Lighthouse Tourism

Why in News?

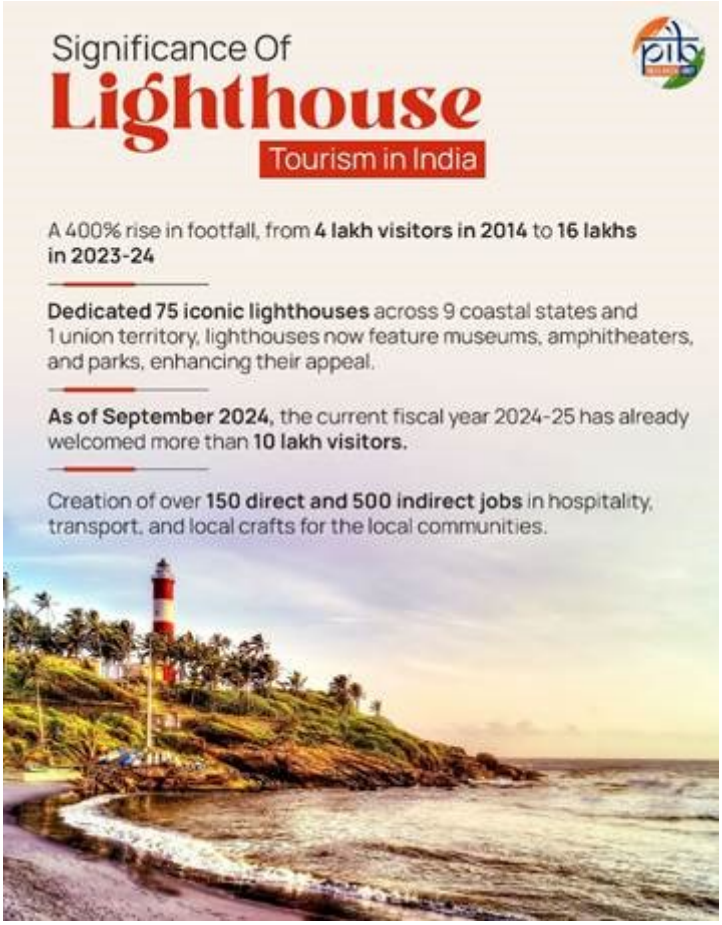
GOI is fostering lighthouse tourism as part of its Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030 and Amrit Kaal vision 2047.

What is light house tourism?

- **Lighthouse tourism** – It involves transforming lighthouses and their surrounding areas into vibrant tourist attractions.
- **Light houses** - These structures, often located in scenic coastal or island settings, offer visitors a unique combination of natural beauty, maritime history, and recreational opportunities.
- Lighthouse tourism exemplifies the harmonious blend of heritage conservation and modern tourism development.
- **Aim** - To preserve the historical and architectural significance of lighthouses and unlock their potential for economic growth and community empowerment.
- **Benefit** - By developing these sites, the government seeks to enhance India's tourism offerings while creating employment opportunities and fostering local economic growth.
- **Lighthouse tourism potential of India** :
- **Geographical extension** - India has an extensive coastline of over 7,500 km and is home to 204 lighthouses that preserve its maritime legacy.
- **Cultural importance** - Some lighthouses date back centuries and are near UNESCO World Heritage Sites like Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu or other prominent cultural landmarks.

Lighthouse at Mahabalipuram was built around 640 CE by the Pallava king Mahendravarman I.

- **Adventure and leisure** - These sites can host activities such as trekking, boating, and water sports, appealing to adventure seekers.
- **Economic impact** - Developing lighthouse tourism can generate hospitality, transportation, and handicraft employment while boosting local economies.
- Recognising this potential, the government has identified lighthouse tourism as a priority area for development.



What are the steps taken to boost lighthouse tourism?

- **Present status -** In February 2024, PM Narendra Modi dedicated 75 Lighthouses with tourist facilities in 10 states & UTs.
- **Promotion** - The Central Government is actively promoting lighthouse tourism as a part of its broader Maritime India Vision (MIV) 2030 and Amrit Kaal vision 2047.

> MIV 2030 aims to position India as a leader in the Global Maritime Sector and includes more than 150 initiatives within 10 themes to address national maritime goals.

- **Indian Lighthouse Festival Series** - It has been held annually since then, serving as a key platform to celebrate and promote lighthouse tourism.

The 2nd Indian Lighthouse Festival was held in Odisha in 2024.

- **Stakeholders Meet** - Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways chaired a Stakeholders Meeting to boost Lighthouse Tourism in Kerala in July 2024.
- **Sagarmala programme** - It focuses on fostering partnerships with private stakeholders and integrated development to drive India's maritime and economic progress.
- **Standardization** - Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships (DGLL) actively

collaborates with private players to ensure these projects meet international standards.

- **National framework** - The government plans to establish a national framework to empower the coastal communities and ensure sustainable development around lighthouses.
- **Integration with Coastal Circuits** - Lighthouses are incorporated into broader coastal tourism itineraries to enhance their appeal.
- **Awareness Campaigns** - Digital initiatives are being launched to showcase lighthouse destinations to domestic and international audiences.
- **Skill Development** - Training programs are being introduced to equip local communities with skills required for employment in hospitality and tourism-related sectors.

Over 9 lakh tourists visited lighthouses in the first half of the current fiscal.

What lies ahead?

- Emphasis on eco-friendly practices to protect fragile coastal ecosystems while promoting responsible tourism.
- Increase the accessibility to light houses through better transport connectivity.
- Increase the safety features in and around light houses to ensure safe light house tourism.

Reference

PIB | Light House Tourism in India

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering