Chapter VI

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter is divided into three classifications as Research findings, Recommendations and Conclusion.

From the analysis of data made in the earlier chapter, the following findings are made.

6.1 Kerala - a Primary Tourist Destination.

In the opinion of majority respondents of each group, Kerala is a unique primary tourist destination in the world. Eightynine per cent of officials, 90 per cent of private intermediaries, 86 per cent of domestic tourists and 60 per cent of international tourists support this viewpoint. In the “Tourism Vision, 2025” statement, the international acclamation of Kerala as the most “sought after” destination is described as: “World Travel and Tourism Council has selected Kerala as a partner state. National Geographic Travel after two years of research has chosen Kerala as one of the 50 must see destinations of a lifetime. Kerala has been stated as one of the 10 paradises of the world. The other acclaims received by Kerala Tourism include128.

One of the 100 great trips for the 21st century, by ‘Travel and Leisure’
One of the ten hot spots for the millennium, by ‘Emirates Inflight Magazine’
One of the best breakfast in the world, by ‘Travel and Leisure’
One of the ten love nests in India by ‘Cosmopolitan’
One of the six destinations of the millennium, by ‘Khaleej Times’

128 Tourism Vision 2025 ; (October 2001) op. cit.
Kerala has also been awarded the best performing state Award for the year 1998-1999 and 1999-2000, by ‘Government of India’ for achieving rapid growth, development and advancement in the tourism sector”129.

6.2 Importance to Domestic and International Tourism.

It is made clear by a vast majority of Group I (81%) and Group II (90%) respondents that Kerala should pay equal importance to domestic as well as international tourism. We cannot always look for affluent foreign tourists. Majority tourists now visiting Kerala are Budget Tourists who mostly come on a tour package planned and contracted earlier.

6.3 Age Group of Visiting Tourists to Kerala.

Most domestic and international tourists who visit Kerala fall within the age range 30 to 45 years.

6.4 Tourism Products of Kerala.

Beaches, backwaters, ayurveda, hill stations and wildlife are the most appealing tourism products of Kerala to the respondents. Although Kerala has so much other tourism products (see Appendix I) these have wide preference amongst the respondents.

6.5 International Publicity for Kerala Tourism.

For conducting international publicity of Kerala tourism, almost 90 per cent of Group I and Group II respondents suggest the following media such as internet

website, international journals, pavilion at World Tourism Expo, and advertisement in foreign TV channels.

6.6 Reasons for Slow Growth of Tourism in Kerala.

Even though, Kerala has the international recognition as a primary tourist destination, the number of foreign tourists who visit Kerala annually, comes to only 8 per cent of the total foreign tourists visiting India. As per the government statistics (see Table 3.5), foreign tourist arrivals to India in 2000 was 26,24,259 and of this, 2,099,33 tourists only visited Kerala.

It is a debatable question why India which has a history of more than five millennium is lagging behind other countries of the world in economic power. Similarly, how China could attract 30-32 million tourists in a year hardly a decade after it opened its economy to the world. Why a small country like Singapore with artificial tourism products gets large number of tourist arrivals than India? Why does the number of tourist arrivals to Mauritius, Seychelles, Maldives, Bermuda, Caribbean Island etc., even exceed their population?

Answer to these questions can be given from two angles i.e., internal and external causes.

Internal causes

a) Managerial Inefficiency

Sixty seven per cent of Group I and 85 per cent of Group II respondents opine the deficiencies of Kerala in this regard (see table 5.8) as lack of administrative and managerial inefficiencies such as no systematic planning and implementation;
required facilities are not provided; no proper maintenance of the infrastructure; staff of the DOT are not well trained; and funds are inadequate.

Planning is inevitable in tourism for developing the product, marketing the product and to achieve sustainability in tourism. Kerala has the serious lacking of a tourism master plan, regional plan and area plan.

b) Lack of Co-ordination.

Another serious vaccum in the promotion of tourism in Kerala is the ‘lack of co-ordination’ among the participants. Eightysix per cent of the informants of Group I strongly advocate co-ordination of related departments engaged in tourism promotion. Besides, 95 per cent agree for a master plan, district plan and block-level plan for the promotion of tourism in Kerala.

c) Absence of Basic Facilities.

Road journey, cleanliness and hygience, entertainment, guides service, tourist information, basic facilities, recreational activities, conducted tours etc. have only poor rating among the informants as per Table 5.11 and 5.13. Tourism requires better roads, comfortable transportation, adequate communication network, hygienic public toilets and adequate number of tourism information centres.

d) Staff Training.

Ninetyeight per cent of respondents of Group I and II strongly favour training of the staff for achieving business results. In Kerala, sufficient number of trained manpower is not available in various tourism organisations. This fact was stressed
seriously by the Estimates Committee of the Parliament in 1969, as mentioned in chapter III.

e) Tourist Information.

About ‘Tourist information’ on Kerala, the response is so unsatisfactory from Group II, III and IV respondents as is evident from Table 5.13 and 5.39. It is also relevant here to mention that 88 per cent of domestic tourists and 80 per cent of foreign tourists view that (refer Table 5.46) their source of knowledge to visit Kerala were either own knowledge or through friends/relatives.

f) Tourist Hospitality Services and Promotion Services.

Road journey, cleanliness and hygiene, entertainment, guides service, tourist information, conducted tours, basic amenities, recreational activities etc have only poor rating among the respondents as per table 5.11 and 5.13. Services such as location of hotels, staff services at hotels, food served at hotels, Bar and restaurant services, postal, banking, customs services, shopping facilities and security of tourists are quite satisfactory to the respondents.

g) Problems Affecting Tourist Industry in Kerala.

As per table 5.21, 62 per cent of Group I respondents believe the following four hurdles which afflict the progress of Kerala tourism. They are: no effective management of the tourism potential, lack of serious publicity for tourism promotion, serious lacking of facilities at tourism centres: and inter departmental non co-operation.
h) Although Kerala has three international airports direct international flights from Western countries do not have air link with our State. This is a conspicuous lacking which must be solved with a determined approach by the State government.

**External Reasons.**

Criticism about ‘destination India’ is that the country is far from the west and air travel cost is comparatively high for a tourist. This allegation is untenable because tourists are attracted by many other considerations to visit a destination outside their country.

Secondly, it is said that Kerala lacks existence of world famous monuments like Taj Mahal to entice world travel to Kerala. Well, sure to admit. But are tourists to Singapore, Malaysia, Spain, Caribbean etc motivated by pleasure to see monuments?

Thirdly, another reason stated is that various governments at the centre have not given much impetus to promote the industry in India and whatever strides in this sector were reaped by the North Indian lobby projecting Taj Mahal, palaces of Rajasthan, temple of Khajuraho, Ajantha and Ellora caves etc. This is quite acceptable because service sector did not get the preference of our planners and allocations for tourism industry has not come to even one per cent share of our budgets. This callous indifference has really afflicted the industry to a great extent.

Fourthly, India was known to the Western countries as a ‘poor and under developed’ country with so much illiteracy and absence of basic infrastructure. It is
only towards the beginning of the last decade, the growth potential of this largest
democracy could be realised to them. So, international tourist traffic to India
affected seriously because of inadequate overseas publicity of our tourism wealth.

Fifthly, Indian tourism has experienced serious set back owing to the general
slow down in the international tourism and travel since the terrorist attack on
September 11, 2001 at World Trade Centre, New York. Tourists from Western
countries still fear to visit South Asia. Incidents of killing of nationals of America,
France and UK in Pakistan have created a fear of insecurity to visit this
sub-continent.

Another recent damage caused to Indian tourism industry is on account of
false and malicious propaganda spread in the world about a possible nuclear war
between India and Pakistan. Governments of USA, UK and Australia even advised
their country men not to visit these destinations and those who were already there
to return immediately. This false propaganda has resulted in too many
cancellations which were contracted earlier in connection with travel and tourism.

