Ports and Shipping and Secretary, Tourism jointly co-chair the apex committee.

Sonowal said that to tackle the talent shortage in the sector, three dedicated cruise training academies will be set up in the states of Goa, Kerala and West Bengal.

“The Maritime India Vision 2030 aims to generate more than two lakh new jobs” he said.

The minister virtually laid the foundation stone of Third Chemical Berth at Pir Pau,

Mumbai. The berth will have a rated capacity of two million metric tonnes per annum and cater to very large gas carriers and tankers up to 72500 displacement tonnage.

It will be equipped with the latest safety standards under OISD norms.

In addition, he also virtually inaugurated DGL's Kelshi Light House in Maharashtra and Dhanushya Kodi Light House in Tamilnadu.

Shripad Yesso Naik, Minister of State for Ports, Shipping & Waterways & Tourism Government of India, said the cruise industry is an emerging industry in India owing to the country's long coastline. He said that upgradation and modernisation of the cruise infrastructure are being carried out at Mumbai, Goa, Mangalore, Kochi, Chennai and Vizag ports. **MPOST**