

Importance of G20 Srinagar Summit

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Context - Recently, The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has successfully completed the third G20 Tourism Working Group meeting, held from 22nd to 24th May 2023 in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir.

The Group of Twenty, or G20, is the premier forum for international cooperation on the most important aspects of the international economic and financial agenda. It brings together the world's major advanced and emerging economies. We will be discussing the achievements and failures of the G20 grouping.

About the Srinagar Summit

- The Srinagar summit is actually the 3rd G20 Tourism Working Group Summit. The first summit was held at Rann of Kutch and the second was Darjeeling.
- This meeting would take forward discussions from the previous G20 Tourism track meeting held at Rann of Kutch and Darjeeling in 2023.
- India's G20 Tourism Working Group has identified five priority areas viz. Green Tourism, Digitalization, Skills, Tourism MSMEs and Destination Management, for our Presidency.
- G20 members would submit their suggestions in writing by 26th May, 2023 which will form part of the final draft of the roadmap prepared in consultation with UNWTO that will be presented at the 4th Tourism Working Group Meeting to be held in Goa in June followed by the tourism declaration at the Ministerial Meet.

Significance of Srinagar Summit

- This G20 summit is very significant as Jammu & Kashmir is strategically located. It is

bordered by China and Pakistan, with volatile borders of LoC and LAC.

- The G20 Summit preparations in Srinagar have resulted in urban transformation of the city such as the newly redeveloped Polo market which has been praised by G20 delegates also.
- Kashmir in Western media is generally shown in a state of turmoil that tarnishes the image of India. Therefore, organizing a Global event like this in Kashmir will help India showcase a different picture of Kashmir to the world.
- Kashmir is home to a number of crafts and beautiful landscapes. Such a meeting will help promote Kashmir's art and craft as well as tourism in the state. For example, the Ministry of Tourism gave Paper Mache Box, Kashmir saffron, Kawa cups etc. as souvenirs to G20 delegates.

Outcomes of the Summit

- The event saw the 'Launch of Travel for LiFE Programme' to encourage citizens to make conscious use of tourism resources through responsible tourism practices during their travels.
- The draft 'National Strategy on Film Tourism' was unveiled which will provide a roadmap for harnessing the role of films in promoting tourist destinations.
- A panel discussion with G20 member countries including Spain, Singapore, Mauritius, Nigeria, South Africa, Brazil and India. The panel deliberated upon the impact of Film Tourism on economic benefits and its role in promoting the destination globally.
- Discussion on the 2nd draft of the Goa Roadmap for tourism as a vehicle for achieving Sustainable Development Goals.
- There are two key deliverables of the Tourism Working Group, which are GOA Roadmap for tourism as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development goals and G20 Tourism Ministers' Declaration.

Way Forward for G20

- **Enhance inclusivity:** Expand the representation of countries to include emerging economies, developing nations, and regions that are underrepresented. This broader participation will provide a more comprehensive perspective and ensure that the G20 reflects the diversity of the global economy.
- **Strengthen cooperation:** Foster greater cooperation and collaboration among G20 members by encouraging open dialogue, knowledge sharing, and joint problem-solving. This could involve establishing working groups on specific topics and providing platforms for regular discussions.
- **Support international trade:** Promote free and fair trade by reducing barriers, avoiding protectionist measures, and advancing negotiations on trade agreements. Encouraging open markets and fair competition can stimulate economic growth and benefit all participating countries.
- **Follow up on commitments:** Ensure that commitments made during G20 meetings are followed through and implemented effectively. Establish mechanisms for monitoring

progress and holding member countries accountable for their commitments.

Conclusion

The successful conclusion of the meeting in Kashmir with more than 60 attendees is a testimony of India's international might and powerful diplomacy. However, the overall effectiveness of the grouping is still questionable. Thus, there is a need to strengthen the group by making it more inclusive and outcome-oriented.