**6.7 Government's Role in Tourism.**

Group I (Officials) informants are of the opinion (66%) that government must
develop, maintain and promote existing tourist centres; while all new ventures are
to be opened to the private sector.

Group II (Private intermediaries) believe that government’s role in tourism
shall be to provide facilities at tourism centres, conduct national/international
publicity and create infrastructure. They strongly favour (upto 81%) prominent role
to the private sector in identifying, developing, creating infrastructure for tourism
6.8 Mode of Providing Facilities at Tourist Centres.

Informants of Group I and Group II are of the opinion that various tourist hospitality services can be provided at tourist centres even without government spending in any of the following ways: on contract basis with private entrepreneurs, on long-term lease with advertisement monopoly, self-supporting basis and income-sharing basis. These are reported in tables 5.22 and 5.30.

6.9 Performance of District Tourism Promotion Councils (DTPCs).

The performance of DTPCs as a feeder organisation for district level tourism activities has not been much appreciated by the respondents. The very purpose of forming DTPCs was to draw much focussed attention towards the tourist potentialities of the district and now they have become mere fund consuming centres. There are cases of funds allotted to DTPCs getting diverted to other activities outside the district. There is acute shortage of professional management in the working of them. The respondents of Group I (Officials) as in Table 5.19 give only 28 per cent support in the continued maintenance of DTPCs.

6.10 The Role of Local Bodies in Tourism.

Now-a-days, many local bodies have entered the tourism sector with novel projects within their jurisdictional limit. Eighty-eight per cent of Group I respondents support the involvement of local bodies particularly in rural or green tourism.

6.11 Uncared Tourism Potential of Kerala.

The study reveals the fact that there exists in Kerala a large number of uncared/
unexploited tourism wealth. Almost all the informants of Group I respondents agree to this reality. But the problem lies in the investment of money to develop these places.


Tourism in Kerala needs a take-off. A new attempt to conduct a thorough shake-up in the plans, policies and programmes of the government is demanded by up to 90 per cent of the respondents of Group I.

6.13 New Tourism Oriented Educational Courses.

Kerala lacks trained manpower whose services shall be best utilised for the promotion of tourism in Kerala. The respondents (upto 93 per cent) strongly recommend the starting of new Degree/PG level courses on tourism courses in Kerala by colleges and universities.

6.14 Tax on Hotel Bill.

Tax imposed on hotel bills is to be reduced. If it is not reduced it must not be charged on foreign tourists. This is because, the foreign tourists who visit India are already charged for various taxes and duties by the government. Table 5.15 deals with the views of domestic and international tourists on this.

6.15 Special Tourism Week Celebrations.

During Onam eve, the government sets momentum for special tourism week celebrations to highlight the traditional art forms of Kerala and her cultural diversity. Regarding the tourist importance of these celebrations, respondents of Group I have only fifty per cent support.
6.16 Special Tourism Fair.

Majority respondents of Group I view that the venue of special tourism fairs and festivals should be held in rural areas because of the following reasons:

(a) Knowing the social life and interacting with people;
(b) For enjoying the local arts, music, dance and crafts; and
(c) Knowing the local culture.

6.17 Type of Tourism to be Promoted in Kerala.

Group I and Group II respondents strongly favour the following type of tourism which are most relevant in Kerala:

Tourism which is eco-friendly, culture-oriented, labour-intensive and capable of earning more and more foreign exchange. All these are very much prominent for achieving sustainability in tourism.

6.18 Accommodation Preferred by Tourists in Kerala.

It is already made clear that majority tourists visiting Kerala are budget tourists. According to Group I and II respondents, foreign tourists in Kerala mostly prefer tourist resorts and cottages. When the same question was put to foreign tourists, majority expressed their preference for tourist homes and lodges. Domestic tourists preferred tourist home/lodges, cottages and with friends/relatives, Group II respondents support this truth through table 5.32. Both domestic and foreign tourists opt for non-AC standard rooms as made clear in Table 5.51.
6.19 Price Charged for Various Services in Kerala.

Table 5.15 discloses that both domestic and foreign tourists are much dissatisfied about the price charged for shopping, Bar & Restaurant services and tax on hotel bill. Other hospitality services like transport, accommodation, food and beverages, conducted tours, recreational facilities etc, do not have much complaint about price charged.

6.20 Mode of Transport Liked by Visiting Tourists.

Tourists in Kerala mostly prefer hired tourist vehicles to other modes of transportation. But foreign tourists expressed that they preferred public transport as well as hired vehicles for travel in Kerala. See Tables 5.33 and 5.50.

6.21 Number of Nights Stayed by the Tourists in Kerala.

Domestic tourists in Kerala stay for less than three nights; while foreign tourists generally stay for five nights and more than a week. Table 5.38 and 5.49 substantiate this statement.

6.22 Behaviour of Local People Towards Tourists in Kerala.

Kerala, being a literate State, the response of Group II, III and IV respondents is that the behaviour of local people towards the tourists is in a polite helpful and sophisticated manner (refer table 5.40 and 5.53). Although, there may take place stray cases of obstruction to the tourists due to hartal, there needs much public awareness.

6.23 Complaints/Grievances of Tourists.

General complaints of tourists in Kerala are: Tedious road journey, no sufficient tourist information, no cleanliness and hygiene, tourist centres
lack necessary facilities and no guides to accompany with (refer table 5.41). Prominent complaint raised by both domestic and foreign tourists is exploitation by auto/taxi drivers (as per table 5.55).

6.24 **Purpose of Visit to Kerala.**

Main purpose of visit to Kerala for the tourists is just a pleasure trip.

6.25 **Accompaniment of Others With Tourists Visiting Kerala.**

Most domestic tourists visit Kerala with their family members; while foreign tourists visit here with their friends.

6.26 **Goods Bought by Tourists in Kerala.**

Both domestic and foreign tourists are alike in ranking high handicraft goods while on shopping in Kerala.

6.27 **Regarding Further Visits to Kerala.**

Both domestic and foreign tourists express with an overwhelming support that they would visit Kerala again.

6.28 **Application of Strategic Management in Tourism Industry.**

Ninty seven per cent of Group I and II respondents agree for implementing strategic management in the tourism industry of Kerala. Recommendations regarding implementation of strategic management in Kerala tourism are separately given towards the end of this chapter.
RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the study, the following recommendations are made:-

6.29 Focus Kerala as a Primary Tourist Destination.

Although Kerala has the privilege of a primary tourist destination in the world both in terms of primary data as well as the international acclaim possessed by it, the destination woefully lacks international attention in the world tourism travel, because of a number of deficiencies. It is for the state government to find worthwhile solutions to various internal causes hindering the growth of tourism in Kerala. For this, the following suggestions may guide the planning and implementing agencies engaged in tourism promotion.

6.30 Equal Importance to Domestic as Well as International Tourism.

Kerala has to give equal importance to both domestic and international tourism. The seriousness of this must be known better to the government which spends lakhs of rupees for participating in international tourism fairs like World Travel Mart, London, Internaional Tourismus Borse, Berlin etc. When there is threat to international travel, that will result in slump in the travel industry. A tourist season if gone is gone for ever. IATA reports 17% decline in international travels since the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 at New York.

Kerala must initiate new publicity campaign to vie more and more rich north Indian tourists to visit our destinations. Domestic tourism will flourish only when there is adequate disposable income and incentives from the employer. Leave travel concession which is now frozen by the government must be restored to government employees. It is also advisable that a literacy campaign to create a ‘psychological
urge' to travel to tourist destinations of the state by the Keralites may be started from school curriculum onwards.

