A transformative opportunity

CWG 2030 India in Ahmedabad will boost Gujarat's hospitality sector considerably

Hotel Leela, Gandhinagar: the 2030 Commonwealth Games can be a powerful catalyst for Gujarat's tourism economy

India's announcement that it will host the 2030 Commonwealth Games (CWG 2030 India) in Ahmedabad could make the country's tourism revenue jump by 20-25 per cent, estimate the experts. This global sporting event is likely to draw tens of thousands of international athletes, officials, and spectators, leading to a massive short-term spike in hotel bookings, airline traffic and local travel across India – especially in Gujarat. Athletes, officials and technical delegates from, say, 74 Commonwealth nations and territories are expected to arrive for CWG 2030 India in Gujarat, while the country is also likely to attract over 2 million foreign spectators, tourists and delegates. Tourism estimates associated with CWG 2030 India event planning suggest the creation of over 120,000 jobs in the country's travel & tourism sector. CWG 2030 India will be particularly meaningful because it coincides with the 100th anniversary of the inaugural Commonwealth Games held in 1930 in Canada. CWG 2030 India will mark the first time in two decades that the Games has returned to India (the last was in 2010 in New Delhi).

"Hosting Commonwealth Games in India will be a transformative opportunity for Gujarat, not just as a sporting destination but also as a global tourism and investment hub," affirmed Mansukh Mandaviya, Union minister for youth affairs & sports and labour & employment, in an exclusive interaction with *Business India*. "CWG 2030 India will bring athletes, officials, fans and visitors from across the Commonwealth, creating a significant boost for hotels, hospitality, transport, local businesses, handicrafts and the wider tourism ecosystem. The Commonwealth Games will provide a global platform to showcase the state's rich tourism potential. Major sporting events can become engines of economic growth, creating jobs, empowering local entrepreneurs and generating long-term opportunities. The event in Ahmedabad will strengthen our country's position on the global sporting map, while contributing meaningfully to the vision of Viksit Bharat."

CWG 2030 India is expected to bolster the growth of Gujarat's hospitality sector. Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar together have 5,420-6,000 star-category rooms in 3-star and 5-star hotel properties. Ahmedabad aims to scale up its capacity to 40,000 star-category hotel rooms ahead of hosting CWG 2030 India. Projections indicate a peak requirement of 20,000 to nearly 60,000 rooms, depending on delegation sizes, media and global sports tourists, highlighting a massive infrastructure gap in Gujarat. The Gujarat government is preparing a new hotel incentives policy, featuring capital subsidies to lower barriers to entry for global brands and local developers.

A growth market

"CWG 2030 India in Ahmedabad will accelerate infrastructure and connectivity across all of Gujarat," acknowledges Neelendra Singh, MD, Lemon Tree Hotels. "The Games will add a powerful layer on top of that with international visitors, athletes, officials, media and delegations moving through a city where we already have well-located, functioning assets. That's the advantage of building ahead of demand. Gujarat is an important growth market for Lemon Tree Hotels and we have built a substantial