



TOURISM, ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS AREA IN UTTARAKHAND

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Abstract—This study primarily focus on tourism, economy and environmental problems related to religious areas in Uttarakhand.

Keywords- tourism; economy; environment; problems; religious areas; Uttarakhand;

I. INTRODUCTION

Uttarakhand is a state in the northern Himalayan region in India and it has been a popular spot of tourism due to its admirably various landscape, rich cultural heritage, high biodiversity and enough religious potential. Which has also generated a good source of income and employment to youth and rural mass. Tourism is a major social phenomenon of modern society. Today tourism is also considered as an agent of economic development of the country. In terms of revenue generation as well as employer in the world, tourism is now become a largest source.

II. ROLE OF TOURISM ACTIVITIES IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF STATE

Tourism can play a very significant position for leveraging limited foreign exchange earnings for not only the developing countries of the third world but for Most of the developed countries in the world. It offers employment to various semi-skilled and unskilled people. Tourism gives a momentum to State income. In Uttarakhand, tourism is considered to be an essential medium for economic development. To create foreign exchange earnings tourism industry has such potential, tourism promote development in various parts of the region, create employment and help to lighten poverty.

A more complete view point can be provided for various parts of country. A more complete picture can be provided by the concept of tourism development, because it can help policy maker to make effective policy to realize the social and economic potential of the tourism industry. Several types of business such as hotels, restaurants, tour operator's handicrafts, transporters, travel agents, etc, can get benefit from it. Other related businesses such as cab drivers, adventure sports arrangers, and food and beverage suppliers, photographers can also have lucrative earnings. Employment in tourism sector is very much important for Uttarakhand. As it is mainly an agriculture based economy where industries have not much developed. Tourism development is foundation on the

responsibility of governments and all the stakeholders in the tourism sector to ensure the long term prosperity and quality of life for future generation. It should make optimal use of environment resource that constitutes a key element in tourism development.

III. CURRENT CHALLENGES FOR TOURISM PROMOTION IN UTTARAKHAND

Restoring tourism in disaster Uttarakhand has been one of the biggest challenges before the state government. The national media's focus on the predicament of tourists has grossly deformed the true nature of the tragedy even in the Char Dham area. Many of the people who come from their villages in these valleys and elsewhere to earn income for their families' on yatra routes during the tourist season are still missing many of them were dead and many of them had feared to death. They work in the dhabas that line the entire route from GauriKund to Kedarnath which is almost 14 km track; they sell raincoats, umbrellas, soft drinks, water bottles, snacks and other goods. They carry children on their backs, the sick, the old and tourists who are simply unfit and out of condition to walk the entire route. They run along the path with their horses carrying tourists.

Most of the families dependent on religious tourism for much of their annual income is multifaceted by the fact that the yatra season is over for the year, and is unlikely to resume even next year given the damage of the roads and bridges in the upper reaches. Thousands of families who lives near Char Dham valley will now fall below the poverty line. Till the revival of the yatras, what will be the alternative sources of employment for the unemployed? Most likely we will see increased male outmigration from the region.

IV. REASONS FOR DISASTER IN UTTARAKHAND

Many researchers and experts viewed that Uttarakhand recent disasters are man-made, they said unabated expansion of hydro-power projects and building roads for lodging ever-increasing tourism are major causes for the unprecedented level of destruction. The valley of Yamuna, Ganga, and Alakhananda witness heavy traffic of tourists. Therefore many people build their hotels, Restaurants, Dhabas or stalls near rivers.



A. *Inadequate Infrastructure*

Hilly and unreceptive territory, absorbent boundaries, highly inadequate road connectivity and poor transport connectivity, very limited air services, scarcity of rail links and weak telecommunication network, etc has constrained the growth of tourism in the State. Most places of tourist attraction especially pilgrims are too far from the national highways, and approach roads are in worst condition. This is a strong disappointing factor, which works in opposition to a good visiting of the tourist. Apart from the infrastructural bottleneck, lack of well managed package tour, lack of facilities like good hotels and tourist lodges, reasonable and reliable communication system, etc have been slow down the expected development and promotion of tourism in the state.

B. *Rebellion*

The media often inclined to focus on the ethnic conflicts and under development of the State neglecting the revolutionary development efforts made in the region. It has been stamped in the minds of the general papules by the media that nothing significant is happening in the region other than violence.

C. *Absence of Certified Tourist Guides*

Uttarakhand virtually does not have any trained or experienced guides consigned in important places of tourist attraction. As a result, as the tourists arrive at such a place there is hardly few people who satisfy the curiosity of the tourists. The Department of Tourism need to initiate such programs to train tourist guides.

