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Rural Tourism and Sustainable Development in India

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Abstract - A tourist Paradise, India in a magnum of diverse geography and cultures, offering 30 words heritage sites, 25 biographical Zones and attractive beaches. The Country Saw the arrived of 1282 million domestic and 22.57 million foreign tourist in the year 2013-14. Tourism in India accounts for 6.8% of the GDP, and in the third largest foreign expanse earner for the country with USD 18.13 Billion. It has been accorded a priority sector status in the 12th five year plan.

Rural Tourism in rural areas is in a new form of activity that can bring economic and social benefits to the Society. In Asia, specialty in India, rural tourism in its true form is relatively new. Rural tourism can help in shaping our society. Our government is promoting Rural tourism for sustainable Development and livelihood Generation. Various organization and NGO are also playing a vital Role for development of tourism. The main aim of present this paper to analyze the Role of tourism in sustainable Development. The brief shads light upon the various aspects related to rural tourism and the great potential that India Keeps for emerging as a rural tourism icon. The final section enlists various centrally sponsored schemes for supporting the rural tourism in country.

Keywords: - Rural Tourism, Challenges, sustainable development.

I. Introduction

A tourist's paradise India is a magnum of diverse geography and cultures, offering 30 World Heritage sites, 25 biographical zones and attractive beaches. The country saw the arrival of 1282 million domestic and 22.57 million foreign tourists in the year 2013-14. Tourism in India accounts for 6.8% of the GDP, and is the third largest foreign exchange earner for the country with USD 18.13 Billion. It has been accorded a priority sector status in the 12th Five-year Plan.

In recent years, there has been an increased realization that the tourism growth potential can be harnessed as a strategy for Rural Development with 69% population living in rural India, and almost 6.5 million village units spread across the country. India foresees itself as a strong platform for harnessing rural tourism. The geographical diversity of India makes it

a unique spot for harnessing rural tourism which can include tourist sites like desert, mountains, plains, plateaus, islands and coasts in different regions. 2 biodiversity hotspots of the total 34 in the world are located in India, namely, the Western Ghats and Himalayas, housing a large number of flora and fauna. India showcases a variety of cultural patterns having different lifestyles practice, art and craft and festivals. These can be incorporated and leveraged in the form of rural tourism. The Country is also rich in heritage and offers 30 world Heritage sites.

Factors such as increasing level of awareness growing interest in heritage and culture, improved accessibility and environmental consciousness have shifted trends towards rural tourism. This will not only preserve the culture and heritage of the country, but will also generate employment in the villagers since it can be leveraged to provide skill development in tourism related job roles such as that of guide, driver, cook, housekeeping and hospitality to the tourism. Minister of tourism specifies that any form of tourism that showcases the rural life art, culture, and heritage at rural locations, benefits the local community economically and socially, and enables interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching tourism experience can be termed as rural tourism. Rural tourism may include multiple facets such as farm tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, and eco-tourism. The country has been successful rural tourism models in states such as Kerala's backwater, Karnataka's forest and Tamil nadu's temple.

What is rural Tourism?

In broad sense it can be defined as a state of mind and technically according to activities, destination and other measurable, tangible characteristics (Sharpley & Sharpley 1997).

Over line researchers have constantly added to understanding the activities that compass rural tourism. The list includes interest in farms, nature, adventure, health, education arts and heritage. (Bramwell & Lane in Jolliffe & MacDonald 2003) and experiencing living history such as rural custom 2003) folklore, local traditions and common heritage (Pedford in Jolliffe & Macdonald 2003). The Key Parameters that define rural, tourism are, It is located in rural areas, functionally rural, based on small scale and traditional activities and enterprises (rural in scale) relies on the traditional qualities of the country side develops slowly under the control of local people and is non uniform (reflecting the complexity of the rural environment) (Thomson Learning)

II. Geographic and Demographic Definitions

"A Multi-faced activity that takes place in an environment outside heavily urbanized areas. It in industry sector characterized by small scale tourism business, set in area where land use is dominated by agricultural pursuits, forestry or natural area" (Department of Tourism 1994)

Sustainable Rural Tourism-

The united nation world tourism organisation notes that within next 5-10 years the range of products on offers to tourists the rural experience is to increase significantly. There is a clear trend in the growth of rural tourist with the increase in the number of tourism visiting these places (United nation World tourism organisation 1999). Sustainable development has been in existence and practiced since time immemorial. However the concept of sustainability as it is understood today was first defined is the "Brundtland Report 1987" by the world

commission on Environment and Development, as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs" (Williams 1998). Though the Brundtland report made no special reference to tourism, the role of tourism in the process of community misusing the Earth's resources has been analysed and the concept of sustainable tourism appeared (Ratz & Puckzo 1998). Various International conventions organisations since then have highlighted the importance of sustainable tourism. Essentially the basis of Sustainable tourism development is recognition of the relationship that operating environment, the destination environment and the host community and how to find balanced approach amongst the three (Sharply & Sharply 1997). It is this ideal balance that is sought by most planners. The need of the hour is to align rural tourism under the broad ambit of Sustainable development. The reason as explained by Lane (1994) "visitors to the countryside are increasingly mobile and are able to penetrate more remote areas than just a few year ago, Advances in modes of transport have assisted this coupled with the increasingly sophistic marketing of new destination. Outsiders who have little undertaking of the people, culture and heritage of the area may manage rural tourism. While realizing a need to stimulate some rural economics reliance on tourism may tend to an unbalanced economy" (Thomas Learning). However information on the principals of sustainable rural tourism still remains elusive. Efforts have been made by a few countries answer this question. United Kingdom has published advisory booklets on the Development of sustainable rural tourism and working for the countryside. A Strategy for rural tourism in England (2001-2005), while India, Korea and others have incorporated this element in to their national policies. As there is no clear direction on this subject, each county trying to mesh this ideology into its national policies.

