

Descriptive Assessment Of Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) and its Impact on the Tourism Sector

Prashanth P¹,

¹ Assistant Professor - Department of Commerce - Travel and Tourism, St Claret College.

Abstract: India has become only the third country in the world to improve its Travel and Tourism Competitive Index by double digits in a single year, this being attributed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for a Swachh Bharat, thereby propelling growth in the tourism sector. The Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) initiative aims to achieve a distinctly higher level of cleanliness at the 30 sites as decided under the three phases namely 1, 2 and 3. The present study attempts to understand Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) program initiated by the government of India, and its linkages in growth and impact on the tourism sector. Descriptive methodology will be adopted for the study. The reason for such an approach is to understand and observe the phenomena in a completely natural and unchanged environment. The study relied on secondary sources of data. The study finds that initiative is an approach for benchmarking the iconic sites and setting examples for number of potential attractions to follow the footsteps in the near future. Stakeholders in the country's tourism industry are quite happy about 'Swachh Iconic Places (SIP)', and feel that this campaign has a great significance for the future of tourism.

Keywords: Swachh Iconic Places (SIP), benchmark, tourism industry

INTRODUCTION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' on 2014, with an aim to accomplish the vision of Clean India by October 2, 2019. Launching the campaign at Rajpath, Modi said that it is a duty of every Indian to keep the country clean. If this campaign is successful, one of its key beneficiaries will be the Indian tourism sector. According to a report of Water and Sanitation Programme (WPS), 'Economic Impacts of Inadequate Sanitation in India', tourism-related economic losses from inadequate sanitation are estimated to be Rs. 12 billion (\$266 million). Of these losses, 45 per cent (Rs. 5.5 billion, \$121 million) are from loss of tourism earnings, and 55 per cent (Rs. 6.6 billion, \$145.6 million) are from losses due to gastrointestinal illnesses among international tourists.

As per the report, about 9.85 million tourism days are estimated to be lost due to inadequate sanitation and hygiene. Of these, half are domestic overnight tourism days, 46 per

cent are domestic day tourism days, and the remaining four per cent are international tourism days. Of the total tourism earnings loss of (Rs. 5.4 billion) due to inadequate sanitation and hygiene, the bulk was accounted for by lost domestic overnight tourism loss. In the report Dollar values are based on the 2006 exchange rate (\$1 = Rs. 45.3325). India has diverse tourism products, but lack of hygiene and sanitation spoils the charm of visiting the country. So ‘Swachh Bharat Abhiyan’ has a great significance for country’s tourism sector.

SWACHH ICONIC PLACES (SIP)

Swachh Iconic Places (SIP), an initiative of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation under Swachh Bharat Mission. Initiated as a project to implement Prime Minister’s vision to take iconic places and their surroundings to higher standards of Swachhata. The Ministry has taken up a multi-stakeholder initiative focusing on cleaning up 100 places across India that are “iconic” due to their heritage, religious and/or cultural significance. This initiative is in partnership with Ministries of Urban Development, Tourism and Culture with Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation being the nodal ministry. The goal of the Initiative is to improve the cleanliness conditions at these places to a distinctly higher level.

Work under Phase-I started in 2016 at Meenakshi Temple (Tamil Nadu), Ajmer Sharif Dargah (Rajasthan), Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus (Maharashtra), Shree Jagannath Temple (Odisha), Manikarnika Ghat (Uttar Pradesh), Golden Temple (Punjab), Kamakhya Devi Shrine (Assam), Taj Mahal (Uttar Pradesh), Shri Mata Vaisho Devi Temple (Jammu and Kashmir) and Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (Andhra Pradesh).

Another ten sites, Shree Mahakaleswar Temple (Madhya Pradesh), Charminar (Telangana), Convent & Church of St. Francis of Assisi (Goa), Somnath Temple (Gujarat), Gomateshwara Statue (Karnataka), Kalady (Kerala), Gangotri Temple (Uttarakhand), Yamunotri Temple (Uttarakhand), Gaya Teerth (Bihar) and Baidyanath Temple (Jharkhand) were taken up in 2017 under Phase-II.

