

DEVELOPMENT AND SCOPE OF TOURISM SECTOR IN UTTAR PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is the activities of societies traveling to and residing in places outside their usual atmosphere for not more than one successive year for relaxation, business and other commitments not related to the application of a movement waged from within the place stayed. Tourism is travel for entertaining or vacation purposes. Surrounded in the soul of India is Uttar Pradesh, a land where values have developed and faiths converge. The importance of Uttar Pradesh lies not only in this convergence, but also in the advent of cultural and religious customs along some of the chief rivers in the Indian sub-continent – the Ganga and the Yamuna. Throughout history, great cities have arisen and established along great rivers. Within India, the Ganga and the Yamuna have nurtured a culture because of which religious faith, rituals, culture and intellectual enlightenment have evolved in places along the two rivers.

Keywords: Tourism, vacation, diverse range, Ecotourism, Rural Tourism, Tourism circuits

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the activities of societies traveling to and residing in places outside their usual atmosphere for not more than one successive year for relaxation, business and other commitments not related to the application of a movement waged from within the place stayed. Tourism is travel for entertaining or vacation purposes. The World Tourism Organization defines travelers as people who "travel to and stay in places separate from their usual atmosphere for not more than one repeated year for vacation, commercial and other commitments not related to the exercise of an activity compensated from within the place stayed". Tourism has become a popular worldwide relaxation movement. In 2008, there were more than 903 million global traveler arrivals, with a progress of 6.6% as equated to 2007. Transnational tourist earnings were USD 856 billion in 2008. Notwithstanding the doubts in the worldwide economy, arrivals raised at around 5% during the first four months of 2009, almost a similar growth than the same period in 2008. Uttar Pradesh is the fourth leading state in India with an estimated area of 2,40,928 sq. km. It is also the densely inhabited state in the nation with a population of 199.5 million (2011). Uttar Pradesh is one of the most

favoured state for visitors in India with a steady position amongst the topmost states in relations of tourist arrivals. In 2014 it was ranked 2nd in terms of total tourist arrivals, 2nd in terms of domestic tourist arrivals and 3rd in terms of external tourist arrivals amid Indian states. The Tourism industry in Uttar Pradesh has a noteworthy role to the state's financial growth.

UNIQUENESS OF UTTAR PRADESH

Uttar Pradesh is endowed with a diverse range of tourism offerings. These range from wonder of the world (Taj Mahal – Agra) to exclusive cultural and holy hotspots like Varanasi, Braj (Mathura, Vrindavan, Goverdhan), Awadh (Lucknow, Ayodhya). U.P. is the single state which is habitat of one of the wonders of the world "Taj Mahal" which is also a UNESCO world heritage site. U.P. is home to some very key Hindu pilgrim centres of India viz. Krishna Janmabhoomi (Mathura), Ram Janmabhoomi (Ayodhya), Sangam (Allahabad), Baba Vishwanath (Varanasi), Maa Vindhyavasani (Vindhyachal). Some important destinations connected to the life of Lord Buddha viz. Kapilvastu, Sarnath, Shravasti, Kaushambi, Sankisa and Kushinagar are located in U.P. Uttar

Pradesh has a excess of unique environment especially in the Terai area of Dudhwa National Park and Pilibhit Tiger Reserve, which is endowed with exclusive floral and faunal biodiversity. Dudhwa National Park of U.P. is the only secure area (other than Kaziranga National Park, Assam) where one can get one horned rhinoceros beside with national animal tiger. It is also the only place in India where one can see 5 species of deer viz. sambhar deer, swamp deer, spotted deer, barking deer and hog deer. Branch of Tourism has just introduced the Uttar Pradesh Culture Arc which is gaining all round appreciation. It attaches three most important tourism hubs of U.P. i.e. Agra, Lucknow and Varanasi. It is bound to increase tourism as it covers the true soul of Uttar Pradesh, by offering a gamut of cultural, religious and heritage tourism assets. Apart from Heritage Arc Circuit, UP has some very interesting and potential tourism circuits and trails, such as Buddhist Circuit, Pilgrimage Circuit – Kashi - Sangam, Mathura – Vrindavan, Allahabad – Vindhyachal, Ayodhya Trail, Sufi Trail – Lucknow - Deva Sharif; Ittra Trail – Kannauj, The Great Awadh Circuit – Lucknow, Heritage Trail – Lucknow, Cycling Trail – Lucknow, Taj Nature Tour, Agra Heritage Tour, Agra – Braj Tour; Rhino – Tiger Circuit – Dudhwa National Park, Awadh Bird Trail, Mango Trail, etc. The cuisine of Uttar Pradesh is just as diverse as its geography. The main genre of U.P is Awadhi, famed for its Dum-pukht (food cooked on slow fire). Uttar Pradesh is also home to rich textiles, crafts, dance/drama, and legacy of musicians adding to the exquisiteness of tourism offerings in the state.

