

Ladakh records 60.60% growth in tourist arrivals in September 2026 compared to September 2025

4.61 lakh tourists visit Ladakh between January and September 2026, compared to 2.78 lakh visitors during corresponding period in 2025

L-G VK Saxena highlights Admin's aim to promote festivals and events to extend tourism beyond traditional peak summer season

Leh, October 12: Ladakh continues to witness impressive tourist footfall, with September 2026 recording 55,582 tourist arrivals, against 34,610 tourists in September 2025, marking a year-on-year increase of 60.60%.

Between January 1 and September 30, 2026, Ladakh received 4,60,667 tourists as compared to 3,35,872 visitors during the entire year of 2025. The tourist arrivals during the first nine months of 2026 have already surpassed the total footfall recorded in the previous year by 37.16%, reflecting Ladakh's growing appeal as a destination for cultural experiences, adventure tourism, sporting events, and its unique natural heritage, with three months still remaining in the current year.

Lieutenant Governor, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, attributed this massive growth to improved connectivity and promoting events like Ladakh Bike Week, Ladakh Marathon, Ladakh Festivals, and recent pioneering initiatives like the world's highest-altitude Lilium flower fields and the introduction of India's first high-altitude wildlife safari, which have added to the people's growing charm for Ladakh.

The growth is equally evident in the comparison of the corresponding nine-month periods. Ladakh received 2,78,599 tourists between January and September 2025, while the number rose to 4,60,667 during the same period in 2026, registering a substantial 65.38% increase.

Tourist arrivals have risen across both domestic and foreign segments. During the first nine months of 2026, Ladakh welcomed 4,20,927 domestic tourists and 39,740 foreign tourists, compared to 3,03,838 domestic and 32,034 foreign tourists during the corresponding period in 2025. This represents growth of approximately 38.54% in domestic tourist arrivals and 24.06% in foreign tourist arrivals.

In the month of September 2026, domestic tourist arrivals rose from 29,888 to 49,188, while foreign tourist arrivals increased from 4,722 to 6,394 during the month.

Lieutenant Governor Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena has emphasised the importance of promoting festivals and events to extend tourism beyond the traditional peak summer season. “Our aim is to encourage travel during shoulder and off-season periods, diversifying the tourism economy and creating more sustained livelihood opportunities for local residents. The Administration’s focus is not limited to increasing visitor numbers, but also on ensuring that tourism growth translates into tangible benefits for local communities,” said L-G Saxena.

The growth in tourist footfall has been supported by the Administration’s efforts to expand Ladakh’s tourism calendar through festivals, sporting events, and cultural programmes. Events such as the Ladakh Festival, Ladakh Marathon, Ladakh Bike Week, and Ladakh Zaskar Festival have added to the region’s appeal, attracting visitors interested in its distinctive culture, traditions, landscapes, and adventure tourism experiences.