6.31 Tourism to Suit the Age Group of Inbound Tourists.

While developing tourist centres, the preferences and aspirations of the age group of visitors must be taken care of. It is also found that US tourists to Kerala are typically over 60 years and many being retired persons. Special ayurvedic tourism package for attracting the old and retired people from the West must be encouraged with due care that there does not take place any exploitation in the name of treatment and rejuvenation.

6.32 Promote the Most Interesting Tourism Products in a Bigger Way.

In the light of preferences of tourism products made by the tourists, it is recommended that tourism activities associated with these resources must get continued encouragement and patronage by the government. A 550 KM long palm-fringed coastline of Kerala has many glamorous beaches from North to South. Beach tourism needs perfectly clean surroundings, availability of pure drinking water, hygienic public sanitation, proper drainage system without stagnation in the flow of wastage and water, cottages and rest rooms built with eco-friendly materials which are at least 100 metres away from the shore, availability of water sports equipments and above all security measures. In Kerala, no seashore can guarantee all these facilities.

The present state of Kovalam beach in Thiruvananthapuram is an example here with highrise concrete structures and unplanned atmosphere. Some of the recommendations made by the UN study team on Kovalam in 1973 as reported in
Chapter IV still remain in paper only. Planning is inevitable in the development of a beach for tourist purposes. Many North Kerala beaches such as Bakel, Muzhappilangad, Payyambalam, Dharmadam, Kappad etc., have distinct attractive features.

Houseboats and backwater resorts are the other attractions of Kerala. For houseboats, necessary registration and standard cruise services should be insisted. Strict instruction is to be given to houseboat operators not to pollute the lake water by throwing garbage into it. Similarly the use of plastic bottles/containers in houseboats should be banned legally.

Government must ensure that there shall be no exploitation in the name of ayurvedic medication given to tourists. Ayurveda publicised as more than three millennium old traditional medicine gifted by rishis or sages must preserve its traditional values in its application. Fake and unauthorised ayurvedic parlours should be strictly dealt with. While massaging female patients, women doctors and qualified women assistants alone shall be permitted to apply the treatment.

6.33 Tourism Marketing and Use of Most Modern Communication Media for International Publicity.

Tourism marketing involves strategic planning and implementation of various marketing strategies by adopting SWOT analysis. It must take into consideration the factors such as tourists, their likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses of competitors, tourism objectives, communicative media and imminent risk factors.
Unlike a tradeable good, in tourism, it is the customer who comes to the product. So marketing strategies must be aimed to create customer values. According to Philip Kotler\textsuperscript{130} "the best destinations have successfully answered a key question-what do our customers or future customer value? There is no guarantee that a tourism product can attract tourists once and for all. Products will change; destinations will change; whims and fancies of tourists will change; and threat to peace and security will crop up. So tourism marketing professionals must be capable of introducing\textit{niche marketing in tourism}. "At least one in every four booking for a tour package in the current millennium is going to be over the internet. So, travel and tourism firms have to improve their e-infrastructure in order to deliver a complete and most competitive online reservation for transportation, food & cuisine, lodging, sight-seeing etc".\textsuperscript{131} A government which now claims to be a promoter and facilitator in the tourism sector has to evolve multiple strategies for international publicity of our tourism products by any means such as internet, international journals, participation in world tourism fairs, foreign TV channels etc. Publicity is also possible through foreign airline companies, international tour operators and foreign media. While selecting foreign media for international tourism publicity, care should be taken to engross children and young people of those countries as they are the visitors of tomorrow. Foreign tourists while leaving Kerala from Kerala airports should be given a "Thanks card with the internet address of Kerala tourism and with the complimentary words "VISIT AGAIN KERALA". Publicity through domestic airlines is also a welcome move through advertisements in their travel brochure. Travel organisations and tourism


\textsuperscript{131} "Figuring it Out"; \textit{The Economic Times}; (4-12-2001) p.7.
intermediaries must be encouraged and motivated to conduct tourism fairs in world cities with the accompaniment of outstanding art performances.

6.34 Ensure Co-ordination of All Related Agencies Engaged in Tourism.

In Kerala, there are multiple institutions engaged in tourism activities. State government has its own tourism projects and schemes and now local bodies too have entered the fray with their own tourism projects. KTDC owns a chain of hotels and resorts, while Bakel Resorts Development Corporation (BRDC) proceeds with its own projects and programmes. Tourism being a multi-sectoral and multi-functional activity, co-operation and co-ordination of related departments is unavoidable. This was even suggested by the John Sargeant committee set up in 1945. Departments such as archaeology, museum and zoo, transport, public works, electricity, irrigation, culture etc have supplementary role in tourism activities. Besides, public-private partnership in tourism is a welcome move. So, as will be specified in the end of this chapter, a tourism co-ordination committee should be created to steer the industry to achieve the goals.

6.35 Ensure Comfortable Road Journey.

Road journey in Kerala is rated very badly by the tourists. Surroundings in tourism centres should look clean and hygienic. In most of the tourism centres of Kerala, clean and tidy public toilets do not exist. Many tourism centres still need approachable roads. Here, the government can enter into contract with private entrepreneurs under Build-Operate and Transfer (BOT) scheme or self supporting basis.
6.36 Quality Tourism Alone Will Attract Tourists.

‘Quality tourism’ should be realised both in letter and spirit. Staff working in the tourism department in the supervisory and subordinate positions have to undergo periodical updating/refresher programmes to suit them better in their role. Tourism information centres at Airports and Railway stations should employ trained staff with proficiency in English and one or two foreign preferably European languages.

Necessary on-the-job training and off-the-job training shall be rendered to the staff to equip them better in the job situation. State owned KITTS may conduct periodical training programme to suit the staff working in the public and private sector.

Riaz Hasan132 rightly asserts “The Governments both at the Centre and the States should first set their house in order by reorganising and revamping the tourism departments (and Ministries). They should be run by a small, well-trained team of professionals and experts and not by an army of novices and neophytes. Some of them should be sent abroad to places like Hongkong, Singapore and Dubai and not Europe or the United States, where they normally go to learn first hand, why these places attract more tourists than India. The lessons learnt should then be applied to their respective departments.

6.37 Promote Net Tourism.

It is ‘net tourism’ that facilitates modern package tours and it must guarantee all travel facilities to the prospective visitor. A tourism website over the internet must present the information in such a way so as to cater to the needs of holiday travellers, pilgrims, business tourists, adventure seekers, nature tourists, art lovers and health tourists. While printing tourism brochures, inherent limitations as regards transportation, accommodation, food etc., must be stated. Necessary route map must also be provided in detail. Insufficient tourist information about Kerala tourism is even highlighted by WTO as its report says that “the response is even more extreme with all tour operators stating that the US travelling public have not a clear accurate or positive perception of the state and its tourist attractions”.

6.38 Tourist Hospitality/Promotion Services.

Regarding tourist hospitality services and tourist promotion services, the index of tourism in the previous chapter describes enough practical suggestions. So, to avoid redundancy the same is not explained further.

6.39 Project a Better Image Abroad.

Among the different external reasons that impede the growth of Kerala tourism, some are hard realities and some are false and baseless. An image building programme of India abroad is a welcome step in this endeavour. This was even suggested by the National Committee on Tourism set up by the Planning Commission in 1986. Indian Embassies and Missions abroad may be chosen as the sponsors in this image-building drive.

