

## Int'l traveller spending in USA reaches highest level since Covid-19

-A Monitor Report

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New York : International visitors to the United States of America spent over USD 17.5 billion on travel and tourism-related activities in May 2023-up 26 per cent from May 2022.

According to the country's National Travel and Tourism Office's data, this marks the highest level of monthly spending since the onset of Covid-19 in February 2020.

Between January and May 2023, international traveller spending totaled USD 84.7 billion, up 41 per cent from 2022. On average, international travellers are now injecting around USD 561 million a day into the US economy.

Purchases of travel and tourism-related goods and services by international visitors in the United States totaled USD 9.7 billion during

May 2023, an increase of nearly 34 per cent compared to USD 7.2 billion in May 2022.

These goods and services include food, lodging, recreation, gifts, entertainment, local transportation in the United States, and other items incidental to foreign travel.

On the other hand, Americans spent nearly USD 17.0 billion travelling abroad during May, yielding a balance of trade surplus of USD 530 million, during which the US travel and tourism exports have outpaced imports in the last year.

Travel receipts accounted for 55 per cent of total US travel and tourism exports in May 2023.

Fares received by US carriers from international visitors totaled USD 3.2 billion in May 2023, up 30 per cent compared to USD 2.5 billion in the previous year. These receipts represent expenditures by foreign residents on international flights provided by US airlines.

Passenger fare receipts accounted for 18 per cent of total US travel and tourism exports in May 2023.

Expenditures for educational and health-related tourism, along with all expenditures by border, seasonal, and other short-term workers in the United States totaled USD 4.7 billion in May 2023, an increase of 10 per cent compared to USD 4.2 billion in May 2022.

Medical tourism, education, and short-term worker expenditures accounted for 27 per cent of total US travel and tourism exports in May 2023.

### Record demand for H-2B Visas

The United States of America received more H-2B visa applications for the year's first-half allotment than total visas available, announced the US Department of Labour.

Commenting on the matter, Tori Emerson Barnes, Executive Vice President of Public Affairs and Policy, US Travel Association, said, "The overwhelming demand for H-2B worker visas-the earliest the first-half cap has ever been met-is further proof that this highly successful programme should expand to meet the country's workforce demand."

"With nearly 10 million job openings across the US economy, and 1.4 million in the leisure and hospitality sector alone, there are simply not enough American workers to meet hiring needs," he added.

"The federal government can address these critical workforce shortages- and spur the US economy-by increasing the cap on H-2B temporary worker visas."