Phase-III of the Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) initiative constitute ten new heritage sites of the country today. Action plans for raising their sanitation standards to exemplary levels. These Places are Sri Raghavendra Swami Mutt Mantralayam (Andhra Pradesh), Hazarduari Palace (West Bengal), Shri Brahma Sarovar Temple (Haryana), Vidur Kuti Temple (Uttar Pradesh), Mana village (Uttarakhand), Pangong Tso (Jammu and Kashmir), Shri Nag Vasuki Temple (Uttar Pradesh), Nupi Keithel (Manipur), Sree Dharma Sastha Temple (Kerala) and Kanvashram (Uttarakhand).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objectives of the study is to

- To understand Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) program initiated by the government of India,
- List out the places that are incorporated in the initiative.
- Outline its linkages in growth and impact on the tourism sector.

RECENT DISCUSSIONS

Secretary, MDWS, Shri Parameswaran Iyer, said that SIP is a unique initiative and is aligned with the PM's vision of achieving high standard of cleanliness and easy access to sanitation at iconic places of historic, religious and tourist importance. He highlighted the importance of collaboration between multiple agencies, which has accelerated the implementation of action plans.

E M Najeeb Chairman, ATE Group of Companies

“Swachh Bharat Abhiyan goes very well with the Incredible India campaign because cleanliness, hygiene and sanitations are the basics for any tourist destination. Any efforts for a clean India would primarily support and help the tourism industry.”

Arun Anand MD, Midtown Travels

“The perception about India in overseas is that it is a dirty country. With the PM himself starting this campaign, lots of people have taken a note of this outside India and even if we achieve a small percentage of success, this will be a big achievement.”

S N Srivastava President Clarks Inn Group of Hotels

“It's a fantastic initiative but a very long process. There needs to be a far greater consensus on cleanliness. Besides, support from 'aam aadmi' and private sector's participation is imperative for the campaign to be a success. .”

Pradeep Kalra Sr. VP, Sales & Marketing, Sarovar Hotels

“Cleanliness plays a catalytic role in beautification of any country. Therefore it is really important for the Tourism Industry to understand pledge together for adopting new strategies for making our country clean and green.”

Ravi Gosain MD, Erco Travels & Hony. Joint Secretary, IATO

“Swachh Bharat mission launched will have long impact on Tourism in India because it’s one of the major challenges which tourist often complains about India. since our PM has put it on priority, it will get much needed focus.”

Harjeet Wasan, VP Tux Hospitality

“Faced with the issues of hygiene and sanitation in the country, especially at important tourist destinations, the campaign has significant importance for Indian Travel and Tourism Industry. The importance of a clean India is increasingly felt for boosting tourism.”

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive methodology will be adopted for the study. The reason for such an approach is to understand and observe the phenomena in a completely natural and unchanged environment. The study relied on secondary sources of data. An analysis of relevant studies conducted through research papers published in journals, articles in newspapers and magazines, reports of government agencies were studied to understand the relevance of the Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) initiative. Further articles written by experts in the field of tourism were analyzed to ascertain the linkages to tourism and its impact on tourism revenue generation.

SWACHH ICONIC PLACES (SIP) INTIATIVE

As stated earlier the Swachh Iconic Places is an initiative under the Swachh Bharat Mission. It is a special clean-up initiative focused on select iconic heritage, spiritual and cultural places in the country. The initiative is being coordinated by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in association with

1. Ministry of Urban Development,
2. Ministry of Culture,
3. Ministry of Tourism
4. Concerned State governments.
5. Local administrations in the concerned States and
6. Public Sector and Private Companies as sponsoring partners.

Table 1: Coverage Of Iconic Places Under Various Phases

SI No.	PHASE - 1	PHASE - 2	PHASE - 3
1.	Vaishno Devi, Jammu and Kashmir	Gangotri, Uttarakhand	Raghavendra Swamy Temple Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh
2.	Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Maharashtra	Yamunotri, Uttarakhand	Hazardwari Palace Murshidabad, West Bengal
3.	Taj Mahal, Uttar Pradesh	Mahakaleshwar Temple, Ujjain	Brahma Sarovar Temple Kurukshetra, Haryana
4.	Tirupati Temple, Andhra Pradesh	Char Minar, Hyderabad	VidurKuti Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh
5.	Golden Temple, Punjab	Church and Convent of St. Francis of Assisi, Goa	Mana village Chamoli, Uttarakhand
6.	Manikarnika Ghat, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh	Adi Shankaracharya's abode Kaladi in Ernakulam	Pangong Lake Leh-Ladakh, J&K
7.	Ajmer Sharif Dargah, Rajasthan	Gomateshwar in Shravanbelgola	Nagvasuki Temple Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh
8.	Meenakshi Temple, Tamil Nadu	Bajjnath Dham, Devghar	ImaKeithal/market Imphal, Manipur
9.	Kamakhya Temple, Assam	Gaya Tirth in Bihar	Sabarimala Temple Kerala
10.	Jagannath Puri, Odisha	Somnath temple in Gujarat.	Kanvashram Uttarakhand