6.40 Re-define the Role of the Government in Tourism and Encourage Privatisation.

It has been already made clear that the role of the government in tourism shall be that of promoter and facilitator. The first suggestion in the report of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) (1970) as stated in chapter III is worth noteworthy here. Tourism is a service industry. A 'Service' wins according to the quality and style in which it is presented. We are now in the age of Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation (LPG). Government institutions must raise to the level of presenting a service in an efficient, punctual and responsible manner. If these cannot be assured, transformation or restructuring may be adopted. There is no social justification for monopolising the tourism sector by any government if it cannot deliver the service in the required standard. Auctioning and leasing out of several ITDC hotels recently is worth mentioning here. No ideology supports pulling and financing of "white elephants" which are the state treasury. Hotels and Resorts of KTDC which are uneconomic or loss-making may be restructured suitably. "Those projects which are uneconomic or poor in standard may be auctioned or leased out or otherwise restructured. There is no meaning to fuel a vehicle which has a worn out engine".134

Incentives and encouragements to the private sector will create new projects and services and the government can slowly wean away from its

primary role in tourism. Bezbaruah M.P. \(^{135}\) writes “some policy initiatives-making travel and tourism a strategic economic priority; liberalising the economy further; removing fundamental barriers to growth of the private sector, like infrastructure deficiency, high tax rates and boosting service skills”.

In times of crisis, government must announce new package to shield the industry. Privatisation may sometimes lead to the downfall of similar government institution either because of competition or excellence. While permitting more and more private partnership in tourism, rules and regulations should be more liberal and transparent. The aim of the government must be to attract more and more tourism enterprise with employment potential.

**6.41 Remodel, Refurbish DTPCs.**

Registered as a society and under the chairmanship of the District Collector, District Tourism Promotion Councils have only limited scope in the tourism activities of the district. In addition to ex-officio members, the executive council must comprise travel professionals and tourism experts rather than nominating politicians who have no interest in tourism. In the utilisation of money for various tourism-related programmes, strict audit of accounts is to be insisted. The staff working in DTPCs are not permanent staff. Their grievances are not taken seriously. At least, the government must conduct an investigation by an expert agency into the performance of DTPCs, its projects, manpower, fund utilisation, earnings etc.

6.42 Involvement of Local Bodies in Tourism.

Now-a-days, many local bodies have started tourism project in the state. Projects which are viable and that cannot be managed by the tourism department may be undertaken by a panchayath or corporation. Necessary feasibility study and project evaluation should have preceded its construction work. What is required is, such isolated projects must be brought within the ambit of tourism master plan or regional plan. Tourism department can negotiate with local bodies in filling 'gaps' in the existing tourism projects managed by the government.

6.43 Identify the Unexploited Tourism Products of Kerala and Ensure Balanced Tourism Development all Over the State.

There is no dearth of tourism products in Kerala. It is admissible that there are plenty of untapped tourism potential in the State, especially in North Kerala. While developing international tourism, special attention may be given to selected locations with a regional balance so that existing south domination of the industry will be reduced.
The following Table shows the extent of district-wise disparity in the arrival of foreign tourists to Kerala.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>No. of Tourists 1999</th>
<th>No. of Tourists 2000</th>
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</thead>
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<td>96536</td>
<td>82803</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Kollam</td>
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<td>8997</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pathanamthitta</td>
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<td>208</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Kottayam</td>
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<td>Ernakulam</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Idukki</td>
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<td>24842</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Thrissur</td>
<td>1634</td>
<td>2057</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<td>Wayanad</td>
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<td>Kozhikode</td>
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6.44 Devise New Objectives, Plans, Policies and Strategies to Achieve Long-Term and Short-Term Targets in Tourism.

In Kerala, the government must revise, remodel and shape new plans, policies and programmes in the tourism sector. This is what strategic management theory prescribes for efficient and effective utilisation of the resources.

6.45 Start New Degree/Post Graduate and Professional Courses in Tourism.

Kerala lacks prestigious institutes for offering Degree-level/master level educational courses on tourism, hotel management, travel agency etc. Universities in Kerala must be encouraged to start master-level professional courses in tourism with the support of the industry and international agencies. The Master of Tourism Administration (MTA) course run by the Department of Futures Studies, University
of Kerala is attracting a number of students.

Existing tourism courses run by KITTS and KTDC are to be revamped and revitalised to suit the current demands of the industry.

6.46 Reduce Taxes Imposed in the Travel and Tourism Sector.

"Tourists pay 40 per cent tax in India, the highest in the world". This is according to the WTTC research study. Other countries charge between 3 to 6 per cent. Lowest tax burden is in Hongkong followed by Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. It is in this direction government of Goa in its budget for 2002-03 reduced the luxury tax from 12% to 8%. Besides sales tax on Liquified Petroleum Gas reduced from 20% to 8%. As this is a general issue, both the central and state government should evolve a common programme of reducing the tax burden charged on tourists at various levels.

6.47 Give More Focus on Festivals of Kerala.

It is astonishing to know that respondents have given low priority to festivals of Kerala. This will be due to poor publicity campaign about Kerala's enthralling festivals.

Festivals in Kerala begin from Onam which is celebrated in August-September. It is on this eve, special tourism week celebrations take place. Response from the Group I informants for this study is that the venue for tourism fair may be arranged in rural areas for knowing the social life, enjoying the local arts and to interact with the people.

136 Hansika Pai; (18.03.2002) op.cit.
Temple and church festivals in Kerala start from November onwards and extends up to May. Folk arts of North Kerala such as Perunkaliyattom, Theyyam, Thira, Poothan, Padayani etc; are also celebrated during this period mostly in connection with temple festivals. It is during January-February school/college yuvajanotsavom is staged. In addition to all these, famous dance, music and art festivals also take place in Kerala at different towns and cities. Although, tourism department has published special brochures on festivals in Kerala they do not describe fully the event, the festivities, the legends, the rituals and their tourist importance. Special tour packages covering important festivals of a month may be published in advance through internet. It is very much relevant here to mention the recognition given to koodiyattom by the UNESCO as one of the millennium old heritage dance drama.

Temple festivals with mega elephant pageants take place in Thrissur and Palakkad districts. Special international publicity drive may be initiated to attract the attention of domestic and foreign tourists to view these events. Special incentives may be offered to flight charterers and tour operators to bring maximum tourists. Thrissur pooram, the ultimate and unparallel among temple festivals still needs world wide publicity. Importance of Thrissur Pooram is even highlighted in a foreign book\(^{137}\), as “Many of India’s visitors are attracted by its fine buildings, such as Taj Mahal and Jaipur palaces and its distinctive cultures. Kerala has strong cultural traditions of its own. For eg; during April or May each year, a festival known as Trichur Pooram takes place. Generally coinciding with a new moon, the festival is characterised by a procession of elephants decorated in brightly coloured and

jewelled coverings”. Similarly a calendar of boat races in Kerala should be made available for publicity both in India and abroad.

6.48 Encourage Eco-Friendly Tourism.

Tourism in Kerala is desired as eco-friendly and environment friendly. Ecology of an area is greatly influenced by man, his behaviour and his interaction with nature. The visiting tourist, their lifestyle, the length of their stay, response of the local population, various facilities offered, the nature of the tourism product etc, are predominant factors that directly influence the environment of the host region.138

“Managed sensitively, tourism can be less destructive than alternative industries such as mining. While it has the potential to increase the wealth of the population in destination areas, thus making communities more viable and providing a clear justification for devoting resources to the preservation of local culture heritage and environmental features”.139

Tourists of the present millennium prefer, visit to natural areas rather than man-made artificial attractions. To check the environmental threats, proposals like carrying capacity assessment, environmental audit, town planning, involvement of local people, undertaking conservation programme, promoting eco-tourism, declaring plastic free zones, conducting awareness programme, declaring wildlife sanctuaries and bio-reserve areas, conducting research on impacts of tourism etc., are welcome steps. Periodical Environment Impact Assessments (EIA) are also needed.