CHALLENGES FACED BY UTTAR PRADESH TOURISM

- i. Inadequate support infrastructure at tourist destinations
- ii. Inadequate road, rail and air connectivity to various tourist destinations
- iii. Inadequate availability of hotel rooms
- iv. Inadequate availability of skilled labor
- v. Limited availability of hygienic and quality food outlets, restaurants at destinations
- vi. Inadequate cleanliness at tourist destinations & surroundings including lack of clean public toilets
- vii. Poor visitor management at site especially religious destinations
- viii. Lack of conservation of Heritage Sites

- ix. Limited availability of certified tourist guides
- x. Harassment of tourists from miscreants & notorious elements
- xi. Safety of tourists

ACTIVITIES COVERED UNDER THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

- Hotels, Motels and Restaurants
- Heritage Hotels
- Wayside facilities on National Highways or State Highways wherein restaurants and parking are available
- Tourist resort/tourist village
- Theme Park, Amusement park & Water parks
- Nature Walk, City Walk, Heritage Walk, Cycle Tours etc
- Production and marketing of traditional crafts and other artwork
- Work related to maintenance of cultural and historical heritage
- Promotion to establishment and running of museums
- Tourism/ Hotel Management Institutes
- Tourism activities related to environment conservation/jungle safari/jungle lodge etc
- Homestay scheme (Bread and Breakfast)
- Organizing and development of Adventure activities such as – trekking, rock climbing, water sports, boat race, skating, fishing, aero sports etc
- Package tours, conducted tours
- Caravan, cruise boats, Yatch, house boats and establishment of boats clubs
- Establishment and operation of ropeway
- Yoga, Ayurveda and Naturopathy institutes
- Travel agent/Tour Operation Company.
- Operation of helium and hot air balloon
- Activities in Rural tourism
- Spa & health resorts.
- MICE convention center (minimum area of 10,000sq. ft)

STRENGTHENING OF TOURISM TRANSPORT SYSTEM AIR TRANSPORT

- i. Air transport will be developed further to improve last mile connectivity to the tourist places in the State. All the major tourist places will be connected through the aerial route. At present air connectivity is available only for Agra, Lucknow, Varanasi and other places.
- ii. International Airports will be constructed in Agra and Kushinagar

- iii. Civil Airports will be established at Allahabad, Gorakhpur, Jhansi, Muradabad
- iv. air taxi and helicopter services will be encouraged to facilitate travel of tourists
- v. Private entrepreneurs will be encouraged for operating the air transport services through the State's Intra-State Regional Connectivity policy

ROAD TRANSPORT

- i. All major tourist destinations which lack good connectivity will be connected through good quality roads. All major destinations will be connected through 4 lane highways and where needed the existing 4 lanes will be upgraded to 6 lane highways. The Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department will actively pursue this with the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI), Uttar Pradesh State Highways Authority of India (UPSHAI) etc
- ii. The quality of all the main roads connecting the tourist places in the State will be significantly improved with the help of the Public Works Department. It is proposed that a separate head be created in the PWD budget for creating roads connecting major tourist destinations
- iii. Traffic Signages of International and National standards will be placed along major roads leading to tourist destinations
- iv. Public amenities like eateries, toilets, washrooms, ATMs, repair shops, petrol pumps etc. will be created at strategic locations
- v. Police and Highway Patrol to be ensured on all major state and national highways connecting major tourism destinations in co-ordination with Home department and Highway Authorities

BUS SERVICE

- i. Department of Tourism will increase its offerings in terms of Tourists Coaches/Luxury Buses by creating tourism packages to major tourism destinations with the help of UPSTDC & private sector
- ii. Hop-on and Hop-off bus services will be introduced at tourist places

RAIL TRANSPORT

- i. At present only a few major tourist destinations are connected to the National capital by superfast express trains. Efforts will be made in close co-ordination with Indian Railways to

connect all major tourist destinations with the National Capital Region with high-speed rail services

- ii. Efforts will be made to extend Shatabdi connectivity to Varanasi on the Heritage Arc (Agra – Lucknow – Varanasi)
- iii. Arrangements for special tourist trains will be made for important tourist destinations/ festivals in close co-ordination with Indian Railways.

