

PROBLEMS AND PLANNING OF TOURISM IN NORTH BIHAR

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Abstract :-

The tourism strength of North Bihar plain is that it has a rich inventory of world class tourism resources, both natural as well as manmade which includes picturesque landscape, wildlife sanctuaries & national park, hot springs, cultural heritage sites unique Mithila paintings etc.

- Lack of security & safety measures for tourists ultimately affect the perception & tourism potential of the state.
- Lack of Tourism infrastructure such as Tourist Information Centres, transportation facilities, public conveniences such as toilets, refreshment centers etc.
- Being located in isolation in terms of development, the area is facing challenges, which directly and indirectly curb the growth of tourism. The existing infrastructure, safety & security, local awareness and others are the major hindrance for the development of the tourism in the study area.

Introduction

North Bihar Plain and its adjoining areas have much potential for the development of Tourism. But the area is underdeveloped due to lack of infrastructural facilities for development of tourism. Although the tourist spots are very much famous for theological, historical and natural sites, lack of proper planning has been the hindrance before the development of tourist centres. The problems may be enlisted as follows :

(1) **Absence of well-defined Policy:**

The tourism policies of the state are yet to be developed in tune with the national tourism policies. There is hardly a clear cut and Well-defined policy for the tourism sector at the moment in the state. The State Tourism Development Corporation of Bihar needs to create a Tourism Development Authority consisting of Government Official, Tourism Experts and Professionals for preparing the guidelines and detailed tourism master plan

for the state. The policies must be in tune with other state government policies in order to facilitate convergence and greater co-ordination between concerned ministers.

- (2) **Law and Order :** Due to poor law and order situation, most of the tourists feel hesitant in visiting Bihar particularly in Naxal affected areas of North Bihar which has large number tourist spots. A tourist will never like to visit to a place where their lives may be in jeopardy. The local police are not trained to meet eventualities that the tourist might face. Especially in the case of foreigners the situation is even worse as they leave with harassed feeling preventing repeat tourism and create the wrong kind of publicity abroad. This kind of promotion evidently dissuades others from visiting the state. It has also been observed that a number of pilgrimage sites and its surrounding villages are practically controlled by some criminal gangs. Some instances were reported during the course of discussions with some tour operators that the local goons control some of the tourist destinations. Foreigners reported parting away to their belongings in some lonely remote areas like Bhikhana Tori, Valmiki Nagar, Nandan Garh. Perhaps the state government could also think about deploying the special tourist place in the tourist destinations of Bihar as suggested in the national tourism policy.

- (3) **Linkage and Communication:**

Most of the roads linking different tourist sites are in a deplorable condition. Some of the roads linking tourist spots are unmetalled and brick soaling. Recently, the government has taken steps to make all the dilapidated roads into two lanes, four lanes and metalled roads. In North Bihar the accessibility of fast running tourist buses, cars, taxis etc. is very poor. The state roads are in bad shape with pot holes making travelling extremely risky and dangerous. The simple amenities like toilets and availability of drinking water are almost absent throughout even where there exists a certain degree of road linkages. The private sector needs to be involved in developing and maintaining the infrastructural linkages.

- (4) **Management of Funds:**

The funds to develop and maintain the tourism have not been enhanced considerably. The national tourism sector recently has enhanced its allocation in XIII Five Year Plan. Unfortunately Bihar has not been forthright in allocating a respectable budget for its tourism sector. The expenditure on the various budget heads could be divided among the private sectors, international organizations, the central government and other allied partners. However, this needs a massive networking and marketing skills.

(5) **Lack of International Market :**

The 3 per cent domestic inflow of tourist and 2 per cent foreign tourists into the region depicts clearly that there is a lack of marketing skills not only abroad but also at the domestic front. An effective liaison and dynamic synergy needs to be developed not only between the public and private sector but also within the private sector itself. Awareness regarding its products, services as well as its investment opportunities in the tourism sector has not been highlighted.

(6) **Lack of Professionalism:**

The personnel working in the tourism department need on-job training at regular intervals in order to keep abreast with the current scenario as well as acquire the professionalism and create a 'tourist-friendly' environment. The low employee moral will also get a boost by installing self—confidence among the employees. The typical 'Babu' culture will also mellow down. The tourists sometimes are wrongly guided by the agents of different private hotels and motels. The tourists are charged heavily for visiting the different points of view.

(7) **Dearth of Funds for the Implementation of Tourism Product:**

The state needs substantial investment in tourism on a priority basis. Possibilities need to be explored for generating funds for the implementation of action-oriented projects. The year 2002 being declared as the international year of Eco-tourism has opened up several opportunities. The international agencies can be approached for the funding of some of the programmes. Awareness regarding its products, services as well as its investment opportunities in this sector has not been highlighted. There needs to be more awareness generated among the stakeholders regarding the various schemes available both at a national level as well as at the global level.

