Preface

Tourism industry has graduated from “mass tourism” to “class tourism”. In this context the potential of tourism is immense. The modern enlightened tourist no more restricts himself to mere passive visitor to monuments or sights of destination; they want to be very much a part of it. Thus comes new concept like adventure tourism, eco-tourism, farm tourism, agri-tourism, rural tourism and endogenous tourism. Globally, there has been sharp increase in the business of these new-age tourism. Thus remote area need not languish for the want of shopping malls and the associated glitterati. Every place has got its unique features that can be marketed to the tourist. One just needs to identify these and then go about marketing. Even remoteness of area itself can be a tourism product. A. Jaythilak, Managing Director, Chattisgadh Tourism Board puts it, “if it was ABCD for Kerala, it is now EFGE for Chattisgadh”. Thus in a country like India, which is of sub-continental size and is “diversity of diversities”, potentials for tourism are just galore.

Keeping the above in mind the study area "Vidarbha" was choosen – first, to enlist the places of tourist interest. Secondly, to assess and evaluate the present steps taken by the private and public sector in promoting tourism in Vidarbha region. Thirdly, to suggest strategies after doing a SWOT analysis. While little or no study has been done on the tourism potential of Vidarbha before, the present study aims to be a pioneer work leaving much scope of study for the future scholars. Despite exciting destination fit enough to attract visitors from India and abroad as well as its strategic central location, the apathy and stepmotherly attitude of both central and state government came as a surprise to the scholar. This study has been divided into nine chapters..
Chapter I gives an overview of tourism industry in India and world. It also makes a brief historical sketch of Vidarbha.

Chapter II, throws light on the research design of the study. It enlists the hypothesis based on which the whole study is done. It also gives the objective and significance of the study.

Chapter III, which describes geographic personality of the region gives the physical features, topography, weather phenomenon, forest and mineral resources, population and settlement, education, economy and the like aspects.

Chapter IV, sketches the touristic personality of Vidarbha region. It has been further subdivided into man-made tourist attractions and the natural tourist places. It also paints the kaleidoscope of the beautiful living culture of this region. The chapter ends with giving the Unique Selling Point (USP) of the region that can act as a catalyst for fuelling the tourism promotion in the region.

Chapter V, undertakes case studies of two natural wonders of the Vidarbha region. While Chikhaldara is the only hill station in the region, Lonar has the distinction of being the largest impact crater in the world in basaltic rock. The first case study reveals that Chikhaldara has lot more to offer than just a hill station. The second case study uncovers the mystery of the extra terrestrial body that visited Vidarbha some 25,000 years ago.

Chapter VI, entitled, Reviews and Assessment, besides making a SWOT analysis covers interpretation of the findings. At the same time it reviews the ongoing efforts by private and public sector enterprises. It also makes a critical evaluation of government policies.

Chapter VII, makes clear the strategic implementation for tourism promotion in the Vidarbha region. The chapter also discusses various promotional campaigns and urges to take technological advantage.
Chapter VIII, concludes the study and the scholar has rendered her concrete suggestions, which when adopted can turn the potential of the region into real tourist assets.

Chapter IX, is a list of bibliography and references that were referred to while undertaking the study.

An attempt has been made to make the study as comprehensive as was possible in the various limitations of time and funds, which the researcher had to face.