



# CURRENT AFFAIRS



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## EXPANSION OF DIGI YATRA SERVICES

( This article is related to the section 'Indian Polity and Governance, Indian Constitution, Government Policies ' of UPSC Civil Services Mains General Studies Paper - 2 and ' Digi Yatra, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Expansion of Digi Yatra Services ' of UPSC Prelims Exam. It also includes suggestions from the PLUTUS IAS Team. This article is related to ' Expansion of Digi Yatra Services ' under ' Daily Current Affairs '.)

### WHY IN THE NEWS ?



- Recently, the CEO of Digi Yatra Foundation has said that Digi Yatra technology used at airports can now be expanded to public places like hotels and historical monuments.
- With this technology, entry to these places will also be made simple and convenient.
- To make air travel more accessible, the Government has introduced paperless entry at select airports, which will eliminate the need for passengers to have physical documents and make their air travel process faster and simpler.

### WHAT IS DIGI YATRA ?



- Digi Yatra is an advanced technology in which passengers travel at airports through a paperless and contactless process using a face to confirm their identity.
- With this technology, entry is done based on facial recognition systems at the checkpoints linked to the passenger's boarding pass.
- It comes under Biometric Enabled Seamless Travel Experience (BEST) and check-in services at airports using biometrics, making paperless travel extremely accessible for passengers at airports.
- It is an industry-led initiative coordinated by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- This system can also be used as an application in hotels and other public places.

#### **MAIN CONCERNS RELATED TO EXPANSION OF DIGI YATRA SERVICES :**



**Following are the main concerns related to Digi Yatra –**

#### **PRIVACY CONCERNS AND REVISED POLICIES :**

- Related to passengers under this scheme A revised policy document will be released soon, clarifying the issues related to access to third party vendor data and also clarifying the conditions under which the process of mandatory data clarification within 24 hours can be waived. Is.
- With this the government can get information regarding the travel pattern/system of the people. Due to which citizens ' **Right to privacy** ' may be affected or violated.

#### **DATA PROTECTION :**

- Expanding Digi Yatra to hotels and public places will enhance data security.
- Through this advanced technology, unlike traditional identity verification methods, which often involve sharing unencrypted documents, the Digi Travel ID does not contain personally identifiable information.
- Under this scheme, the system only retains the hash value or numerical identifier, thereby ensuring that personal data of passengers such as name, Aadhaar number, face scan and passport number cannot be leaked.

#### **TO ENSURE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF RIGHTS OF FOREIGN TOURISTS :**

- It is very important for foreign tourists to be informed about their responsibilities while traveling. This helps to ensure that they can make their journey safe and convenient. Foreign tourists are required to report their arrival and departure to the nearest police station, so as to protect their safety and rights.
- Currently, citizens of some countries like Pakistan are required to report their arrival and departure to the nearest police station within 24 hours.
- Additionally, tourists from other countries with visas longer than 180 days are required to register with the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO). This is important to protect their safety and rights during their journey.
- Under the Digi Yatra scheme, it is very important to inform the foreign tourists about their current time and these rules may differ in different countries. If you are a foreign tourist, you are advised to follow local rules during your travel.

#### **IMPLEMENTING MINISTRY :**

- The project is being implemented by Digi Yatra Foundation under the Ministry of Civil Aviation of India.
- Digi Yatra Foundation is a joint venture company comprising the Airports Authority of India and an association of private airports.
- The Private Airports Association holds 74% stake and the Airports Authority of India holds 26% stake in this non-profit private company.



## EXPANSION OF DIGI YATRA :

- The initiative, launched in December 2022, currently covers 14 airports, and plans to add 15 more airports by the end of 2024.
- This extension will significantly improve the travel experience of tourists who have to show their passport for hotel check-in and police verification. For example, tourists visiting the Taj Mahal can benefit from this technology.
- The CEO of Digi Yatra Foundation said that discussions are going on with various government agencies including the Ministry of Tourism to expand this service. Since its launch in the year 2022, it currently has 14 airports covered under it, and 15 more additional airports will be covered under it by the end of 2024.
- In its first phase, the initiative was launched at seven airports, with Delhi, Bengaluru and Varanasi being the first three airports.
- Under this plan, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Pune and Vijayawada airports were also included by March 2023.
- Discussions are underway with various government agencies including the Ministry of Tourism for the development of this service |
- In the coming time, this service will be available across the country and air travel will become even safer and more convenient for passengers.

## MAIN OBJECTIVES OF DIGI YATRA :



### Following are the main objectives of Digi Yatra –

1. **To improve the flow of Passenger traffic :** The main objective of Digi Yatra is to improve passenger flow at airports. For this, it is necessary to promote the efficiency of infrastructure.
2. **Adjusting Passenger Numbers :** The objective is to adjust the passenger numbers through Digi Yatra. For this, passenger options are encouraged in various ways.

3. **Indication of the wide scope of possible expansion** : The use of Digi Yatra indicates possible expansion to hotels and other public places.
4. It is also extremely important to take care of privacy and data security while traveling.
5. While using Digi Yatra Services, the Traveler must be cautious about the security of his/her personal information while sharing his/her personal information with anyone.

#### IMPORTANCE OF EXPANDING DIGI YATRA SERVICES :

Enjoy a **seamless journey,**  
only with **Digi Yatra.**



- Digi Yatra which helps passengers to travel safely and conveniently at airports. Provides facility of.
- In this system, passengers receive information related to boarding pass securely on the basis of their facial recognition.
- Passengers are allowed to pass through various check points without any documents or contact. Along with this, it also deals with issues like privacy and data security.
- Expansion of Digi Travel services is of utmost importance in the modern era. Its importance is linked to various aspects. **Which are as follows –**
- **Extremely convenient and time saving:** Digi Yatra services provide convenience and time savings to travelers. Travel related information, travel booking, hotel reservations, information about various travel options makes it more attractive for travelers.
- **Provide more contact and support** : Digi travel services provide greater connectivity and support to travelers. Travelers can benefit from the experiences and recommendations of others through online communities, review portals and social media platforms.
- **Better planning and planning** : Digi travel services provide suggestions to travelers for better planning and planning of trips. It helps them to get the right information about the travel structure, schedule and comfortable destinations.

- **Improving travel experience** : Digi travel services improve the travel experience. They have access to better information, facilities, and travel options, making their travels safer, more comfortable, and more enjoyable.
- **Environmental effect** : Digi travel services can help protect the environment too. Paperless options for travel with greater digitalisation, electronic tickets and other travel related processes are extremely helpful in saving nature and the environment.
- Thus, Digi travel services are well suited to modern travel and play an important role in providing a convenient, safe and satisfied travel experience to passengers.

**Source – The Hindu and Indian Express.**

**PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PRELIMINARY EXAM :**

**Q.1. Consider the following statements regarding the expansion of Digi Yatra services.**

1. Digi Yatra expands its services to paperless travel promotes |
2. Under this, check-in services are available at airports using biometrics.
3. It is an industry-led initiative by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
4. Under this, the ‘right to privacy’ of the citizens may be affected or violated.

**Which of the above statement/statements is / are correct?**

- A. Only 1, 2 and 3.
- B. Only 2, 3 and 4.
- C. None of these.
- D. All of the above.

**Answer – D**

**PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAIN EXAM :**

**Q.1. Expansion of Digi Yatra Services Highlighting the major provisions of the scheme, discuss how it plays an important role in making public travel facility in India transparent, extremely convenient and promoting environment protection? Present a rational opinion. (UPSC CSE – 2022 Word Limit – 250 Marks – 15)**

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