**Taj Mahal may limit visitors to protect India's top monument**

As befitting one the seven new wonders of the world, the Taj Mahal attracts millions of people every year but now authorities are considering limits on the number of visitors to protect the monument.



Unobstructed view of Taj Mahal

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) which oversees the protection of India’s most iconic sight has advised that visitor numbers should be capped and visits should last no longer than three hours.

At the weekends or on public holidays, visitor numbers can reach many people a day, made up largely of Indian people who are embracing domestic tourism in greater numbers Recently, five people were injured as crowds tried to push through the gate as closing time, prompting the ASI to take renewed action at limiting numbers.

The visitor restrictions will affect only domestic tourists, who make up about 7.2 million out of the 8 million annual visitors. Currently Indian visitors pay just 40 rupees to visit the Taj Mahal while international visitors must pay 1000 rupees. Domestic tourists who want to escape the cap can do so by purchasing the higher-priced ticket.

Overcrowding by tourists is not the only danger facing the structure however; it's beginning to turn yellow from air pollution and is two years into a nine-year plan to brighten the walls with mudpacks.