Chapter IX

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The prognosis of the contemporary demand – supply patterns with regard to tourist plant facilities and the existing attractions scattered all around the state clearly indicates that though the study area is fairing considerably well as far as tourists’ expectations are concerned, yet there are chances of improvement both in qualitative and quantitative terms, which in turn seems to play a decisive role in growth and development of tourism in Rajasthan.

After receiving first hand information and conducting a careful analysis of the current tourism trends in the state vis-à-vis the grey and potential areas, activities & attractions; the scholar is submitting the following suggestions which, if implemented, can prove to be vital for the holistic development of tourism industry and be more beneficial, socio-economically, for the indigenous population:

- **Initiative should be taken to create rural tourism resorts/ projects/ attractions in tribal bases.**

Rajasthan should create master plans for effective development of its tribal and rural resources into unique and attractive rural tourism projects. Where possible and where good support at the local level is available there may be endogenous, community, based rural tourism projects. In other places where this is not possible, the state may consider bringing in private investment through a workable format to enable tourism infrastructure to be developed in these areas so as to allow tourists to come and spend time in these places.

- **The state should prepare guidelines and implement the same for Eco- Rural Circuits.**
While rural and eco tourism vary in their specialized connections, the two genres often go together in the nature of resources on which they are based and on their demands for sustainability and local community involvement for success. They also closely overlap in the offering and experience they offer to tourists. This would be particularly true for a State like Rajasthan where fascinating tribes reside within and on the fringes of beautiful sanctuaries, forests and deserts. Accordingly, the potential for these two have to be considered together.

Therefore, it is proposed that the state should ideally combine the rural and eco tourism attraction to create circuits that could synergize both their features and offer an integrated experience to lengthen the tourists’ stay. The following areas can be taken on priority basis:

- The Southern eco- rural circuits, comprising Udaipur, Sirohi, Dungarpur and Banswara, the traditionally stronghold of tribes of Rajasthan close to the nearby hill station at Mount Abu and Air connectivity through airport at Udaipur.

- The South- Eastern eco- rural circuit, comprising, Chittaurgarh, Jhalawar, Kota and Bundi with presence of both tribal and industrial area at Kota & Bhilwara with Ranthambhor National Park and Darrah wildlife Sanctuary closely and Air connectivity through an Airport at Kota.

- The North- Eastern eco tourism circuit, comprising districts of Alwar, Bharatpur and Jaipur, internationally well- known wildlife sanctuaries like Sariska National park and Keoladeo National Park with the exquisite frescoes of the entire Shekhavati region and the entry airport at Jaipur.

- The Western eco- rural circuits with Jaisalmer as on entry point highlighting the unique desert of Rajasthan as well the tribal wealth of this region.

*The desert experience should be made unique and distinct one of its kind.*

As Kerala has exploited its backwaters, Rajasthan should also exploit its desert experience, as it is the only State having this geographical feature, unique rural tourism projects should be planned and developed to offer the wonders of desert living like:

- Luxurious glass resorts amidst sand- dunes
- Therapeutic centers
- Comfortable camel rides.
- Cross country camel/ jeep safaris.
- Desert camping
- Exclusive desert experience.

- **Efforts should be focused on combining health as a tourism product offering, especially to foreign tourists.**

With strong foreign tourist arrivals and an excellent tourism profile, it is natural to assume that Rajasthan should promote health tourism as a natural offering to tourists. In the areas of health tourism, Rajasthan can explore the following two options:

- Offer its corporate hospital in Jaipur and Jodhpur for medical tourism wherein health tourists can combine tour health/ medical treatment etc. while exploring tourism treasures of Rajasthan.
- Build health resorts therapeutic centers in its existing and proposed tourism centers offering traditionally nature care facilities.

Further, it is proposed that to promote medical tourism Rajasthan will require a holistic approach involving marketing promotion, infrastructure creation and tourism promotion. Some of the key initiatives in this direction would be:

- **Promote specialized training institutes which train Para-medical staff by imparting requisite skills to built capacity**
- **Encouraging medical associations based in Rajasthan to enter into exchange programs and partnering arrangements with similar organizations abroad.**
- **Develop informative website to provide information like facilities provided by the hospitals, prices & packages online tour planning, tourist destination, quality standards. This website can be created from combined efforts of private players in medical & tourism industry and the government.**
- **Associated with private players in the health industry to participate in the international seminars, exhibitions to highlight and promote medical facilities in India.**
✓ Consider promotion of tertiary healthcare infrastructure by providing tax incentives and other facilitation support.
✓ Address environment issues like treatment of medical waste and ensure installation of medical waste treatment facilities in health centers.
✓ Promote accreditation of hospitals so as to enable ready catchments of medical tourists which are on the waitlists of institutions like the National Health Service (NHS) of the UK.
✓ Focus on linkage infrastructure like airline connectivity and airport facilities to provide ready access to major medical centers in the State.

• **Plans must be prepared to integrate new eco, rural & health tourism concept/projects into its existing tourism circuits.**

Along with exploring new areas, new resources and new projects, the state should plan to integrate its efforts in eco-tourism, rural tourism and health tourism along with and into the already well known existing circuits so that the proven and known tourist base will give the impetus to success.

