

Need to draft a comprehensive National Policy on Agri-tourism-laid

SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL (KURUKSHETRA): Agri-tourism is a commercial enterprise that offers a vital alternative income to our farmers, stabilizing their finances against uncertain crop yields. It creates diverse local jobs for artisans, guides, and cooks, especially empowering rural women and youth. It preserves our invaluable heritage from traditional farming methods and indigenous crafts like pottery and weaving to our unique regional cuisines along with creating jobs for artisans, guides, cooks, and transport providers, offering rural women and youth new employment opportunities. The global agri-tourism market, valued at over \$42 billion in 2019, is projected to exceed \$62 billion by 2027, growing at over 13% annually. The Agri-tourism market in India is also experiencing significant growth, driven by increasing demand for unique travel experiences and a desire to connect with rural life. There is an urgent need for promoting agri-tourism through educational and recreational activities such as farm tours, farm-stays, planting fruits, flowers, and vegetables and rural games. Majority of the populace in India is either directly or indirectly dependent on agriculture, so agri-tourism warrants greater policy attention in India. A dedicated policy would streamline development, promote organic farming, and ensure quality standards through skill development, such as training youth as 'atithi mitras'. Therefore, I strongly urge the Government to constitute a high-level committee, involving all stakeholders, to draft a comprehensive National Policy on Agri-tourism which will empower our farmers and boost the rural economy.