

## Promotion of tourism in India

Manzoor Ahmad Khan

Assistant Professor (Travel and Tourism), University of Kashmir, Jammu & Kashmir, India.

### Abstract

Hospitality sector in India is luring foreign tourists towards spirituality, yoga, medical tourism and cultural diversity from past few decades. Tourism promoters are using attractive promotional strategies and revitalizing old tourism offerings. This paper is an attempt to discuss various promotional strategies to boost the tourism in the country.

**Keywords:** MICE Tourism, Spiritual tourism, eco-tourism, Atithi Devo Bawa, Incredible India

### 1. Introduction

The tourism promotion mainly involves telling the people about the product or in other words making people familiar with the tourist destinations and what it offers to the tourists. Nowadays it all depends on the promotion of a tourist destination which attracts more and more tourists and makes it a successful tourist destination. The best tourism promotion results in the familiarity of the tourist destination among the people. India has a huge potential for tourism. In 2014 number of foreign tourist arrivals in India was 22.57 million tourists (source: bureau of immigration govt. of India.). Similarly number of domestic tourists in India in 2014 was 1281.95 million tourists (source: state/ union territory tourism departments). Foreign exchange earnings from tourism in 2014 were \$20236 million (source: Reserve Bank of India). The contribution of tourism in GDP in India in 2015 was 6.8% (source: ministry of statistics and programme implementation govt. of India.). Tourism gives the second highest net foreign earnings to our economy. Total share of India in international tourism receipts in world in 2014 was 1.58% (source: UNWTO). According to tourism policy of India, India's share in international tourism will be 2% by 2025. But all this is possible only when it promotes its tourist destinations and new tourism potential in a very efficient and intelligent manner so that maximum number of tourists will be attracted to India. The following measures were taken for the promotion of tourism in India.

**1. Incredible India campaign:** - this campaign was launched by govt. of India in the year 2002. The main motive of this campaign was to encourage visitors from all over the world to experience India. For this purpose various marketing efforts including television, radio and print ads were involved. This campaign also includes road shows, which were initially planned for the countries like Canada, United Kingdom, Singapore, Malaysia, Russia, Australia and New Zealand. This ad campaign was combined with an effort to improve domestic conditions that hindered tourism to a great extent, such as poor infrastructure and not enough hotels. The campaign projected India as an attractive tourist destination by showcasing different aspects of Indian culture and history like yoga, spirituality, etc. The campaign was conducted globally and received appreciation from tourism industry observers and

travellers alike. Indian travel industry analysts and tour operators were appreciative of the high standards of the 'Incredible India' campaign. "The promo campaign is making a powerful visual impact and creating a perception of India being a magical place to visit," said Anne Morgaon Scully, President, Mc Cabe Bremer Travel, Virginia, U.S. Average travellers too appeared to find the campaign interesting and informative, going by favourable comments on blogs on travel websites. Although the 'Incredible India' campaign was generally well received, industry observers differed in their opinions on the positioning of India in the campaign. G.S.Murari, Director, Fidelis Advertising and Marketing Pvt. Ltd. stated he was uncomfortable with the tagline 'Incredible India' and was of the opinion that since India was not a uni-dimensional country like Singapore or the Maldives, using a word like 'incredible' to describe India as a whole was not appropriate. In 2011, Arjun Sharma, Managing Director, Le Passage to India, stated that the campaign has lived its life and it had to be reinvented. The Ministry of Tourism has again engaged Ogilvy & Mather for a period of three years, beginning 2012, to redefine the brand and provide a strategic vision for the campaign. The government of India adopted the ancient verse from the ancient Hindu scripture to promote the increasing tourism influx in the country. The tourists had some complaints when they used to visit the country like overcharging from the vendors, misbehaviour and unfriendly attitude. Responding to the need of the tourists, Ministry of Tourism came up with the Social Awareness Campaign for attitudinal and behavioural change towards the tourists and so adopted the part of the verse – *atithi devo bhava* from the Indian scripture itself so that it gives a psychological impact upon the local populace to treat the guests with love, respect and warmth. The main aim of the government in this nationwide "Atithi Devo Bhava" campaign is to sensitize key stakeholders in the tourism industry through a process of training & orientation. Extending it to one notch further, the campaign takes into account the general public as a whole focusing on their attitudinal and behavioural change. The campaign aims to train and orient taxi drivers, guides, police, immigration officers and other personnel who are the first levels to interact with the tourists. The different stages in "Atithi Devo Bhava" campaign are Sensitization, Screening, Induction, Certification and Feedback of key stakeholders so

that a process-chain is created resulting into desired tourist-friendly environment created over a period of time.

**2. Building up of infrastructure:** - To attract more and more tourists, India is building its infrastructure. World class airports, hotels, shopping malls, clubs, information centres etc. are being build. For this purpose, India has allowed FDI in tourism sector.

**3. Making more lodging available:** - there is a lack of available lodging in India. Therefore it needs to be addressed before the nation could handle a large surge in tourists. As one of the solution to this particular problem, the ministry of tourism has encouraged Indian entrepreneurs to start lodging tourists in bed and breakfast style guest lodging. These bed and breakfast lodging offer visitors an authentic experience with Indian cuisine, culture and people, as well as an increase in the number of guest rooms available in metropolitan areas.

**4. Transportation and accessibility:** - India's poor infrastructure is another hurdle to the growth of tourism successfully. The accessibility to rural areas is still very poor. But now Indian govt. is paying much attention to accessibility to rural areas, so that these areas could be thrown open to the tourists. Besides road connectivity, Indian government is also installing heliports in these rural areas, where the tourists can easily travel from metropolitan areas to a rural area by helicopter.

