

# GIST OF KURUKESTHRA DEC-2017

## RURAL TOURISM IN INDIA



## **I N D E X**

### **KURUKSHETRA – DECEMBER - 2017**

- 
1. RURAL TOURISM IN INDIA : SCOPE AND POTENTIAL
  2. GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM
  3. NATIONAL TOURISM POLICY : THE POTENTIAL GAME CHANGER
  4. DEVELOPING RURAL TOURISM RESOURCES IN INDIA
  5. MARKETING NEEDS FOR RURAL TOURISM IN INDIA .



## 1. RURAL TOURISM IN INDIA : SCOPE AND POTENTIAL

What is the present situation of tourism?

- The tourism industry world over is going through a great shift in ideas and beliefs. Today fuelled by a massive increasing in purchase power and development of faster and cheaper modes of travel, more and more people are travelling across the world.
- The purpose of travels now tend to be more of leisure, and increasingly so, for getting to know new things and experiencing cultures, cuisines, traditions, etc., and this kind of travel is rightly called as experiential travelling.
- Today, the traveller is prepared to go greater distances and to previously unknown places to get the unique experiences and also cater to his own interests.
- The tourist is also looking at being a responsible traveller, about giving back to the community and interacting with the host community so that he has a visible stake in the whole development of the region.

What is the scope and potential of rural tourism in India?

- Mahatma Gandhi had once said that "India lives in its villages". The village life in India where you meet the "Real India".
- The villages are also repositories of Indian culture and tradition. The slow pace of life in the villages, far away from the hustle and busy city, is an experience that can rejuvenate one.
- The villages and the rural economies also have practitioners of unique arts and crafts in their original forms and it serves as an effective attraction among tourists.
- The local community benefits as this is a way of supplanting their incomes which are mostly dependent on agriculture or low skill jobs.
- Many cases of rural tourism also includes volunteerism in which tourists spend some time in volunteering and giving back to the community they visit in the form of teaching at the local schools, helping out in the farming activities., etc

List out some of the projects of rural tourism?

- The Endogenous tourism project was launched with the help of United Nations Development Program with a pilot project across 31 villages in the country.
- **The Shaam-e-sarhad** project in the village of Hodka in Gujarat focuses to develop the culture, craft and sustainable dimensions of rural life, as a means to viable livelihood opportunities for low-income rural communities.
- The award winning Kerala Responsible tourism projects **in Kumarakom**, Wayanad and other locations combine a unique model of involving the rural communities and getting the visitor experience village life with the local stake holders as story tellers.
- **Sikkim tourism** is organizing the home stays thus spreading the tourism products evenly and away from the traditional destinations. It also leverages on the **organic farming** techniques to promote the rural tourism.
- The **Govardhan Eco Village in Maharashtra** which won UNWTO Ulysses award has developed the village into community that has symbiotic relationship with the visitors and has increased community participation as well as increased the income and education level in this backward area.
- Under **the Swadesh Darshan scheme** among the 13 different circuits rural tourism is one of the circuit to promote the rural tourism.

## 2. GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM

What is Rural Tourism?

- GOI explains Rural Tourism as " Any form of tourism that showcases the rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefitting the local community, economically and socially, as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching experience of tourism can be termed as rural tourism".

**What are the major types of Rural Tourism in India?**

- **Agritourism** as it is defined most broadly, involves any agriculturally based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch and to explore how **farmers** work with crops and animals.
- **Cultural Tourism** (or culture tourism) is the subset of tourism concerned with a traveler's engagement with a country or region's culture, specifically **the lifestyle** of the people in those geographical areas, the history of those people, their art, architecture, religion(s), and other elements that helped shape their way of life.
- **Nature tourism** is a responsible travel to natural areas, which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people. It is **tourism based on the natural attractions** of an area.
- **Adventure tourism** is a type of niche tourism involving exploration or travel to remote areas, where the traveler should expect the unexpected. **Mountaineering expeditions, trekking, bungee jumping, rafting and rock climbing** are frequently cited as an examples of adventure tourism.
- **Community-based ecotourism** is a form of ecotourism that emphasizes the development of local communities and allows for local residents to have substantial control over, and involvement in, its development and management, a major proportion of the benefits remain within the community.

**What are different schemes of GOI to promote Rural Tourism?**

- Under **the Swadesh Darshan scheme**, thirteen thematic circuits have been identified, for development namely: North-East India Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Desert Circuit, Tribal Circuit, Eco Circuit, Wildlife Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual Circuit, Ramayana Circuit and Heritage Circuit.
- **Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spirituality Augmentation Drive (PRASAD)** was launched to promote the India's rich cultural heritage regarding the spirituality as it is home to birth of many religions like Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.
- The Finance Minister in his Budget speech of the year 2017-18, proposed to set-up Five Special **Tourism Zone, anchored on SPVs** in partnership with the States.