Source: Press Information Bureau

Table 2: Classification of Swachh Iconic Places

Sl. No	Religious Attractions	Cultural, Historical Attractions	Other Parameters
1.	Vaishno Devi, Jammu and Kashmir	Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Maharashtra	Mana village (Chamoli, Uttarakhand)
2.	Gangotri, Uttarakhand	Hazardwari Palace (Murshidabad, West Bengal)	Pangong Lake (Leh-Ladakh, J&K)
3.	Raghavendra Swamy Temple Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh	Taj Mahal, Uttar Pradesh	ImaKeithal/market Imphal, Manipur
4.	Yamunotri, Uttarakhand	Char Minar, Hyderabad	
5.	Mahakaleshwar Temple, Ujjain	Kanvashram Uttarakhand	
6.	Brahma Sarovar Temple Kurukshetra, Haryana		
7.	Tirupati Temple, Andhra Pradesh		
8.	VidurKuti Bijnor, Uttar Pradesh		
9.	Golden Temple, Punjab		
10.	Church and Convent of St. Francis of Assisi, Goa		
11.	Manikarnika Ghat, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh		
12.	Adi Shankaracharya's abode Kaladi in Ernakulam		
13.	Ajmer Sharif Dargah, Rajasthan		
14.	Gomateshwar in Shravanbelgola		
15.	Nagvasuki Temple Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh		
16.	Meenakshi Temple, Tamil		

	Nadu		
17.	Baijnath Dham, Devghar		
18.	Kamakhya Temple, Assam		
19.	Gaya Tirth in Bihar		
20.	Sabarimala Temple Kerala		
21.	Jagannath Puri, Odisha		
22.	Somnath temple in Gujarat		

Source: Researchers Analysis

The special Swachhata initiatives at these places have received CSR support from public and private companies.

Table 3: PSU Sponsors for SIP Sites – Phase 1

Sl.No	Iconic Places	Sponsors
1	Ajmer Sharif Dargah, Ajmer, Rajasthan	Hindustan Zinc India Ltd.
2	CST, Mumbai, Maharashtra	State Bank of India (SBI)
3	Golden Temple, Amritsar, Punjab	Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)
4	Kamakhya Temple, Guwahati, Assam	Oil India Limited
5	Maikarnika Ghat, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh	Northern Coal Field Ltd.
6	Meenakshi Temple, Madurai, Tamil Nadu	Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)
7	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, Katra, J&K	National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO)
8	Shree Jagannath Temple, Puri, Odisha	Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)
9	The Taj Mahal, Agra, Uttar Pradesh	Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL)

10	Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh	Oil and Natural Gas Corporation & Neyveli Lignite Corporation India limited
----	---	--

Source: <http://swachhbharatmission.gov.in/SBMCMS/swachh-iconic-places.htm>

Table 4: CSR partners for Iconic Places Under Phases 1-2

SI No.	CSR partners for Phases 1-2
1.	Hindustan Zinc India Ltd.
2.	SBI Foundation
4.	HPCL
5.	Oil India Ltd
6.	Northern Coal Field Ltd
7.	BPCL
8.	NALCO
9.	IOCL
10.	GAIL
11.	ONGC
12.	NHPC
13.	NTPC
14.	Airport Authority of India
15.	Power Grid Corporation (PGCIL)
16.	IDEA Cellular
17.	Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL)

Source: Press Information Bureau

The consultation is in process for finalizing the PSUs/corporates for extending support to new sites as CSR partners

The initiatives undertaken by the government at these sites are as follows:

- Improved sewage infrastructure,
- Drainage facilities,
- Installation of sewage treatment plant (stp),
- Improved sanitation facilities to exemplary levels
- Water vending machines (water atms).
- Solid and liquid waste management (slwm) set-up,

- Structure restoration,
- Roads maintenance,
- Lighting arrangements,
- Beautification of parks,
- Better transport facilities in approach and access areas will also be taken up at the main sites.

IMPACT ON TOURISM INDUSTRY

“Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji’s Swachh Bharat initiative rewarded India with a jump of ranks up in the World Tourism index for cleanliness and safety”, tweeted Dr. Mahesh Sharma, ex. Minister of State, Culture and Tourism.