“Environmental auditing is a process whereby operations of an organisation are monitored to determine whether they are in compliance with regulatory requirements and environmental policies and standards. A well conducted environmental auditing programme is expected to -

(1) increase the overall level of environmental awareness in the tourism industry;
(2) assist tourism management to improve environmental, standards through ‘benchmarking’ against proven performance;
(3) identify opportunities to reinforce positive environmental interactions; and
(4) accelerate the achievement of best practice environmental management in the industry.”

6.49 Make Available Clean and Tidy Room Facility.

Majority tourists visiting Kerala are middle-income budget tourists who wish to stay in tourist homes, tourist lodges and tourist cottages. Tourists are not attracted to stay in AC deluxe rooms or suite in star hotels of Kerala. A tour operator who brings tourists on package tour cannot quote competitive rates when he arranges accommodation in a star hotel. A newcomer who ventures into the hotel industry must be aware of this changing trend. Group III and IV respondents have expressed this opinion. Rooms in government owned guest houses and tourist bungalows shall also be made available to tourists. Rules and policies in letting out rooms at government guest houses must be revised and liberalised so that the government can earn from them rather than retaining them unoccupied.

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6.50 Immediate Redressal of Complaints of Tourists

Complaints of the tourists need special attention and redressal. The complaints may be grouped into two: General complaints and particular complaints. Some of the general complaints are:

(a) Tourist centres lack necessary facilities.
(b) No cleanliness and hygiene.
(c) High cost of tax on hotel bills.
(d) Tediouos road journey.
(e) Absence of basic facilities.

These are general problems for which the government, Department of tourism and other state level tourism institutions must find solution. But particular complaints like:

(a) no sufficient tourist information;
(b) non-availability of guides to accompany with;
(c) unimpressive conducted tours;
(d) inadequate entertainment/recreation; and
(e) exploitation by taxi/auto drivers etc.,

can be rectified at the local level if the host (tour operator/resort owner/hotel) takes responsibility in this regard. Regarding overpricing of various services, the complaints were mainly about shopping, bar and restaurant services and tax on hotel bills.
6.51 Popularise Conducted Tours.

For the economic advantage of the host region, hiring of vehicles or conducted tours have to be popularised. Special incentives must be offered to tourist vehicles owners and car rental agencies in the matter of road tax and taxi permits so that they can quote competitive rates for travel. The recent tie-up between tourism department of Kerala and Indian Railways for arranging special tourist coaches in trains bound for Kerala is praiseworthy. State Road Transport Corporation can also come in agreement with the Tourism Department for plying special tourist buses to selected destinations during peak tourist season.

6.52 Attract Rich Tourists to Visit Kerala.

Kerala needs arrival of more and more affluent tourists, who have the time to stay here for long. If the staying period extends, the economic advantage to the host community enhances. In this direction, two suggestions are worth mentioning.

(a) Promote week-long and fortnightly, tour packages covering diverse but most thrilling tourism products which are spread in the length and breadth of the state.

(b) Attract wealthy retired nationals from the Gulf and Western countries to undergo ayurvedic medication because most ayurvedic therapy needs longer treatment. But, the aspirants must be taken into confidence by giving perfect information about the age-old, well-codified texts and scriptures of ayurvedic therapy. Ayurveda derives its healing power from the herbal bounty of the nature for the harmony and rejuvenation of the human body, mind and soul.
6.53 Local Participation in Tourism.

Programmes should be chalked out to participate the local community in tourism related activities. Interaction with tourists and friendly cultural exchange programmes between the visiting tourist and host community will remove much misconceptions about the tourist and tourism. The paying guest scheme initiated by the Tourism Department, Government of Kerala is a right move but, it requires much more publicity and popularity.

6.54 Public Awareness.

It is the need of the hour to pinpoint the importance of tourism awareness amongst the people. Kerala, rightly called the most literate state, is devoid of adequate tourism literacy. Knowledge of tourism intends to create friendly hospitality towards the foreign tourists, and also awareness concerning the positive & negative impact of tourism. Basic tenets of tourism may be taught from school level onwards. New degree-level, PG level tourism courses may be started in universities and affiliated colleges in Kerala. Idea of starting tourism clubs in colleges is a welcome move in this direction. Special tourism awareness programme has to be rendered to Taxi/Autorikshaw drivers because both domestic & international tourists (Group III & IV) have raised complaints against them. The words of Jawaharlal Nehru “Welcome a tourist and send back a friend” is to be implemented here. Kamala Das had said once that “we see the foreigner as an alien or laughable commodity imported to thrill our children and until this mind set changes, we cannot have tourism promotion”.

6.55 Feed Back From Tourists.

The tourist is our guest, our friend and our benefactor. His views, complaints and suggestions must be heard and rectified to the possible extent. While leaving a tourist centre, necessary feedback from tourists must be ascertained to know their likes and dislikes about the destination.

6.56 Non-seasonal Tourism.

Tourism is not at all seasonal in Kerala. It should not be publicised as seasonal. Even during monsoon season, there are alternative tourism products like boat races, ayurveda etc. It is the best time for applying the healing touch of ayurveda. Acute rains will add to the thrill of tourists from temperate regions.

6.57 Direct International Flights.

In destination development, this factor is very much predominant. Since this subject comes within the powers of the central government, the state government must initiate serious lobbying work in this issue with the prime Minister and Union Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation. In the national tourism scenario, Kerala has a distinct position because the state is one of the rarest participants among other Indian States in various international tourism fairs. Direct flights to Germany, UK, France and US will boost Kerala tourism to new heights.

6.58 Inland Waterways.

Kerala has approximately a 900 Km long inland waterways between Kovalam and Kasaragod. The scintillating beauty of Kerala backwaters is unexplainable. Lush greenery, coconut palm groves, rivers, estuaries,
 ethic rural panorama, flock of migratory and home birds, fantastic view of scores of Chinese fish nets, country boats (engaged in fishing, catching shell fish, transporting coconut husk and other cargo), moving houseboats, mangrove forests, acqua plants spread in the lake as green blankets, small islands here and there, sunrise/sunset views and many more- all these in the placid waters of Kerala shall be a dreamlike experience to the visitor.

After a careful project study, this mega project can be presented to any international funding agency for financial aid. The project, although, entailing several hundred crores of rupees shall be beneficial for tourism as well as cheap water transportation. The entire cost spent can be recovered from the moving vehicles over a period of years by way of toll and tax revenue. Environment Impact Assessment also has to be undertaken as part of the survey. Strict rules and regulations have to be framed to prevent the contamination of water with bio-waste and non-degradable materials.

6.59 Plantation Tourism

In Kerala, there is no dearth of plantations. Tea, rubber, coffee, cardamom, coconut, pepper, arecanut are common plantations in Kerala. Plantation tourism can be linked with eco-tourism and too much nature-friendly services can be provided to the visitors. Here too, the government can promote the private sector.

The plantation tourism project started by the State-owned Plantation Corporation of Kerala needs a thorough investigation.
6.60 Hill Highway

In addition to three highways in Kerala, another proposal for the structural and tourism development of Kerala is the hill highway between Kasaragod and Thiruvananthapuram. Deepika Research Bureau\textsuperscript{141} has highlighted much about this. It involves 50 Crore rupees, connects 13 districts and has a length of 960 KMs. The hill highway as suggested, utilises 95 per cent existing keeled routes, few bridges and no damage to any reserve forests. The highway starts from NandaramPathavu in the border of the Kasaragod district and finally ends at Netta in Thiruvananthapuram-Tamil Nadu border. It opens scope for new interstate highway connecting Kerala-Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

The idea of a hill highway as recommended here may be surveyed and its potential may be assessed. This issue may be taken up with the central government for special assistance under any scheme. This highway will open new milestone in the development of hill tourism, high-range tourism, wildlife tourism, adventure tourism etc.