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOURIST DESTINATIONS

- i. New tourist destinations and new circuits shall be identified and presented to tourists
- ii. In the Tourism Policy of 1998; seven circuits had been identified for tourism development. These will be reorganized and new attractions will be added to them. The circuits identified in 1998 were:
 - Braj Circuit (Mathura, Vrindavan, Agra and other places connected to Lord Shri Krishna's life)
 - Bundelkhand Circuit (Jhansi, Lalitpur, Deogarh, Kalinjar, Chitrakoot and nearby areas)
 - Buddha Circuit (pilgrimage sites connected with Lord Buddha)
 - Vindhya Circuit (areas connected to Vindhya-achal and Sonbhadra)
 - Awadh Circuit (Lucknow and Allahabad and areas in between)
 - Forest, Eco Tourism and Adventure Tourism Circuit (Wildlife sanctuaries, forests and ecotourism spots in the State)
 - Water Sports Circuit (places with possibilities of water sports)
 - The State Department will undertake Infra-Gap Analysis of the existing tourism circuits to assess the civic and tourist infrastructure, and shall improve and strengthen the same for better tourist satisfaction.
 - Seven new circuits will be added to this series –
 - Heritage Arc (Agra-Lucknow-Varanasi) region
 - Mahabharata Circuit (areas connected to the Mahabharata era)
 - Ramayana Circuit (areas connected to the Ramayana era)
 - Jain Circuit (areas connected to the Jain faith)
 - Sufi Circuit (prominent areas connected to Sufism)

- Freedom Struggle Circuit (areas connected to the independence movement)
- Craft, Cuisine and Culture trail (cultural centers connected to handicrafts, cuisine and special cultural activities)

SHORTAGE OF HOTEL ROOMS AT TOURIST DESTINATIONS

- i. Development of wayside amenities with the help of private sector participation along major tourist routes / circuits
- ii. To address shortage of accommodation facilities the department of tourism shall identify unutilized government properties/rest-houses viz. Department of Irrigation, PWD, Forest amongst others will be utilized for tourism purposes
- iii. Efforts shall be made with local bodies and development authorities to make regulations/bye-laws flexible towards encouraging private sector participation in establishing tourism units
- iv. Provisioning of land parcels for tourism activities will be ensured under the development plans of local development authorities including provision for hotels in the City Master plans
- v. Department of Tourism will be consulted in selection of land parcels for development of hotels.

DEVELOPMENT OF PILGRIMAGE TOURISM

- i. Strengthening and Upgradation of civic amenities and facilities at religious tourist destinations across the state
- ii. Strengthening the facilities at religious destinations will be done developing management trusts on the lines of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board
- iii. The private sector shall be encouraged to participate towards creation of accommodation facilities at religious destinations
- iv. With the help of local bodies regular cleanliness drives shall be ensured at religious destinations
- v. Creation of Tourist Facilitation Centres will be done to enhance the visitor experience at religious destinations. These centres shall ensure centralized booking facilities, tourist information, food etc. Such centres shall be set

up in the upcoming 10 years at Vrindavan, Vindhyachal, Ayodhya, Naimisharanya, Varanasi etc.

DEVELOPMENT ECOTOURISM & WILDLIFE TOURISM

- i. The Department of Tourism will provide civic and tourist amenities in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries jointly along with Forest Department to ensure visitor satisfaction
- ii. Nature Interpretation Centers, Nature Camps, Boating, Nature Tour Programs etc shall be organized
- iii. While encouraging wildlife tourism it shall be ensured that it does not disturb, deteriorate or have any negative impact on the environment
- iv. Planning for such destinations will be done by engaging the local communities to ensure equitable distribution of benefits and socio-economic upliftment of the local population.
- v. Trained eco-tourism guides and naturalists shall be trained and certified in co-ordination with the Forest Department

DEVELOPMENT ADVENTURE TOURISM

- i. Private sector participation will be encouraged to develop adventure tourism activities like rock climbing, bungee jumping, aero sports activities like hot air ballooning, paragliding, parasailing and water sports centers etc will be developed
- ii. There will be an arrangement of special incentives to start adventure tourism activities in Bundelkhand and Vindhya regions

DEVELOPMENT CULTURAL TOURISM

- i. The Department will keep on organizing several Mahotsavas and events to promote cultural tourism
- ii. Financial assistance will be provided for organizing traditional fairs
- iii. The dates of fairs/festivals will be publicized for the next ten years in the publicity materials and events of the state

DEVELOPMENT CRAFT / HANDLOOM AND TEXTILE TOURISM

- i. Moradabad's craft industry, Bhadohi's carpet industry, Agra's inlay work and Zardoji, Varanasi's silk industry, Gorakhpur's terracota, Nijamabad and Khurja's pottery industry and

- Lucknow's chikan industry are world famous.
- ii. Shilpgrams and Shilp Bazaars will be established across the state to promote UP's rich Handicraft legacy
 - iii. The state shall develop textile tourism circuits to promote the indigenous art by linking it to major tourist destinations

RURAL TOURISM

Under Rural Tourism Policy, villages will be identified which are associated with special art forms or handicraft, music genre with a view to introduce foreign tourists and encourage their stay in the State. This shall enable tourists to experience special village cuisine, culture and arts. Comprehensive village development plans to be prepared to boost tourism in rural areas

PROMOTION OF SELF EMPLOYMENT IN TOURISM SECTOR

To enhance the employment opportunities in tourism industry a grant up to INR 10 Lakhs can be availed by fast food centers, souvenir shops, operation of buses, taxies, adventure sports, camp sites, garages, etc.

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