India has become only the third country in the world to improve its Travel and Tourism Competitive Index by double digits in a single year. Ranked 52 in 2015, India climbed up by a healthy 12 places to be ranked 40 this year. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s clarion call for a Swachh Bharat has not only improved India’s rural and urban sanitation scenario, but seems to have had a positive effect on India’s ranking in the Travel and Tourism Competitive Index as well. The rankings, released by the World Economic Forum, maps sustainable developments of countries in the travel and tourism sector and how the sector contributes to the overall development of the country.

The improvement in India’s rankings is closely attributed to how increased focus on cleanliness in tourist spaces has resulted in cleaner tourist spots across India under the Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) initiative. The Union Government has also undertaken a drive to clean 30 iconic tourist spots across India in three phases, including.

Tirupati, a renowned tourist destination was also ranked as the 9th cleanest city in India, by Swachh Survekshan 2017. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has also collaborated with PSUs in implementing Swachh activities under their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) scheme

CONCLUSION:

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has taken several initiatives to implement Swachh Bharat’s objectives in several tourist destinations across India and this has helped improve India's global ranking as a destination for tourists.

Improved sanitation and cleanliness of tourist spots were among the major objectives of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and the mission has undertaken several initiatives to improve the sanitation and cleanliness conditions of some of India's major tourist spots. In 2016, all 3,686 monuments of national importance and under the protection of the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) were declared polythene free zones to reduce waste disposal at such sites. And in context of this, Swach Bharat Abhiyan is a right decision taken at a very crucial time as it is the need of hour to boost the economy of our decision scaling new heights and tourism industry is one of the major sources of foreign exchange thereby strengthening the reserves.

REFERENCES:

1. Bindu. V.T. Sindhuja Julian. K. "Impact Of Clean India Campaign On Tourism Development In Coimbatore As A Destination" Retrieved from <http://icrb.international/pdf/papers/Dr.%20Bindu%20V.T.pdf>
2. Dutta Saptarshi, Bhaskar Sonia, 2017, May 30 "Swachh Bharat Impact: India Jumps In Travel And Tourism Competitive Index Ranking To Be Among Top 40 Countries"
3. Retrieved from <https://swachhindia.ndtv.com/swachh-bharat-impact-india-jumps-in-travel-tourism-competitive-index-ranking-to-be-among-top-40-countries-7130/>
4. Press Information Bureau. 2018, June 12, "Ten new Swachh Iconic Places launched under Swachh Bharat Mission" Retrieved from <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=179904>
5. Press Information Bureau. 2018, June 26, "Sanitation Action Plans Prepared for 10 New Swachh Iconic Places SIP Sites Resolve to go 100% Plastic Free" Retrieved from <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=180196>
6. Press Information Bureau. 2017, November 21, "10 new heritage sites commence special sanitation action as the Swachh Iconic Places project under Swachh Bharat Mission completes a year" Retrieved from <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=173715>
7. Press Trust of India. 2018, June 12, "These 10 'Swachh Iconic Places' added to phase 3 of Swachh Bharat Mission – Here is the list". Retrieved from <https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/these-10-swachh-iconic-places-added-to-phase-3-of-swachh-bharat-mission-here-is-the-list/1203544/>

8. Press Trust of India. 2018, June 26, “All Swachh Iconic Places, 10 new heritage sites to become plastic-free” Retrieved from https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/all-swachh-iconic-places-10-new-heritage-sites-to-become-plastic-free-118062601087_1.html
9. Press Trust of India, 2016. July 8 “Govt to clean 10 iconic places under Swachh Bharat” Retrieved from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/good-governance/centre/Govt-to-clean-10-iconic-places-under-Swachh-Bharat/articleshow/53114053.cms>
10. S P Sharma .”Ten new Swachh Iconic Places launched under Swachh Bharat Mission”, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry
11. Retrieved from <http://phdcci.in/image/data/Research%20Bureau2014/Economic%20Developments/Economic2018/June/Ten%20new%20Swachh.pdf>
12. Surana Rohit, 2014. December 23, “Swach Bharat Abhiyan – Impact On Tourism“
13. Retrieved from <https://rohitmanojurana.wordpress.com/2014/12/23/swach-bharat-abhiyan-impact-on-tourism/>
14. Travel n Hospitality,.2014 Nov 10, “Swachh Bharat Abhiyan to boost tourism growth in the country “Retrieved from http://www.tnhindia.com/news/swachh_abhiyan.html#.W2BcHyN94y4
15. World Bank. 2011. “*Economic impacts of inadequate sanitation in India*” (English). Water and Sanitation Program. Washington, DC: World Bank.