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12 lakh tourists visited J&K this year: Omar

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INDICATING that the lost glory of the state as a tourist destination is slowly but surely picking up, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said over 12 lakh tourists have visited Kashmir so far this year.

Inaugurating a model hotel set up by a private sector group at Gulmarg, he said development of much-needed tourist infrastructure with due consideration of environmental requirements is necessary to make world famous resorts like Gulmarg a round-the-

year tourist attraction.

"Our government has concentrated on holistic development of tourism making eco-tourism fulcrum in the creation of new facilities and upgrading the existing ones," he said, adding that tourism is the key sector to catapult economy and generate more jobs for people round the year.

Omar said that visit of about 12 lakh visitors indicates the interest people have for J&K. "Besides, conventional tourism, government is focusing to harness the potential of adventure, pilgrim and sports tourism," he said.