III. Role of Govt Schemes for Promotion for Rural Tourism

Under this scheme thrust will be to promote village tourism as the primary tourism product to spread tourism its socio economic benefits to rural and its new geographic region. Key geographic region would be identifying for Development and promotion of rural tourism. The implementation would be done through a convergence committee headed by district Collector activates like improving the environment, hygiene, Infrastructure etc., would be eligible, for assistance. Apart from providing financial assistance the focus would be to tap the resource available under life schemes of department of Rural Development, state govt and other concern department of govt of India. The key scheme for promotion of Rural Tourism are-

1. Rural Tourism infrastructure development component under (PIDDC) scheme-

The ministry of Tourism has released a Rural Tourism Infrastructure development component which is part of the product infrastructure Development for destinations and circuits (PIDDC) scheme, 100% central assistance is provided in this scheme. The objectives of this scheme is to showcase rural life, art, culture and heritage is village that have core competence is art and craft, handloom, textiles and natural environment. Central financial assistance (CFA) up to Rs. 50 lakh for infrastructure development and up to 20 lakh for capacity building is provided.

2. Domestic promotion & publicities including hospitality (DPPH)-

Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to organize fairs and festivals and tourism relates events such as seminars, conclaves and convention. These events are to selected by the stale Government based on the tourism provide. Maximum Financial assistance to be potential to earn state Government during 1 financial year should not Rs. 50 Lakh.

3. Swadesh Darshan-

The ministry of Tourism introduced swadesh Darshan a central sector scheme for integrated Development of Theme based Tourist circuits. A Tourist circuit is a route on which at least three tourist major destinations are located such that none of them are in the same town, village or city, while a tourist circuit, with a consistence there such as religion culture ethnicity and nice is known as Theme based tourist circuit. These circuit would be Identified by ministry of Tourist based on factors such as current tourist traffic, connectivity, potential and significance attached to sites and holistic tourist experience. The allocated budget, for the scheme is 600 crore for 2015-16.

4. Hunnar se Rozgar (HSRT) Programme-

Fully funded by ministry of Tourism, this programme offers courses in hospitality trades of food production, food and beverages, service, housekeeping and bakery and patisserie. Apart from that courses to bring up tourist escorts, tourist facilitators, event facilitators, security guard tour assistants, transfer assistants, and office assistant, have also been set up. This programme in delivered by institutes of Hotel management food craft Institutes and state Tourism Development Corporation amongst others. Over 2 lakh person have been trained under the programme 31st march 2015.

5. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

This is a flagship outcome based skilled training scheme aimed at benefiting a monetary reward in provided to trainees on assessment and certification. The National skill Development Corporation (NSDC) will implement the scheme and involve the sector skill councils to Identify Job roles for which training could be imparted through the PMMKVY. A Budget of INR 1500, Crore has been allocated for the same which would also include awareness, mobilization and administrative expenses. NSDC supports vocational training institutes by providing funding up to 75% of the total project cost in case of known profit entities and up to 85% of the total project cost in care of not for profit entities. Candidates who successfully complete the courses are given skill card. The trainees are also entitled to a monetary reward upon successful completion of the assessment carried out by the assessment agencies, which are appointed by the SSC Training is Tourism and Hospitality is given under this scheme, where in the trainees are trained for job roles such as guide, driver, cook, housekeeping and hospitality to the locals.

IV. Challenges in Rural Tourism

The major challenges are need to preserve the environment and natural resources the need for education, proper understanding for both tourist and local people, and the need to generate a democratic movement which helps people at all levels to participate in tourism development. These are some major challenges are-

- * lack of basic proper education
- *Language problems for rural people
- *Inadequate financial support.

- *Lack of skilled manpower.
- *Illiteracy in rural area.
- *Lack of proper physical communication
- *Lack of business skills.
- *Lack of trained Tourist guide.
- *Problems of communication skills

The above challenges are basic hurdles for Development of Rural Tourism in India.

V. Conclusion

It is clear from above all aspects that rural tourism will emerged as an important instrument for sustainable, development including poverty alleviation, employment, generation environmental regeneration and development of remote areas and advancement of women and other disadvantaged groups in the country apart from promoting social integration and international understanding. Environmental management, local involvement, sound legislation, sustainable marketing and realistic planning are crucial for development of rural tourism.

Thus government should recognize importance of rural tourism at priority and help is creating healthy competition business environment. Government should try to generate data for decision making bodies investing for development the human resource, create adequate facilities and suitable infrastructure like accommodation. Roads, airport facilities, rail facilities, local transport, communication links and other essential amenities become essential for development of rural tourism.

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