



सत्यमेव जयते

# TOURISM POLICY

Ministry of Tourism  
Government of India

## TOURISM POLICY

(Presented by the Minister for Tourism  
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### Dimensions of Tourism

1. Tourism has become a global phenomenon in the last 30 years. Better and faster means of communications have resulted in a massive movement of people throughout the world drawing them closer through experiencing and appreciating one another's culture and life-style. To give an idea of the dimensions of world travel, in 1981 there were about 290 million world travellers who spent US \$ 106 billion (Rs. 84,800 crores). In India alone about 5 million people, excluding city commuters, are carried daily by the Railways over their vast networks indicating the strength of domestic travel movement within the country.

### Parameters of Tourism

2. The parameters of tourism are wide and far-reaching. From a small beginning of individuals travelling alone in search of adventure



knowledge, trade and pilgrimage, the mass movement of people today all over the world has given rise to a highly sophisticated, multi-disciplinary industry - Tourism - to develop and promote tourist activities, to service the tourist facilities so as to ensure visitor - satisfaction and thus generate more travel. Because tourism promotes exchange of ideas and views and facilitates interaction of people and their culture, it can be a potent instrument for achieving national integration, better international understanding and ultimately peaceful co-existence for the people of the world.

3.1 Despite its world-wide operations, tourism can function in the smallest of settings as effectively and efficiently as in wide-ranging, multi-national operations. It has thus the flexibility of adjustments to situations which few industries possess. Tourism can thus be an individual endeavour or it can employ thousands in a single operation. It can be a small enterprise or a multi-million project. Tourism is thus both labour-intensive and capital-intensive activity. In economic terms, tourism is a major source of foreign exchange earnings for many countries. It can help correct adverse trade balances and regional imbalances, create employment opportunities and give a direct stimulus to the socio-economic development of



backward areas in a country.

3.2 However, there are pitfalls as well. Unregulated tourism can cause many problems, unbalanced social change and economic development, social tensions and environmental pollution, distortion of life-styles and cultural decay - indeed the destruction of the very entity on which tourism is built.

### Stages of Tourism Development

4.1 Tourism development in India has passed through many stages. At Government level, the development of tourist facilities was taken up in a planned manner from 1956 coinciding with the Second Five Year Plan. The developmental approach has evolved from isolated planning of single unit facilities in the Second and Third Five Year Plans to integrated development in the Fourth Plan (Gulmarg and Kovalam projects), and thereon to integrated area development in the Fifth and Sixth Plans.

4.2 The many attractions of India hold virtually an unlimited potential for tourism development. The endeavour therefore will be to convert this vast potential into reality through well-planned, well-defined and fully integrated national programmes of tourism development.



4.3 The performance in the field of tourism over the past 30 years has been quite impressive. In 1951, 25 million world travellers crossed national frontiers to visit other countries as tourists. Of these, India received 16,829 or only 0.066 per cent. In 1981 while the world tourist movement was estimated at 290 million, India received 8.53 lakhs and 4.27 lakh arrivals from Pakistan and Bangladesh or 0.44 per cent. The estimated foreign exchange earnings of India from tourism in 1951 were Rs. 7.7 crores. In 1981 these were estimated at Rs. 702 crores. Hardly any other sector of the economy has recorded such a consistently notable performance.

4.4 In 1951 there were only a few hotels primarily in the metropolitan cities and at hill stations which could cater to the needs of the tourists. There were only a handful of travel agencies. Today there are 371 Government of India approved hotels with 23,620 rooms and 185 approved travel agencies throughout the country.

### Objectives

5. The Government's objectives thus are to so develop tourism that :

- (1) It becomes a unifying force nationally and



internationally fostering better understanding through travel.

(ii) It helps to preserve, retain and enrich our world-view and life-style, our cultural expressions and heritage in all its manifestations. The prosperity that tourism brings must cause accretion and strength rather than damage to our social and cultural values and depletion of our natural resources. In tourism, India must present itself on its own terms - not as an echo or imitation of other countries, other cultures and other lifestyles.

(iii) It brings socio-economic benefits to the community and the State in terms of employment opportunities, income generation, revenue generation for the States, foreign exchange earnings and, in general, causes human-habitat improvement.

(iv) It gives a direction and opportunity to the youth of the country both through international and domestic tourism to understand the aspirations and viewpoints of others and thus to bring about a greater national integration and cohesion.

(v) It also offers opportunities to the youth of the country not only for employment but also for taking up activities of nation building



character like sports, adventure and the like. Thus as a programme for the moulding of the youth of the country, tourism is of inestimable value.

