

Rome considering hiking tourist tax

- A Monitor Report

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Milan : Rome considers hiking its tourist tax to make travellers more responsible and raise cash.

Reports citing a draft decree that emerged this summer said, Giorgia Meloni's government is mulling raising the tourist tax, currently around EUR 5 (USD 5.5) a night, to EUR 10 for rooms costing EUR 100, EUR 15 for those costing more than EUR 400 and EUR 25 for luxury suites costing over EUR 750.

The proposal has sparked anger among tourism groups, which fear it could act as a deterrent, added reports. According to tourism stakeholders of Italy, they already have a high rate of VAT (sales tax)-at 22 per cent-and if new taxes are added, it will be risking Italy's competitiveness, especially for all-inclusive organised trips.

"At a time of overtourism we are discussing (the tourist tax) so it can be

a real help to improve services and make the tourists who pay it more responsible," "said Tourism Minister Daniela Santanche on social media in early August.

Italy is the fourth most popular tourist destination in the world, welcoming 57.2 million foreign tourists last year who spent USD 55.9 billion, according to the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

However, reports citing a government source said that consultations with the industry and local authorities were continuing. At this stage, increasing the tax is only a hypothesis, reports added.

Italy has long been a popular tourist destination, thanks to its rich cultural heritage and stunning coastline, however, the numbers are becoming unsustainable.

Venice, where tourists throng the narrow streets and bridges, introduced in April a EUR 5 fee for day visitors during peak periods. However, it was still packed.

Under the proposed Italian plan, the tourist tax which brought in EUR 775 million in 2023 would also be extended to all 7,904 municipalities.