Francis Bacon aptly remarked, 'Travel in the young sort is a part of education and in the elder, a part of experience.' Tourism allows people to escape from their normal, humdrum, lives. Tourism as a form of education is a part of civilised existence. The human animal needs change if it is to operate at optimum levels; travel provides that change. However, the level of satisfaction achieved from tourism depends on the age, health, energy and background of the individual.

It is difficult to describe tourism. Some think of tourism as an industry. If an industry is defined as a number of firms that produce similar goods and services, in competition with each other, then tourism can not be conceived as an industry because tourism offers complementary rather than competing products and services. The airlines, hotels, and attraction industries do not compete with each other, rather they complement each other. To most of us, hotels and tourism signify a special type of business, attracting many successful entrepreneurs and managers - with the sole aim of making their hotel a success/ The eminent futurist Herman Kahn has predicted that tourism may become the largest industry in the world at the end of present century. According to the study conducted by the Wharton econometric Forecasting Association Group (America), Travel and tourism has emerged as the world's largest industry generating & 2.5 trillion in annual revenue, employing 112 million people and delivering 5.5 percent of the world's gross domestic product (G.D.P.). India, being away from the main tourist generating regions and being dependent on inter regional movement had to content with only a minor share (0.63 percent in 1995) of the cake.

(i)
Tourism is of the multipurpose socio-economic benefits in any country. It has both positive and negative effects which evidently compel a country to plan the growth of tourism in a systematic manner. So that tourism industry can cater to the needs of both foreign and domestic customers.

In view of Chronic in the balance of payments faced by India, exports of goods and services, especially of non-Traditional items have assumed great importance, obviously, Tourism industry may easily be used to close this gap because it does not demand as much technological sophistication as is required in other export industries.

The Government, however, cannot exercise any effective control unless it has detailed knowledge of statistics relating to various aspects of tourism industry. There exists a wide gap between the available statistics and that of the actual. In order to fill up the gap to some extent it requires a comprehensive study on different aspects of tourism industry.

But due to the limitations of time and other resources it has not been possible to consider all the aspects. Some lacunae are also present in the present study. But I am sure that the study will offer some insights into the working of the multifaceted tourism industry.

(ii)