6.1 Domestic Tourism: Domestic tourists travelling within their country form the bulk of world tourist traffic. While domestic tourist statistics are not available at present on an all India basis, the volume of passenger traffic carried by our Railways and the road transportation system is indicative of the enormous size of domestic tourism in India. For the large number of our people who travel on pilgrimage or as tourists, facilities provided are minimal. It will therefore be our endeavour to substantially improve and expand facilities for domestic tourists.

6.2 International Tourism: Recognising the importance of international tourism in earning foreign exchange and thereby making a major contribution to the national economy as well as in creating international goodwill and understanding, high priority will be accorded to the development of international tourism.

6.3.1 Cultural Tourism: Various surveys and studies have confirmed that the biggest element in attracting international tourists to India is our historical and archaeological



monuments. Although the maintenance and upkeep of the monuments is the responsibility of the Archaeological Survey of India and the State Departments of Archaeology, it is proposed to provide adequate tourist facilities at the major centres of cultural interest in a planned manner in co-ordination with the other concerned agencies including the State Governments.

6.3.2 The intention is to fully exploit the rich heritage of archaeological monuments, religious centres dear to the followers of various religions of the world as well as the rich heritage in the field of performing arts, the variety of which could itself be the sole objective of the tourist's visit to India.

#### Tourism — a Common Endeavour

7. While broadly the promotion of international tourism will be mainly the responsibility of the Central Sector, and that of domestic tourism primarily of the State Sector, the Centre would play a coordinating role supplementing the State effort wherever necessary. Further, tourism development cannot solely be the responsibility of the Government. It has to be a common endeavour of all the agencies vitally concerned with its development at Central and State levels, of public sector undertakings and



the private sector, of airlines, railways and communications systems, municipal and local bodies, and educational and cultural organisations. This combined effort will be directed towards achieving a comprehensive, well-rounded and integrated development enabling tourism to make a positive and effective contribution to the economic growth of the country.

### Impact of Tourism

8.1 While the overall impact of tourism on a national scale may be difficult to measure as it is a pervasive activity rather than a tangible commodity, it can be more easily assessed in specific situations where the parameters can be more precisely defined. For example, the cost/benefit study of the Gulmarg Winter Sports Project has shown that the net social benefit accruing from winter sports development as envisaged would be around Rs. 600 crores over a period of 25 to 30 years, the multiplier effect being 3.3. In a similar study of the Kovalam Beach Resort Project, the multiplier effect was found to be 2.5. In the field of international tourism, foreign exchange earned from tourism in 1979-80 showed an increase of 20.4 per cent as against an increase of 12.8 per cent growth rate in the commodity exports from India. The Committee on Export Strategy -



1980's\* in its Report mentions that while India's exports altogether constituted 0.42 per cent of the total world exports in 1979, India's share of the world tourism receipts was 0.58 per cent. This despite the fact that 1979 was one of the poorest years for tourism to India. These figures were as follows :- 0.58% in 1979; 0.64% in 1980 and 0.76% in 1981. The fact thus remains that given the opportunity tourism can make an effective contribution towards reducing the country's deficits in international trade. Equally, it can bring sizeable socio-economic benefits to those regions of the country which are rich in tourism potential.

8.2 Increasing attention will be given to Regional tourism i.e. the tourism among the countries of the South Asian Region (comprising the Indian subcontinent) extending the scope to cover Afghanistan, Iran and the Republic of Maldives. Through promotion of tourism in the region, tourism will attempt to play its role in bringing about greater understanding among the countries of the region and consciousness of the oneness of the region.

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\* This Committee was constituted by Govt. of India, Ministry of Commerce, Civil Supplies & Co-operation (Deptt. of Commerce) vide Resolution No.4(23)79-EPL dated 28th June, 1979. Final Report was submitted in December, 1980.



## Plan of Action

9.1 Thus, in order to maximise the benefits of tourism it will be necessary to have a selective approach for determining investment priorities. Rather than spread the resources thin and thereby dilute the impact of tourism, priority will be given to schemes which yield economic returns and generate social benefits. The development of tourist infrastructure will thus be taken up based on the "travel circuit" concept in a 5 to 10 year perspective. This will enable intensive development of selected centres, dispel the tendency to concentrate in a few urban centres, and encourage the diversification of tourist attractions, particularly in opening up economically backward areas which hold many tourist attractions such as archaeological and historical monuments, places of natural beauty, festivals, arts and crafts.