D. *Lack of Synchronized Efforts*

There is a blatant lack of synchronization among numerous agencies like Department of Tourism and Department of Archaeology in handling the requirements or anxiety of the tourists in places of both historic and religious substance. There is no coordination connecting various public and private sectors. This is definitely a big blockage on the way of tourism industry.

E. *Under-Developed Human Resource*

To provide thorough information to the tourists regarding the region, pilgrims etc. There is lack of trained tourist guides, which apparently main obstacle in the path of development of tourism industry in Uttarakhand.

Thus even though plentiful of natural beauty, the flow of incoming tourist has been marginal for the reasons of the lack of such facilities in various tourist places in the state.

V. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING TOURISM IN UTTARAKHAND

To develop the high quality tourism infrastructure, facilities and products in various tourism zone in Uttarakhand state, Uttarakhand tourism development master plan, is planning the strategy with the co-ordination of government of India,

Government of Uttarakhand and United Nation development programme and world Trade organization. Because the state attracts the tourists for pilgrim, cultural, nature, adventure, wildlife, eco-tourism, and amusement and leisure tourism the demand for tourism in the state from both the domestic and international market is wide and diversified.

A. *Role of Media*

To catch the attention of the approaching tourists, media play a vital role by using appropriate strategy like attractive advertisements, seminars, street skits, seminars, through magazines, newspapers, press meets, write-ups in various national and international journals and TV channels to. Well planned and eye-catching websites revised from time to time can also be of helpful.

B. *Improving Infrastructure*

To attract tourist's sites the basic civic facilities and infrastructure such as clean drinking water, food material, restaurants, road networks and knowledgeable and trained guides must be made available. The tourist guides should be familiar with foreign language to provide satisfactory knowledge and information to the tourists. To improve the infrastructure condition Government of Uttarakhand has received loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The main purpose of this Infrastructure development investment program of tourism (IDIP) is to enhance economic growth and to provide livelihood opportunities for local communities through tourism infrastructure development.

C. *Improving Communication Network*

The condition of most of the roads, including the national highways in Uttarakhand, is not in good condition specially NH 58 which is linked with badrinath dham these routes are in condition. Lack of well-conditioned roads to the places of tourist attraction is one of the discouraging factor. Efforts should be made to synchronize with the PWD (Rashtriya Rajmarg mantralya Lok Nirman Vibhag) (Lok Nirman vibhag rajyasarkar), BRO (Roads) to improve the condition of the approach roads to the tourist spots on priority basis. Second, each tourist spot should have at least a PCO/STD? ISD with best communication network for facilitating the tourists to maintain their contact with the rest of the world.

D. *People's Participation*

In Uttarakhand, tourism play an important role in economy development, to mitigate poverty and to create employment, people's participation in planning and benefit sharing should be evolved. It is necessary to build up the concept of 'answerable tourism', whereby all stakeholders have the responsibility to decrease the dreadful side and develop the good side. Therefore policymakers, need to take an unbreakable look at the realities.

E. *Tourism Package*

Tourist packages should base on package, like adventure tourism, heritage, eco-tourism, pilgrimage, wild life tourism.



F. Role of Government

The role of Government in the development of tourism in the sector cannot be ruled out. Investment in tourism industry is now more than oil-industry. Many countries like; Europe and Asia are now completely depend on tourism sector for their earning. Government of India taking various plans to organize and to develop the tourism destination scattered all over the country. To attract more tourist Government of India plans preservation of cultural, and environment heritage at tourist destination. To meet the present and future need of tourist develop the desired infrastructure, government of Uttarakhand starts a train project from Rishikesh to Karnprayag, government of India construct accommodations in Government level and persuading the private companies to invest in accommodation sector by giving them different tax benefits.

G. Initiatives taken by State Tourism Department

In India Uttarakhand is the seventh preferred state, which is attracting 4.1 per cent domestic tourists. The Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board is eager to notice the state among the country's top places by making it favorable destination for both domestic and foreign tourists, tourism board CEO told in his interview to business standard that they are encouraging adventure sports, eco-tourism, traditional yatra and leisure tourism to achieve their goal.

VI. CONCLUSION

Tourism in present day does not incarcerate itself to hotels, restaurants. Its broad pitch touches upon rural area, environment. The new approach is to position tourism as a major engine of growth for employment generation and economic development. There is thus an urgent need to position Assam as an international brand like Kerala's "Gods own country" and include the State into the highly successful "Incredible India" campaign. Tourism is the most important of all resources available to man in the State of Assam. If tourism is developed through careful planning, it is sure to bring revolutionary transformation in its economy.

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