6.61 Nedumbassery - Kochi Waterway.

Another notable suggestion is to conduct survey for an inland waterway between Kochi international Airport, Nedumbassery and Kochi which is known as the queen of Arabian sea. This will not involve huge investment and will considerably reduce much strain on the already busy NH47.

\textsuperscript{141} "Malayora highway"; Deepika, Front Page (6/7/2001).
6.62 Educational Tourism & Health Tourism.

Kerala has the distinct advantage of having highly educated and qualified personnel in science, medicine, engineering, computer software etc. Our universities and reputed educational institutions can reserve seats for foreign students in higher education. Classical arts, vedas, ayurveda, vasthusilpakala, panchakarma yoga, kalaripayattu, super specialty medicinal courses, naval architecture, mural painting etc., in which necessary guidance, teaching and research can be offered. Educational bilateral agreements can be entered into with foreign nations for rendering these facilities.

6.63 Tourism Exhibition in North India.

When Kerala spends huge sums for participating in world tourism fairs, a 10 or 20 percent of it may be spent in India for conducting Tourism exhibition in North Indian cities. The city venue may be changed every year, say, first year Delhi, second year Kolkata, third year Jaipur, fourth year Simla and so on. This is to promote more and more migration of North Indian tourists to visit Kerala. The exhibition may be conducted in alliance with the private sector and accompanied with typical Kerala art performances.

6.64 Government Expenditure on Tourism.

It's a plain fact that the expenditure by the centre and state governments in the tourism sector does not come upto one percent of the total outlay of any five year plans. Henceforth, the expenditure in the
tourism sector by the government shall be spent for basic infrastructure in tourism destinations and for various tourism promotional services. Tourism is not a basic industry in India. Money spent in tourism sector should generate income. The government must think in terms of corporate governance in the tourism industry. 'Governance' in the words of Prof. Behnam is "getting 100 Paise worth of value out of every rupee spent". Before approving a finance proposal for a tourism project, necessary project study for assessing the short-term and long-term returns must be undertaken.

6.65 Innovations-the Only Solution to Win Targets.

Tourism requires talented people to introduce new ideas and projects that stimulate the industry to tide over testing times. Travel and Tourism is now experiencing a slow down all over the world consequent on terrorist activities on September 11, 2001 in the United States of America. Present day global recession has also affected the industry adversely. Airline companies which were the worst-hit during September-October 2001, introduced heavy discounts in passenger fare. Now, most of them have lifted these concessions since the situation has improved. We must think wisely by shaping new strategies to vie more and more domestic and international tourists. Special tourism packages for pilgrimage, festivals, beach holidays, nature friendly tourism, ayurvedic treatment, backwater tour etc, have to be introduced with novel ideas. When the industry faces challenges and difficult times, the government, and tourism authorities must declare fresh incentives and concessions to support the industry.

142 Ventata Subramanian K; “What is Ailing the National Economy”; The Hindu Business Review Page(19.08.02).
Stating ‘innovation the key to get tourism on track’ Neelam Mathews\textsuperscript{143} writes “Even as the tourism industry in India cries itself hoarse asking the government to reduce taxes that are further throttling business, the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) took the industry by surprise when it announced a US $7.1 Million assistance package. The package is aimed at helping ‘tide the industry over this difficult period and ensure that critical growth strategies are not hampered’ said the Chairman, STB”.

\textbf{6.66 Fisheries Tourism Prospects.}

Kerala has over 550 Kilometre coastline, 44 rivers and 45 lakes. Tourism department in association with Kerala Fisheries department can identify recreational fishing, sport fishing, game fishing, fish watching, snorkelling, skuba diving, angling, aquarium, dolphinarium etc. Tourist submarine service, beach train service, maritime museum etc., are the other innovations where the government can attract private investments with novel incentives.

\textbf{6.67 Peace and Harmony.}

This is a predominant requisite to develop, promote and sustain tourist activities in any tourist destination. “Tourism can grow only in an environment of peace and stability where the traveller is sure of safety and security, services are prompt and hassle-free and there is no attempt at extortion or cheating”.\textsuperscript{144}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{143} Neelam Mathews; “Innovation the Key to get Tourism on Track”; The Economic Times (1.12.2001) p.6.
\textsuperscript{144} Praveen Sethi; Nature and Scope of Tourism : Rajat Publications, Delhi, (1999) p.119.
\end{footnotesize}
6.68 Communal Flare-ups and Civil Disturbances.

Communal riots and terrorist activities are the bane of India’s world image. Tourists hesitate to visit countries where there is threat to peace and harmony. Declaring snap hartal (alternate name for ‘Bandh’ which is prohibited by the court) by political parties to air their protest against their opponents creates unexplainable hardship to tourists due to stoppage of normal civil life. In Kerala this has become a common feature and no political party is an exception from this shameful act. Tour operators who bring tourists on a package tour, experience the grim travails of this as their whole plan for the day is disrupted. Compared to other states, number of “hartal” days is more in Kerala, though Kerala is the most literate State in India.

6.69 Tourism Law.

Law in tourism sector is urgent to protect the interest of the tourist, the government and the tourism intermediary. The much trumpeted Tourism Trade Act is still in the cold storage of the Kerala Government. Of course, a law when enacted will add power to the bureaucracy and it may pave way for ‘licence raj’ in tourism. So, what is suggested is, make laws with simple procedure for obedience by the people. If they become harsh, tendency to violate them will be more and thus corruption breeds in the society.

There is real need for appropriate tourism law in the service of house boats, ayurvedic tourism, accompaniment of guides, wildlife tourism, setting up of lake/beach/backwater resorts, construction in hill stations,
protection of the environment, adventure trips, garbage, disposal at tourism centres etc. It is noteworthy that the present government of Kerala announced in 2001 a tourism policy titled “Tourism vision 2025” for the first time in the tourism history of the state.

6.70 No Proper Maintenance and Government Funds.

Tourism infrastructure requires careful upkeep and maintenance not only for attracting tourist but also for its own survival. There are many ambitious government sponsored tourism projects which are either in an unfinished stage or in a state of abandonment. Farm tourism project started by the Plantation Corporation of Kerala Limited near Athirappally waterfalls is worth mentioning here.

Due to acute financial discipline government spending in the tourism sector has been seriously affected. Government should do no more blunder for monopolising the tourism sector. Existing projects run by the government must be subject to a ‘performance analysis’ and those projects which are uneconomic may be restructured suitably. No new tourism projects shall be undertaken by the government. Instead, such projects may be left to the private sector in highly transparent terms. This is supported by the majority respondents of the Group I. Role of the government in the tourism sector should be that of a leader, promoter and facilitator.

6.71 Development of Ports at Alappuzha, Azhicode and Beypore.

Much renovation work and dredging operations on a bigger scale are necessary in Alappuzha and Beypore for the arrival and anchorage of tourist ships. This will surely increase not only tourist traffic but also cheap
carriage of cargo. Azhicode (near Kodungallor) in Thrissur district is the cradle of christianity where Saint Thomas, the apostle of Jesus Christ first landed in India in AD 52. Kodungallore was known as ‘Muziris’ or ‘Mahodayapuram’, a port town with too many historical importance. Azhicode Port which has lost many of its ancient structures needs new construction. Both Azhicode and Beypore ports will surely increase tourist inflow to the Malabar region.

6.72 Tourism Related Industries.

Handicrafts, spices, gem, jewellery, coir, textiles etc. are the major tourism-related products mostly purchased by the tourists. Among these top priority goes to handicrafts. Special fairs and exhibitions of these products can be organised during the peak tourist season at tourist destinations for promoting tourism as well as sales.

6.73 Focus on Youth Tourism.

Tourism is greatly enjoyed by the young people. This, being a demographic truth, the government has to initiate new programmes to encourage the youth in promoting tourism. An escape from the stress and strain of modern life will guarantee a soothing or refreshing effect as the traveller experiences an entirely different environment. So, a travel to nature’s bounty is advisable to everyone.