9.1.2 To involve the youth of the country in national integration and make tourism a vehicle for achieving this objective, youth hostel activity will be given significant importance in the plan of action. This will facilitate the youth from different parts of the country exchanging views and ideas getting themselves exposed to the various parts of the country and thus bringing about greater understanding between youths of all parts of the country, apart from catalysing



international understanding through the youth movement. The existing modest network of youth hostels set up for the purpose will be expanded and the movement strengthened substantially.

9.1.3 The policy on tourism will take cognizance of the need to under-score the fact that tourism facilities for the lower middle class and the poorer sections of the society for getting to know about other parts of the country through travel require to be augmented and towards this purpose, and with particular reference to pilgrimage tourism, cheap accommodation is proposed to be provided through Dharamshalas, Sarais etc. making use of suitable organisations like the Bhartiya Yatri Avas Vikas Samiti and the like to put up such facilities.

9.2 Marketing strategy will be to broaden the tourist base in existing markets, explore new tourist markets, and promote and facilitate intra-regional travel, particularly from neighbouring countries. A dynamic and pragmatic approach will be adopted in identifying regions from where tourist traffic to India has growing potentiality as for instance, West Asian as well as North African countries where as a result of oil, there is a great boom and prosperity resulting in people in these countries desiring to go on pleasure tours abroad. The



WANA countries have a predilection towards India because of its close link with West Asia and North Africa from historical times. Special emphasis has to be given for travel from these countries to India. The infrastructure will be so developed as to cater to the tastes of the tourists from these regions. Similarly the infrastructure at Buddhist centres is being developed as for instance, through a series of Buddhist oriented hotels with a view to attracting large scale Buddhist traffic through charter as well as by the normal services to India making India a Buddhist destination. With the vast Buddhist population in the Far East, there is considerable potentiality for traffic to India from these countries. The assistance of the Railway Ministry is being sought for operating special charter trains to cover the Buddhist centres and also supplement accommodation in hotels through these special trains which would be self-contained mobile hotels, as it were.

9.3 Special attention will be paid to developing social tourism to benefit the weaker sections of society.

9.4 Manpower development and training will be given due weightage to ensure efficient service and effective management of tourist facilities for maximising returns on investments made.



9.5.1 To attract private sector investment in building up the tourist infrastructure and for augmenting various services to keep pace with the tourist demand, it will be necessary to extend fiscal and other incentives to the various segments of the tourism industry on par with those given to other export-oriented industries.

9.5.2 Towards this purpose every endeavour will be made to secure fiscal and other incentives from the concerned Ministries of Government in order to make investment in the tourism industry worthwhile. In this process an endeavour will also be made to highlight the fact that in the context of the country needing substantial foreign exchange for its developmental activities, tourism industry will constitute a major agency/industry for the acquisition of foreign exchange of a sizeable quantum not incomparable to, and in due course expect to exceed, the contribution of foreign exchange made by the engineering goods industries, Handloom and Handicraft industries and such other major foreign exchange earning export-oriented industries.

9.5.3 In this context an endeavour will also have to be made to obtain for tourism industry the status of an export-oriented industry.



## Conservation and Development

10. A major consideration of tourism development will be to preserve our cultural and natural heritage which constitutes the major tourism resources of the country. Despoliation of the natural environment of archaeological monuments, beaches, mountains and places of natural beauty, disruption in the ecosystems of environmentally sensitive regions through haphazard growth of tourist facilities and injecting tourist inflow beyond the absorption capacity of the place/region, destruction of traditions in the culturally sensitive areas, clandestine selling of antiques and vandalism - these are some of the negative aspects of tourism which can lead to the depletion of tourism resources of the country. Similarly the environmental aspects of industrial, urban and other types of development, whether in the immediate vicinity of archaeological sites and places of natural beauty or in their peripheral areas are a matter of deep concern as they can adversely effect the development of tourism. A judicious balance therefore needs to be maintained between conservation and development. Appropriate measures therefore would be necessary to educate the people in appreciating their rich heritage, and eliciting their cooperation in preserving and protecting it.



## A New Ethos and Value

11. India has a long tradition of social and cultural values, and possesses a spiritual quality that has come down unbroken from time immemorial. It is this quintessence of our culture that tourism should be able to project so as to give to our people a sense of unity and identity, a broadening of their intellectual emotional and cultural horizon and a sense of belonging and pride, and for the international traveller, tourism should create a better understanding of our land, people and culture. The cultural, social and economic benefits of tourism that flow from this policy should give a new ethos and value to tourism, and a new sense of purpose and direction to its development and promotion.

## Conclusion

12. It is our earnest hope that this policy on tourism, being presented for the first time, will find wide acceptance and will help to enrich our life and bring greater prosperity to our people in the years to come.