**5. Heritage and ecotourism in India:** - Many visit India seeking signs of the ancient culture founded there. A popular heritage sight is the Taj Mahal, which attracts millions of visitors each year. India's Ministry of Tourism attempts to implement sustainable practices, promoting the ideals of ecotourism to its partner sites and tour guides. The Ministry also is integrating the ideals of conservation and preservation of the local ecology and culture to the greatest extent possible. The Ministry is working to create unique tourist experiences in rural India that promote local culture and have a low impact on the environment.

**6. Health and wellness tourism:** - As the birthplace of yoga and Ayurveda, India has a particular appeal to visitors who are searching for spiritual and physical healing. Since the Beatles visited an Indian ashram in the late 1960s, the popularity of visiting these spiritual yoga centres has grown among Westerners. The Ministry uses that popularity to highlight these traditions in their campaigns.

**7. Spiritual tourism:** - Blending spiritualism with tourism, the government is preparing a new programme to attract tourists, taking a leaf out of Italy and Saudi Arabia which are flocked by huge number of pilgrims every year. Under the 'Spiritual Tourism' programme, the government has drawn up plans to develop holy places and heritage monuments in different parts of the country to woo tourists. "If you look at spiritual tourism throughout the world, it is very big. There is a huge footfall in Rome at Italy and same is the case of Mecca- Medina. In a similar fashion we should also explore our rich potential aspects comprising epics and spirituality.

**8. MICE tourism:** - India is not just one of the world's oldest civilizations, it is also the world's largest democracy, and has made stupendous progress among developing nations. India's impressive variety of history and culture, from the ancient Gangetic Kingdoms to the present state, harmoniously blend to form a unique atmosphere in over a million square kilometres of scenic sights. A continent-sized country, India possesses an amazing wealth of sights and sounds, tastes and textures. From a bustling cosmopolitan city to the quiet countryside, hill station or a beach resort, India has destinations, which offer a backdrop of unmatched beauty for a business meet. You will find a fascinating amalgam of tradition & culture, beauty & nature, style & splendour, warmth, feelings & courtesies, comfort & convenience virtually everything the modern conference organiser or delegate could expect. Conferences here bring fresh meaning of the concept of combining work with pleasure. India is not just one of the world's oldest civilizations, it is also the world's largest democracy, and has made stupendous progress among developing nations. India's impressive variety of history and culture, from the ancient Gangetic Kingdoms to the present state, harmoniously blend to form a unique atmosphere in over a million square kilometres of scenic sights. A continent-sized country, India possesses an amazing wealth of sights and sounds, tastes and textures. From a bustling cosmopolitan city to the quiet countryside, hill station or a beach resort, India has destinations, which offer a backdrop of unmatched beauty for a business meet. You will find a fascinating amalgam of tradition & culture, beauty & nature, style & splendour, warmth, feelings & courtesies, comfort & convenience virtually everything the modern conference organiser or delegate could expect. Conferences here bring fresh meaning of the concept of combining work with pleasure. The Infrastructure - India provides an impressive combination of accommodation and other conference support facilities to hold a successful Conference. To mention a few; Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi, Centre Point, Renaissance Hotel and Convention Centre in Mumbai, the B.M Birla Science and Technology Centre in Jaipur, the Jaypee Hotels & International Convention Centre, Agra and the Cochin Convention Centre, Kochi etc. together with facilities in the business hotels and resorts at various canter's in the country. India is going the global way and MICE are fast becoming a major part of its travel and promotional budgets. In the Indian context, incentives is at present the largest component of MICE but in a maturing market, it's only a matter of time before the entire gamut of MICE activities are undertaken by the Indian corporate world.

**9. Medical tourism:** - Medical Tourism in India also known as Health Tourism. India is the favourable destination for Medical Tourism in the world. In India the history of treatment goes back to Vedic period. Where in Vedas it is written about the remedies of many diseases. India has become Medical Tourism capital of modern world. Medical Tourism is growing sector in India and is expected an annual growth rate of 30%, making it a 2 \$ billion by 2015. This is because of low priced health care procedures. The concept of Medical Tourism in India refers to visit by overseas patients for medical treatment and relaxation. The opportunities in India healthcare sector, in medical infrastructure and technology is as good as those offered in the western

countries. India ranks among top three medical tourist destinations in Asia. In India we have a U.S and India based staff of specialists who focuses on Medical Tourism. The environment for most of the complicated surgeries is suitable in India. In India we have Appolo group of hospitals and research centres, Fortis hospitals, Tata memorial hospital and escorts group of hospitals and research centres, who cater these patients. A complete transplant or bypass procedures can be achieved for a tiny fraction of the cost for the same procedure in U.S. This lower cost includes significantly longer post-operative care in the hospital itself.

## 2. Conclusion

Since the tourism industry in India is a fastest growing industry, it needs a great attention. Different strategies, policies and planning for tourism promotion are very necessary to achieve the desired goals. By these effective promotional measures, India could increase its share in the world tourism market and will boost its economy and eradicate unemployment and poverty.

## 3. References

1. Batra GS, Dangwal RC. Tourism Promotion and Development-New Advances. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd, 1992.
2. Bharadwaj Krishnan K, International Tourism-Issues and Challenges, New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, 2001.
3. Fadia, Anurag. Modern Tourism Issues and Challenges. New Delhi: Cyber Tech Publications, 2005.
4. Hariharan, Iyer Kailash. Tourism Development in India. New Delhi: Vista International Publishing House, 1995.
5. Stephen J. Tourism Management-Managing for Changes. New Delhi: Elsevier, 1996.
6. Raina AK, Agarwal SK. The Essence of Tourism Development Dynamics, Philosophy and Strategies. New Delhi: Sarup and Sons, 1985.
7. Seth P. Successful Tourism Management-Tourism Practices. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1990.