6.74 New Amusement.

Kerala has no dearth of amusement parks. But innovative holiday enjoyment facilities are yet to be started here. For eg; tourist submarine
service as in maldives, para gliding, baloon-flying, scuba diving in the sea, sky train, golf, nature tours, aqua park, helipad at major tourist centres. Tourist trains similar to 'Palace on Wheels', floating restaurants, tourist ship cruise, beach sports, water sports, river rafting, canoeing. current trends in the technology of new hospitality services, etc. are to be introduced in Kerala with the active role of the private sector to attract more and more tourists.

6.75 Tourism - a Great Economic Force.

Owing to the multiplier effect, tourism, being a service industry with immense employment potential has contributed economic benefits to scores of countries in the world. In poverty alleviation too, tourism has a fundamental role. Francesco Frangialli, Secretary-General of WTO describes the reduction of poverty is one of the most compelling challenges of our time. Poverty cannot be summed up as a lack of income. It is a multi-dimensional and complex phenomenon with an intricate relationship to issues such as disease, illiteracy, infant mortality, environmental degradation and many other aspects. Up until now, and this is perhaps precisely one of the reasons for this failure - tourism has not been seriously considered in international strategies to reduce poverty. This is regrettable in so far as it disregards the fact that tourism has grown into the biggest and doubtless, the most diversified economic activity of our time.

The contribution of service sector to India's GDP has gone up from 40.6% share in 1990-91 to 48.5% in 2000-01. The share of manufacturing in the GDP has gone up from 24.5% in 1990-91 to 25% in 2000-01. Tourism has

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146 "Services Bubble": in the column Figuring it Out; The Economic Times (26.03.2002) p.9.
contributed to 6.29% of the Kerala's GDP and has generated employment in Kerala to the tune of nearly 7 lakhs (based on a study by the Tata Consultancy Services)\(^{47}\). In Rajasthan, Tourism accounts for 13% of GDP; while manufacturing sector contributes 8% of the state GDP.

**How Strategic Management Should Work in Kerala Tourism?**

Chapter IV has widely dealt with strategic management in the tourism industry of Kerala. Necessary theoretical background for adopting strategic management was discussed. Now, it becomes necessary to suggest some practical ideas which if implemented will make far-reaching changes in the tourism scenario of Kerala.

### 6.76 Delinking Hospitality Department

It would be most appropriate to delink the Hospitality section from the Department of Tourism as it consumes a lot of revenue from the department of tourism. Instead, the same may be housed in an independent State Hospitality Department with separate budgetary allocations. Hosting the state guests, maintenance of the Guest houses and yatri nivas and hospitality to the ministers and their entourage may be looked after by this department.

### 6.77 The State Hospitality Department, if formed must devise new plans and strategies to create resources and income. At least 60% of the room capacity should be made available for hire by the tourists. The idea here is that this department should not be like a 'white elephant' axing the State exchequer. The State Guest houses, yatri nivases, Tourist lodges, Transport services etc. alone have consumed Rs.5,92,15,000 crores during 1998-99 which is 68 per cent of the total non-plan revenue.

\(^{47}\) "Tourism Vision, 2025" op.cit.
expenditure during that period. A thorough investigation with regard to the present condition of various Guest houses, yatri nivases, palaces owned by this department will surely reveal the need for an appropriate restructuring. Some prestigious institutions like Kanakakunnu palace, KITTS Building, Thycaud, Guest houses of Varkala, Kottayam, Munnar, Ramanilayam Thrissur etc., have a ‘heritage value’ and they can be restructured to yield income to the State Hospitality Department.

There is high degree of incompetency and lack of professional management amongst the staff working in various State Guest houses and Yatri Nivas run by the government. Staff in the middle and lower managerial cadres is not professionally competent to discharge their duties effectively. This must be corrected by the government by appointing qualified personnel or by providing intensive training to the present staff. This is vital to give a new dimension to the working of these institutions as “Profit centres”.

6.78 After bifurcating the Hospitality section from the Tourism department, the restructured organisation structure of the Department of Tourism will be as follows:-

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Chart 6
Proposed organisation structure of Department of Tourism, Kerala.

Minister of Tourism
  ↘
  Tourism Co-ordination Committee
  ↘
Secretary, DOT
  ↘
  Strategic Management Committee
  ↘
Director, DOT
  ↘
  
Strategic Manager (Eco-Tourism)
  ↘
  Asst. Manager North Kerala
  ↘
  Asst. Manager South Kerala
  ↘
  
Strategic Manager (Domestic Tourism)
  ↘
  Asst. Manager Planning
  ↘
  Asst. Manager Publicity
  ↘
  Staff
  ↘
  Information officers at Bus stands
  ↘
  
Strategic Manager (International Tourism)
  ↘
  Asst. Manager Overseas Publicity
  ↘
  Staff
  ↘
  Information officers at Airports & Rly Station
  ↘
  
Strategic Manager Finance (Budgets)
  ↘
  Regional Tourism Managers
  ↘
  Regional Tourism Managers
  ↘
  Regional Tourism Managers
  ↘
  Asst. Manager R & D Env. Impact
  ↘
  
Strategic Manager Administration & Establishment
  ↘
  Regional Tourism Managers
  ↘
  Regional Tourism Managers
  ↘
  Regional Tourism Managers
  ↘
  Asst. Manager Education, Training, KITTS.
  ↘
  
Strategic Manager Planning & Devt.
  ↘
  Asst. Manager Planning & Devt.
  ↘
  
Regional Tourism Manager (Malabar)
  ↘
  
Regional Tourism Manager (Mid Kerala)
  ↘
  
Regional Tourism Manager (South Kerala)
  ↘
  
Superintendents
  ↘
  Clerks
  ↘
  "Kollam"
NB: The committees mentioned above will have both line and staff authority and will report to the concerned authorities as indicated in the chart 6.1.

6.79 Tourism Co-ordination Committee.

This is an inter-departmental co-ordination committee comprising the secretaries of various tourism related department such as irrigation, forest, wildlife, Archaeology, Electricity, Industries department, Public transport, Museum and Zoo, Public works, Cultural affairs, etc; with the Minister of Tourism as the head and the Secretary DoT as the co-ordinator. The task of the committee shall be to suggest various ways and means by which many inter-departmental hindrances can be removed for a mega-tourism promotion of the State. Tourism being, a multi-functional and multi-sectoral industry, the relevance of this committee is indispensable. Managing Director of KTDC and BRDC shall also be members of this committee. This committee can find worthwhile solutions to various problems like inter-departmental rivalry, early clearance of proposals, environmental problems, objections under various law etc.

The committee must meet at least once in three months or according to the exigencies of the case. If a department secretary cannot attend the meeting, another responsible official must be deputed to attend the meeting.

6.80 Strategic Management Committee.

Tourism is one of the very few promising industries that can trigger rapid economic impact to the state's economy. The strategic management committee
shall compose of a core group of professionals in tourism drawn from various segments such as Tourism Dept., Govt. of India, Airline companies, Hotel industry, Travel Agents, Tour operators, Holiday resorts, State industries Department, Tourism and travel organisations and Tourism Writers, to advise the Department of tourism in devising plans, policies and strategies needed in the tourism sector. The committee will take a key role in forging synergy between public-private partners who play in the tourism industry. The committee must be headed by the Secretary, Dept. of Tourism and Director of Tourism as the co-ordinator. The service of management experts on a honorary basis may also be sought.

