

Indians Can Travel To Iran Without A Visa

Why In News

- Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in New Delhi announced that **Indian citizens no longer have** to get visas to travel to Iran.
- Travellers **holding Indian passports can enter Iran without** a visa every six months for a period of 15 days, which is non-extendable.



- Iran approved the **new visa-waiver programme for 33 countries**, including India, Russia, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Brazil and Mexico, in December. Iranian culture minister Ezzatollah Zarghami had said the move is aimed at boosting tourism and neutralising “Iranophobia campaigns”.

Conditions Applied

- **Iranian government** has abolished visas for Indian citizens **from February 4 subject to four conditions**, the Iranian embassy said in a statement.
- According to the new conditions, **Indians with ordinary passports** will be allowed to enter Iran without a visa **once every six months**, with a maximum stay of **15 days that cannot be extended**.



- The visa abolition specifically applies to Indian nationals who **enter Iran by air**.
- It also applies only to Indians going to **Iran for tourism**.
- Indian nationals wishing to stay for a longer period or make **multiple entries** within a six-month period or **requiring other types of visas** must obtain necessary visas from Iranian missions in India, the statement said.

Data Facts

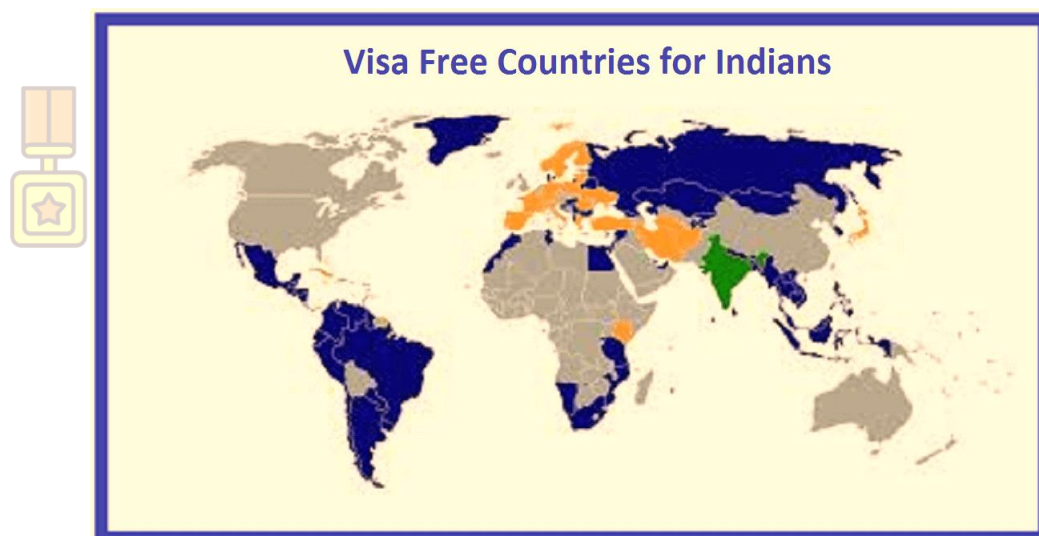
- According to the **World Tourism Organization**, Iran's foreign tourist arrivals during 2022 rose 315% from a year earlier.



- Data showed some **4.1 million tourists** came to Iran in 2022, up from 990,000 in 2021.
- Moslem Shojai, who heads the Iranian tourism ministry's foreign tourism marketing and development office, said in December that there had been a "notable growth" in travellers from India in 2023.
- **A total of 31,000 Indians** visited Iran in the first six months of 2023, marking 25% growth compared to the same period in 2022.

Which Other Countries Allow Visa-Free Travel For India

- **Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam** have also recently waived visa requirements for the citizens of India.
- **In December 2023, Thailand** — another neighbouring country whose economy relies heavily on tourism — had announced a visa exemption for Indian citizens, from November 10 that year to May 10, 2024.



- **In October 2023, Sri Lanka's** Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Sabry lifted visa requirements for the citizens of seven countries including India, China, and Russia under a pilot project, with the exemption to continue till March 31, 2024. According to a statement issued by the Sri Lankan government, the move was part of the crisis-hit country's efforts to boost tourism and hit a target of 50,00,000 visitors by 2026.
- **At present, countries** provide visa-free entry to the citizens of India. These include Kenya, Indonesia, Barbados, Bhutan, Dominica, Haiti, Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Samoa, and Trinidad and Tobago, among others.