(8) **Human Resources Development :**

Tourism is an important aspect of service industries. Tourists depend upon travel agents and guides and hence trained manpower is sine qua non of tourism industry. On the basis of available statistics, training facilities can be safely said to be totally inadequate. If trained manpower is not available locally, the objective of local employment will not be achieved. The state government needs to encourage and support the creation of training facilities in the private sector by private agencies/individuals. Hotel Management courses meant for guides, caterer and other supervisory and non- supervisory staff of hotels could

be introduced in the Industrial Institutes (IT IS). Approved Hotel Associations and Private Entrepreneurs need to be encouraged to create new training facilities by making available land to them for the purpose and by giving other appropriate incentives. The government may consider setting up a Hotel Management Training Institute at the State level preferably in the Private Sector. In North Bihar Plain Human Resource is more in number than it is required.

(9) Lack of Proper Management of wetlands and Religious Places :

Tourist spots should have been managed and maintained properly. Due to mismanagement of natural wetlands and historical temples it has not been converted into tourist centres. The Chaurs of Vaishali, Champaran, the sacred temples located in different parts of the study area like temple of Lord Shiva at Areraj, Nandan Garh, Chanaki Garh, Kesaria Buddhist Stupa, Ashokan Pillars at Lauriya etc. are some of the important tourist centres Where the administration is not paying proper attention to develop these tourist spots. There are no proper facilities for the development of tourism industry.

Development of tourism has also negative impact of different types in the region where tourist centres are located. The tourist centres are over-crowded during the season of tourist arrival. In the favourable season tourist wants to visit the sites. In off-season like rainy season (monsoon period), summer days (hot season) the tourist are low in number. In both the cases problems arise on the sites and in the surrounding region of the tourist sites. In short following adverse impacts have been observed:

Depletion of Natural Resources

Tourism Development can put pressure on natural resources when it increases consumption in areas where resources are already scarce.

(a) Water Resource

Water, especially fresh Water, is one of the most critical natural resources. The tourism industry generally over uses water resources for hotels, swimming pools, golf courses and personal use of water by tourists. This can result in water shortages and degradation of water supplies as well as generating a greater volume of waste water.

(b) Local Resource

Tourism can create greater pressure on local resources like energy, food and other raw materials that may already be in short supply. Greater extraction and transport of these resources exacerbates the physical impacts associated with their exploitation. Due to seasonal character of the tourism industry, many destinations have ten times more inhabitants in the high season as in the low season. A high demand is placed upon these resources to meet the high expectations tourists often have (proper heating, hot water etc.)

(c) Land Degradation

Important land resources include mineral, fossils fuels, fertile soil, forests, wetland and wildlife. Increased construction of tourism and recreational facilities has increased the pressure on these resources and on scenic landscapes. Direct impact on natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable, in the provision of tourist facilities is caused by the use of land for accommodation and other infrastructure provision and the use of building materials. Forests often suffer from negative impacts of tourism in the form of deforestation caused by fuel wood collection and land clearing for agriculture.

Pollution :

Tourism can cause the same forms of pollution as any other industry: air emissions, noise, solid waste and littering, releases of sewage, oil and chemicals even architectural / visual pollution.

(a) Air and Noise Pollution

Transport by air, road and rail is continuously increasing in response to the rising number of tourist activities in India. Transport emissions and emissions from energy production and use are linked to acid rain, global warming and photo chemical pollution. Air pollution from tourist transportation has impacts on the global level, especially from Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emission related to transportation energy use. And it can contribute to severe local air pollution. Some of these impacts are quite specific to tourist activities where the sites are in remote areas like Ajanta and Ellora temples. Tour buses often leave their motors running for hours while the tourists go out for an excursion because they want a comfortably air- conditioned bus. Noise pollution from cars, buses and air planes as well as other recreational vehicles is an ever growing problem of modern life. In addition to causing annoyance, stress and even hearing loss for humans, it causes distress to wildlife, especially in sensitive areas.

(b) Solid Waste and Littering

In areas with high concentration of tourist activities and appealing natural attractions, Waste disposal is a serious problem and improper disposal can be a major despoiler of the natural environment-river, scenic areas and road-sides.

(c) Sewage

Construction of hotels, recreation and other facilities often lead to increased sewage pollution. Waste water has polluted seas and lakes surrounding tourist attractions, damaging the flora and fauna. Sewage run-off causes serious damage to coral reefs because it stimulates the growth of algae, which cover the filter-feeding corals, hindering their ability to survive. Changes in salinity and siltation can have wide ranging impacts on coastal environments and sewage pollution and threaten the health of humans and animals.

PLANNING

The need for planning arises whenever some rational thinking is required to arrive at a choice among a set of limited means so that certain ends are satisfied especially when the means are substitutable among themselves. In other words, planning essentially attempts to allocate scarce resources between different competing uses with a view to maximize output, income and employment and to ensure the balance growth of different sectors.

Conclusion

The need of planned development is of paramount importance in the field of Tourism. Many countries in the world especially the developing countries having enormous possibilities and potentialities of tourism, have now realised the importance of tourism. Bihar, a forlorn state, may bring about radical progress through developing tourism sport spreads throughout the region.

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