

## ACCESS TO ANDAMANS EASED

Relevant for: World & Indian Geography | Topic: Factors responsible for location of Tertiary sector Industries incl. Tourism in world & India and related issues

A view of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The Centre is planning to boost tourism in the islands. R. Ravindran

Foreigners no longer need a Restricted Areas Permit to visit 29 inhabited islands in the Andaman and Nicobar chain. The Union Home Ministry decided on Tuesday to lift restrictions as the government intends to boost tourism.

An official said 11 other uninhabited islands will also be thrown open to foreigners.

### Area permits

The 29 inhabited islands have been excluded from the restricted area permit (RAP) notified under the Foreigners (Restricted Areas) Order, 1963, till December 31, 2022, subject to certain conditions.

However, citizens of Afghanistan, China and Pakistan and foreign nationals having their origin in these countries would continue to require RAP to visit the Union Territory, the official said.

For visiting Mayabunder and Diglipur, citizens of Myanmar will continue to require RAP, which shall be issued only with the prior approval of the ministry.

“To ensure preservation of natural and marine resources, including marine parks and environment, of the Union Territory without affecting tourism and business at large, it should be ensured by the Andaman and Nicobar Islands administration that the guidelines issued by the Environment and Forests Ministry are strictly adhered to,” said the official.

Separate approvals of the competent authority would be required for visiting reserved forests, wildlife sanctuaries and tribal reserves, the official said.

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