For example, some of the immediate initiatives could be as follows:
➢ Initiating Elephant Safari in Jaipur and its environs
➢ Horse Safari in the Shekhawati belt, Udaipur, Nagaur, Pushkar setting up tented camps and adventure excursions covering
➢ Bikaner’s Gujner and Devi Kund Sagar,
➢ Mt. Abu, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Kumbhalgarh, Pushkar, Alnia (Kota) and Udaipur.
➢ Creating rural bazaars, exhibitions centers, local cuisine based food malls in existing tourism routes.
➢ Adding rural excursions to its existing visitor’s itineraries.
➢ Adding therapeutic and health centers in its existing hotels, resorts and tourist places.
➢ Adding free tourist packages to all in-house single room (high value) patients along with an attendant or a caretaker as part of recuperation and before
discharge. The hospital could tie up with existing resorts to offer this attraction.

- **The state should review Policy framework to support the initiatives.**
  - Initatives in eco, rural and health tourism essentially touch sensitive and soft issues and would demand to be supported by policy measures covering:
  - Suitable framework to develop rural and eco tourism projects in environmentally sensitive areas such as reserved forests, national parks, tribal areas etc.
  - Suitable regulations to address sustainability conservation and visitor management aspects
  - Suitable quality certification measures to ensure quality of offerings and compliance with service/ product minimum standards.

Among other policy measures it is suggested to include the following points, as well:

- Rationalize state level taxes that have an impact on tourist and private investment in tourism
- Create institution to support investors and investment in tourism for e.g. a special to guide investors and provide escort services.
- Create suitable framework for giving government land, where available, on long terms lease to private developers especially in eco sensitive and tribal areas.

There is a pressing need to encourage the owners of old *buildings with exclusive architectural features* to get these converted into *heritage hotels*. This suggestion is especially being incorporated because during personal visits of the scholar it was found that many elegant *havelis, forts* and *palaces* are in a horrific shape due to either negligence or scarcity of funds with the present possessors of the properties. Such a step on one hand would rejuvenate these awe-inspiring structures, and at the same time will be helpful in creating a unique image of the region, which in turn, will increase the very tourism magnetism as well.
Undoubtedly Rajasthan is dotted with abundance of virgin areas with unexplored wealth of resource richness. There are natural & protected areas, places with potential for adventure activities, villages & towns that can provide excellent spiritual experience that can be converted into sought after resorts and destinations for tourists with varied motivational spectrums. If an action is taken in this direction there would be unlimited opportunities, and those too for the local people, to establish their own small and medium sized hospitality oriented units (may be eateries or lodging enterprises). This will also increase the inclination of the youth towards professional courses in the sector and the consequential dimension would be that the region will have a good number of professional qualified human resources.

Another fact closely related to the previous suggestion is that such an initiative will work as a blessing in disguise to improve the existing relatively insufficient infrastructure and would be helpful in creation of an effective network of intra and inter-regional transport network properly linked to tourist generating and transit regions. In addition to this the region can reap rich dividends if it is developed in a manner that even in the summer months tourists can be attracted to various destinations providing them with appropriate options alongwith suitable facilities.

It was observed during the initial stages of this research that the most difficult job is to collect secondary literature, and that too authentic, especially on hospitality and tourism related areas. Understandable is the fact that not many researchers might have approached the Government, Public and Private sector organizations and these sectors are not acquainted to the type of information to be provided for the research projects. The disappointing issue is that there is not even appropriate literature for the tourists, because the information provided to them is obsolete, many a times incorrect and the information providers incompetent, as well as unfamiliar to the destinations. Hence there is an imperative need for updating of the literature and refresher courses for the existing staff of all the sectors.
The major pre-requisites for qualifying to be called tourists had been said to be *disposable income, discretionary time and need or desire*. It was in the year 1995 that tourism anthropologist *Valene L. Smith* added one more dimension to these, viz. *Social Sanctions* which is equi-applicable to both TGR and TDR. According to Smith the TGR society should be flexible enough to allow its citizens to go to other places for touristic pursuits (and is evident from the top tourist generating countries), whereas the TDR society must be welcoming and tourist-friendly so as to receive the outsiders in a hassle-free environment. Though the general public at various tourist destinations of the state is well mannered and adequately tourist-friendly, yet there is need to educate the community; especially in unexplored potential areas; to be more affable towards the tourists, which is presently lacking. In fact promotion should be given to local craftsmen and folk artists and introduction of the concept of tourism co-operative societies can prove to be instrumental steps to motivate local people to be more positive and enjoy the benefits of tourism development in the region by being one of the stakeholders.

It was also found that presently there are inadequate Governmental initiatives, whether we take into consideration the allocation of budget or action taken in past, towards the wholesome amplification of the hospitality industry. In addition to this there are innumerable politico-bureaucratic bottlenecks that are reason enough to de-motivate the perspective investors in the region. Thus, it is suggested that Government should amend its policies and become more liberal towards the interested entrepreneurs and at the same time should think about further promotion of the *single window system* to expedite the clearance of the submitted projects.

Any efforts could yield desirable results if and only if these are supported with effective and well-targeted marketing and promotional strategies so as to ensure sufficient awareness in order to receive positive responses. It is further suggested that the Government should seek help of professional agencies/organizations to obtain optimum results.

Conclusively, last but not the least, is the revamping of the organizational infrastructure in the state, which despite being multi-tiered has largely proved ineffective on almost every front - destination planning to destination promotion, needed to be modified? The
recommendations of the committee headed by Timothy O'Driscoll the former head of Ireland Tourism, could be reviewed and possibly mellowed down to the extend that it is accepted and viably implemented in the context of the state. Undoubtedly the time has come when the policy makers in the state have to decide whether tourism is to be promoted as saleable commodity in a sustainable way; if yes, honest efforts shall have to be made by every player of tourism, no matter to whatever possible extent; only then the state shall be in position to judiciously utilize it’s enormous tourism treasure and emerge as a force to be reckoned with.

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