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Addressing the 17th edition of the Iran International Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition, held in Tehran on Monday, Raisi described the tourism industry as a catalyst for the economies of countries.

He said tourism has attracted growing attention since it acts as a driving and accelerating force for economic development.

To avoid a mono-product economy and end Iran's reliance on the oil income, it is necessary to boost the tourism industry, the president added.

He noted that Iran has great capacities for tourism considering its age-old civilization, rich cultural heritage, and diverse climatic situation.

The president also stated that the enemies are fomenting Iranophobia to dissuade foreigners from visiting Iran, saying, "The officials and managers of the administration have a duty to facilitate the presence of tourists (in Iran). One of the steps taken in this course has been the abolition of visa" requirements for the citizens of many countries.

The World Tourism Organization of the United Nations said in its latest report that more than five million foreign tourists visited Iran in the first 11 months of 2023, registering a 42 percent growth compared to the same period a year earlier.

The 42% growth in the arrival of foreign tourists to Iran in 2023 came as Iran's tourism industry experienced a significant slump during the outbreak of the coronavirus.

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Only 880,000 foreign tourists had visited Iran in 2021, but the number grew to 4. 11 million in 2022.