• **E-Tourist Visa Facility** is available to Foreigners whose sole objective of visiting India is recreation, sight-seeing, short duration medical treatment, casual business visit, etc. and not valid for any other purpose/activities. This will allow entry into India within 30 days from the date of approval of e-Tourist Visa and will be valid for 30 days stay in India from the date of arrival in India.

#### What are the impacts of Rural Tourism?

- With increased number of tourists visiting the Indian Country side, there will be a boost in the **income level** of people due to increased level of trade among the people and job creation.
- The **traditional handicrafts** and art industry gets boomed as the tourists will have a firsthand experience in seeing how the craftsman works and for the artisans also get better income as he sells directly without any intermediary.
- Exchange of ideas **and thoughts with the tourists** and local people will create a new ideas among the villagers and will help in universal literacy.
- With more tourists visiting villages, there will be improvement **in connectivity** by means of road, increase in public transports., etc
- **Since the infrastructural** development is a need to boost tourism there may have a chance of concretization of rural areas and may distort the natural beauty and may lead to natural resources exploitation.

#### What is the scope for improvement?

- There is a necessity for **having good logistics and infrastructural support in villages**. Roads connecting to the nearby villages and railway stations and highways must be inter linked to promote tourists.
- The **exotic flora and fauna of rural India can be a huge source of learning for students**. Student excursions can be promoted with proper permission from the authorities.
- **Language may be an important issue when it comes to tourism**. Hence, tourists may be given the opinion of interpreters in case of difficulty also promotes tourism.

- Recognizing the **some unique traditional handicrafts and GI products of villages** also boosts some amount of tourism by conducting workshops, exhibitions and melas
- Many states are blessed with many **medicinal herbs and ayurvedic products** which have strong medicinal values. The Government can develop suitable infrastructure to capture such tourists who can avail medicinal facilities in such villages.
- Since each state has **unique potential to attract tourists**, enroping the State governments in the process of promotion of tourism is a must.

### **3. NATIONAL TOURISM POLICY : THE POTENTIAL GAME CHANGER**

**What is the need for a national level policy?**

- India's **tourism annual growth rate is 17.2** percent and it clearly indicates the rise in global demand and it needs a conducive policy and environment to retain and improve the growth rate.
- Not only foreign tourists increased but also **there is great increase in the domestic tourists** due to the change in lifestyles and increase in income.
- The domestic tourism sector constitutes **about 88 percent of total earnings of tourism in India** and it needs to be regulated to boost more income.
- The tourism is being a dynamic sector it has evolved to many **new sectors like Medical tourism, Golf tourism, Education tourism etc.,**
- Some of the **challenges** faced by the tourism industry like infrastructural and logistical support can be addressed through well developed policy initiatives.

**What is National tourism policy and its objectives ?**

- National tourism policy **was formulated in 1982** in a closed economy with **stringent licensing procedures**. This policy did not recognize the role of private sector due to its formulation of closed economy and foreign investment in tourism sector is not encouraged.

- To lay emphasis on tourism and address **the loopholes in the previous policy**, GOI formulated National Tourism **Development Policy** in 2002.

The main objectives of this policy are as follows:

- a. Positioning and maintaining tourism development as **a national priority activity**
- b. Enhancing and maintaining the **competitiveness of India as a tourism destination**.
- c. Improving India's existing tourism products and expanding these to meet new market requirements.
- d. Creation of **world class infrastructure**
- e. Developing sustained and effective marketing plans and programs.

What are the salient features of the new draft tourism policy?

- Focus of the Policy on **employment generation and community participation** in tourism development.
- Stress on development of tourism in a sustainable and responsible manner.
- An all-encompassing Policy involving linkages with various Ministries, Departments, States/Union Territories and Stakeholders.
- The Policy enshrines the vision of developing and positioning India as a **"MUST EXPERIENCE" and "MUST REVISIT"** Destination for global travelers, whilst encouraging Indians to explore their own country
- Development and **promotion of varied tourism** products including the rich Culture and Heritage of the country, as well as niche products such as Medical & Wellness, Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE), Adventure, Wildlife, etc.
- Development of **core infrastructure** (airways, railways, roadways, waterways, etc.) as well as Tourism Infrastructure.
- Developing quality human resources in the **tourism and hospitality** sectors across the spectrum of vocational to professional skills development and opportunity creation.