"Tourism is a competitive industry which requires careful planning and marketing strategies to entice wanderlust tourists from abroad. Therefore, it is high time, we formed a core group of professional managers to apply 'strategic management' in order to boost the industry to new heights."\textsuperscript{149}

An executive team of this committee shall evolve strategies, assess them, conduct SWOT analysis, implement strategies, make evaluation and feedback. It is ideal here to open a strategic management cell to practise strategic management. The strategic management committee as suggested above shall meet at least once in a month to give expert advice to the Tourism Department.

\textbf{6.81 Strategic Managers.}

Since domestic tourism and international tourism are equally important to the state, separate strategic Managers are to be employed to devote more focussed attention to each. They will be assisted by separate planning and publicity managers.

\textsuperscript{149} George P.O.; "Kerala Tourism - New strategies"; op.cit. (July 2001) p.15.
6.82 Strategic Manager - Administration and Establishment.

Under the Strategic Manager, three regional managers (North, Middle and South Kerala) and one District Manager for each district. Every district in Kerala is rich in different variety of tourism products. So, this decentralisation will hasten the way for a balanced regional attention of the state tourism industry. District Tourism Managers should be authorised to head DTPCs and co-ordinate tourism activities within their district.

6.83 Strategic Manager - Planning & Development.

Shaping the master plan, organising research and education collection and analysis of tourism statistics, environmental issues, tackling inter-departmental issues, may be the major functions of this manager.

6.84 Strategic Manager - (Eco-Tourism).

This is also a coveted post which is to be filled up by drawing from the Forest department not below the rank of a Conservator of Forests by deputation or otherwise. He should be responsible for master-planning & surveillance of eco-tourism projects, wildlife tourism and adventure tourism.

6.85 Joint Meetings of the Top Executives.

The Tourism Secretary, Director and six strategic managers as described above should as far as possible meet once in every fortnight to discuss department issues, managerial issues and the trends in the industry.
CONCLUSION

6.86 The topic of this research study "Management of Tourism Industry in Kerala" was undertaken by the researcher as a comprehensive study covering the whole Kerala State. It required extensive travelling in all the districts of Kerala in order to collect primary data from four types of involving participants such as officials, private intermediaries, domestic tourists and foreign tourists. Three types of questionnaires were prepared to suit each class of informants: the third one being common to domestic and foreign tourists as given in appendices VII to IX.

The data of the study was for a period of ten years since 1990. Every effort was made to collect secondary data relevant to this period. The objectives of this study were:

- to investigate into the problems of the tourism industry and formulate fitting practical solutions to them;
- to investigate and ascertain the application of modern management techniques and methods in the formulation of policies, plans and programmes for the development of tourism in Kerala;
- to suggest the ways and means of co-ordination by which the Department of tourism, other government agencies, local self-governments and private entrepreneurs can be most effectively and optimally employed for the promotion of tourism in Kerala;
- to conduct an in-depth study on the tourism industry in Kerala and evolve new and innovative strategies; and
- to furnish necessary suggestions for improvement and present a model strategic management programme which will be important tools to the policy makers and entrepreneurs connected with the tourism industry in Kerala State.

The hypotheses of this study were:

(a) Kerala, though, immensely rich in tourism products does not attract large number of tourists.

(b) There is lack of professional management in the tourism industry of Kerala and this calls for the adoption of a new management strategy.

To conduct a detailed study like this, the researcher had to visit various tourist centres to make an on the spot study. Besides, five tourism exhibitions were conducted for projecting Kerala tourism and to create public awareness about tourism. A large number of tourists, students and public visited these exhibitions and gave worthwhile suggestions.

Chapter V has already dealt with the analysis of data. Necessary $X^2$ test was applied in all the prominent cases to derive conclusions. An index of tourism was prepared based on 21 variables, the preferences/opinions of tourists were ranked in an ascending order starting from poor ranking to higher ranking and various weak or stress areas were identified. The hypotheses that Kerala, though immensely rich in tourism products does not attract large number of tourists and the second one that there is lack of professional management in the tourism industry of Kerala are profusely substantiated by the version of respondents and the analysis made thereon, in respect of the following:
5.7 Kerala is a primary tourist destination.

5.9 Kerala needs promotion of domestic and international tourism.

5.11 Tourism in Kerala is to be culture-oriented, eco-friendly, labour-intensive and economically gainful.

5.12 Kerala needs more and more international publicity through various verbal and visual media.

5.13 Kerala has inherent weaknesses in planning, administration, establishment and quality of staff in the management of tourism industry.

5.15 & 5.44 Kerala fails to assure best quality tourist hospitality on important services.

5.16 & 5.45 Kerala has to do a lot in tourism promotional services.

5.17 Some overcharging on particular services need a cut.

5.19 In Kerala, tourism requires co-ordination of all relevant departments.

5.20 Kerala needs master plan, district plan and block-level plan for promotion of tourism.

5.21 Engage local bodies too to promote rural or green tourism.

5.22 Performance of DTPCs is not up to the desired level.

5.23 There are administrative and managerial problems affecting the tourism industry in Kerala.

5.24 Kerala government has to redefine its role in tourism.

5.25 There still exist in Kerala so many uncared places with tourist potential.

5.26 There are some basic requirements which need careful attention.
5.28 Kerala has to promote privatisation on a bigger scale to create more and more tourism infrastructure and employment opportunities.

5.29 Kerala needs a thorough shake-up in the plan, policies and programmes of the government.

5.32 There is a compelling need to reduce tax on hotel bills.

5.33 Conduct special tourism fairs and festivals in rural areas for knowing the social and cultural life, interaction with people, knowing the local arts, music, dance and crafts.

5.34 & 5.53 Strategic management must be implemented for the large scale growth of tourism in Kerala.

5.47 Tourist information facilities are woefully lacking in Kerala.

5.49 & 5.68 Complaints and grievances of tourists have to be heard, taken seriously and have to be rectified to a maximum extent.

The second hypothesis formulated in this study is also justified on account of the following findings:-

5.13 There are administrative, managerial and establishment problems affecting Kerala tourism adversely.

5.15, 5.44, 5.16, 5.45 Kerala does not provide best hospitality services and tourism promotion services.

5.19 Kerala needs a co-ordinated approach in tourism by all the related departments.

5.20 Kerala needs tourism master-plan, district plan and block-level plan.
DTPCs in Kerala need a face lift in their performance.

There are some basic managerial problems in the tourism industry of Kerala.

Kerala government has to redefine its role in tourism and promote more and more privatisation in tourism.

There are many unexploited tourism wealth in Kerala.

Kerala has to ensure basic requirements such as training and development of the staff, settlement of disputes of tourists and educate auto/taxi drivers.

The government can provide basic facilities at tourism centres by way of contracts, lease, income-sharing and self-supporting basis.

Allow privatisation on a bigger scale for better creating infrastructure and job opportunities.

There requires a thorough shake-up in the current plans, policies and programmes of the government in the tourism sector.

Kerala has to create more and more tourism professionals by starting new tourism courses in universities and colleges.

Implement strategic management techniques in the tourism industry.

There is serious lacking of tourist information facilities.

Complaints of tourists need earnest attention and redressal.

Training and development of the staff is very much needed for achieving business results.
SWOT Analysis has to be employed to get best results in management.

In conducting this research, the researcher made a humble attempt to bring to light the problems, weaknesses, short-comings and plain realities associated with the management of tourism industry in Kerala. The scope for research on tourism is unending since the industry is greatly involving people, product and services. The impact of tourism is another area where there is need for regular study and research. Continuous research and time to time innovations alone will pave way for achieving sustainability in tourism.

Let us hope that the year 2002, designated as the international year of Eco-tourism by the United Nations will usher a new era of peace, harmony and peaceful, co-existence of all living organism through tourism, an open global gateway. The greatest threat to tourism and travel, now-a-days, is terrorism in which the victims are mostly innocent people. World now requires another Mahatma Gandhi to preach the ideals of peace, universal love and non-violence.