

India targets massive airport expansion by 2047

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New Delhi: As India dreams of being a Viksit nation by 2047, Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu on Friday (Sep 27) said that it is seeking to increase the number of airports in the country to 350 and boost tourism.

In his address at an event held to mark the World Tourism Day at Vigyan Bhawan here, he also said his ministry is working on connecting more hinterlands locations which are close to unexplored sites.

Naidu emphasised the government's vision of boosting domestic connectivity and providing better facilities and warm hospitality at airports to welcome foreign tourists, as airports are "gateways to a country".

"Today, we have 157 airports but in the next 20-25 years, when we are going to see the real Viksit Bharat in 2047, we want to increase the

number of airports which is 157 today to the tune of 350," he said at the event hosted by the Tourism Ministry.

"4.6 crore travellers landed in India in 2014, and now that we have increased the number of airports from 74 to a staggering 157... we are seeing almost 7 crore people landing in the country today. And, within these numbers, more than 35 per cent people are arriving for holidays and recreation only," the civil aviation minister in his address said.

He said that his ministry is now connecting many previously "unserved" and "underserved" airports which are close to beautiful landscapes.

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