- Creating an enabling environment for investment in tourism and **tourism-related infrastructure**.
- Emphasis on technology enabled development in tourism.
- Focus on **domestic tourism** as a major driver of tourism growth.
- Focus on promotions in established source markets and potential markets, which are contributing significantly to global tourist traffic, with targeted and country specific campaigns.
- Emphasis on Tourism as the fulcrum of multi - sectoral activities and dovetailing of activities of the Ministry with important/flagship schemes of the Government of India.

#### **4. DEVELOPING RURAL TOURISM RESOURCES IN INDIA**

**What are the main characteristics of rural tourism?**

- The tourism activity took place in **the country side and community participation** is prerequisite.
- It is multi faceted and incorporates different forms of tourism.
- Locally available accommodation and village foods should be served. Accommodation must be clean and pest resistant.
- A tourist shopping centre can be opened so that a **tourist can purchase local products** like food, tea, honey, fruits, herbs, toys etc.,
- Locally available transportation is used like **tractor, bi cycle, Bullock cart, camel riding** etc.,
- **Tour to production centers like Fruit gardens**, paddy fields must be there to get the first hand experience.
- Rural tourist itinerary must be **busy and activity oriented** like participation in plantation, cattle rearing, tree climbing, making of household items, handicrafts and cooking.

- Family and village games must be a part of the rural tourism as it will make the tourist to relax and get better bonding with other members.
- Rural tourism focus must be on something to see, something to do and something to buy.
- Prime beneficiary are local **people who are trained professionally** to provide complete package to Rural tourist.
- Rural tourist must be **educated to act responsibly and should respect human and natural heritage of** host community.
- Tourists must be sensitized towards cultural values, social norms and traditions. There must be a clearly defined and communicated Do and Dont's.

**What are Indian Rural Tourism resources?**

- Indian rural sites are full of resources but in travel and tourism resources cannot be consumed till it transformed into tourism product.
- In India the rural tourism resources are plenty and they are,
  - Nature reserve, Butterfly park
  - Prehistoric sites, historic sites related with epics,
  - Palaces, Havellis
  - Temples, Samadhis, Mosques, Tombs, Churches
  - Attractions based on primary production
  - Theatres, street based arts
  - Handicraft makers, GI tag producers
  - Historical fairs
  - Sites of historic importance, birth places of leaders
  - Trees, herbs

**What are the benefits of Rural Tourism?**

- Rural tourism can create **long term employment** and provides skilled and semiskilled training and career opportunities.



- Rural tourism will boost women's empowerment and provides young/ agriculturist livelihood diversification.
- Rural tourism has a potential of establishing medium and small enterprises.
- Rural tourism will promote local production, education, art and architecture, community self esteem and pride and also promotes conservation.
- Rural tourism will create new infrastructural facilities and helps to maintain the existing ones and improves the quality of life
- Development of Rural tourism is the passport of poverty alleviation and can double the farmer's income without creating negative impacts on environment and ecology.
- Rural tourism has the potential of developing new professional profiles in the form of local tour guides, Travel circuits, Shopping centres, Food joints and services.

## 5. MARKETING NEEDS FOR RURAL TOURISM IN INDIA

Why marketing is important for tourism industry?

- Travel industry largely relies on marketing experiences. It's because, experiences are at the core of the entire industry and everything else revolves around the experiences.
- Those experiences could be of visual appreciation, cultural immersion and spiritual elevation. By and large tourists pay for their experiences.
- Rural India has an ocean of experiences to offer. Be it the Ikkat handloom weaving of Pochampalli in Andhra Pradesh, Tusser silk weaving of Nepura in Bihar etc., all of them need to be marketed.

- Promotion is the answer to many questions; promotion in a manner that gives positive and sustainable results.

**What are the marketing initiatives by GOI?**

- **Structural involvement** of site artisans in **Dilli Haat, Mega craft melas** in different cities across the country.
- **India@60 road show** in Singapore where artisans participated and demonstrated the art of making and crafts displayed were highly appreciated.
- **Volvo Ocean** rove in Cochin to create awareness of rural tourism.
- Wide media coverage through promotions at World Tourism Mart, Pacific Asia Travel Association and International Tourism Borse and similar trade fairs and shows.
- 15 rural tourism sites were chosen and listed as eco holiday sites for foreign tourists during Visit India 2009.
- Sub brand Explore Rural India was given ample space alongside the globally recognised brand **Incredible India**.
- Rural Tourism site committees were encouraged to launch their **own websites as part of decentralised marketing strategy**.

**What are the strategies to be adopted to promote marketing of Rural tourism?**

- The community should sit together and decide on a **promotion plan and must decide on** workable and viable medium to reach the markets.



