Chapter-VI
Tourism Policy 2005- A Critical Appraisal
The tourists attitude towards various aspects of tourism policy is proposed to evaluate the Tourism Policy critically. The tourism policy of Himachal Pradesh has been analysed with the help of analysis made the respondents opinion towards various tourists facilities and there after SWOT analysis has been applied to evaluate tourism policy-2005. In the 1st part, the analysis of the tourist's opinion has been carried out and the second part has been focused on the SWOT analysis of Tourism Policy-2005. Further, the strengths and opportunities of the tourism policy have been discussed and in the second part the weaknesses and threats have been analysed critically. The Main Strategy is focused on Tourism Sub Plans, Infrastructure Development, New Marketing Strategy, Improving Connectivity, Tourism Development Board, Private Sector Investment and Effective Regulation. Thrust Areas of the policy are: Rural Tourism, Pilgrim Tourism, Eco Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Lesser Known Destinations and Health Tourism.

The "MISSION STATEMENT" stands "TO MAKE TOURISM THE PRIME ENGINE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE STATE BY POSITIONING IT AS A LEADING GLOBAL DESTINATION BY THE YEAR 2020."

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. The number of tourists worldwide has been registering phenomenal growth. It is expected that this number would shortly touch 1.5 billion. Tourism contributes about 11 percent of the world workforce and 10.2 percent of the global gross domestic product. The dynamic growth of this industry is evident from the fact a new job is added to the sector every 2.5 second. This pattern and dynamic character of the Sector necessitates the policy to adapt to the changing environment. Policies are products of time and circumstances, available resources and technologies and
most importantly, the needs of the stakeholders. The Tourism Policy document aimed to provide clear direction for the development of tourism in the State. Himachal Pradesh is already a well-established and recognized tourist destination. It seeks to harness the fullest potential of the State for the Development of tourism, which in turn can be a prime engine for economic growth and prosperity of the State, besides effectively addressing the problems of unemployment and poverty. The policy document is a result of wide range of consultations within and outside the Government, including the industry, tourism unit operators and other stakeholders. The policy document also lists out the strategy for implementation as also specific action plans to implement the policy. It is evident that nature has bestowed Himachal Pradesh with unique beauty and splendid with its lush green valleys, snow covered Himalayan ranges, a serene, peaceful, hospitable and comfortable environment, smiling people are a rich cultural heritage-which tourists would be hard put to find elsewhere. Further more, being in the lap or Himalayas this fee becomes its natural and unique USP with global appeal. The outer fringe of Himachal formed by the ShiwaliK hills which are characterized by shallow valleys and dense scrub forests. The mid ranges have the majestic Himalayan cedar and the spruces followed D. alpine meadows that intersperse themselves with the snow clad peaks of the greater Himalaya.

Tourism in Himachal Pradesh, received recognition in the 19th century, when the British established their chain of hill stations. Earlier, Himachal had been a destination for pilgrims only. A fillip to tourism was administered when British declared Shimla as summer capital India in 1864. Post
independence, and up-gradation as fledged State in the year 1971 led to more investment in the infrastructure sector leading to opening up of the state. However, the biggest explosion in tourism was experienced in the mid 80s and 90s with the Kashmir problem. The number of hotels and hotel rooms increased within this period from 1710 and 6300 to 36000 respectively with its concomitant chaos and haphazard growth which the State would have done without. With the wisdom of hind sigh State is now more equipped to deal with the problems. The policy document is an attempt to address those very problems also. During the year 2004, the tourist arrivals in the state were 6.5 million which is roughly equivalent to the population of the State. It was including 2.04 lacs foreign tourists. In terms of numbers, the State has done more than expected. The challenges now is to attract quality tourists and increase the stay of the tourists in the State. We also need to think globally as even the domestic tourists today have a choice unlike in the past. The State Government aims at to promote sustainable tourism and encouraging the private sector to develop tourism related infrastructure in the State by focusing on quality without disturbing the existing ecology and environment. Furthermore, in order to increase the duration of the stay of the visitors/tourists, a special emphasis is being placed on the development of activity-based tourism and opening up new sub destinations. To promote tourism in the countryside and to lesser-known areas, appropriate infrastructure will be developed within available resources. Himachal was earlier known only for the summer season. The Government of Himachal Pradesh is making efforts to break the seasonality factor and tourism products to attract the tourists in other seasons too. Now Himachal is known as "A Destination for
All Seasons and All Reasons." It is evident that tourism contributes nearly 8 percent of the State Domestic Product. It is roughly the same as horticulture sector because of the Government through its careful planning and infrastructural development. The Policy document proposes to increase it to 15 percent by the year 2020.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

- To establish Himachal Pradesh as a leading tourist destination in the country and abroad;
- To make tourism a prime engine for economic development and prosperity of the State and as a major means for providing employment;
- To encourage a strong and sustainable private sector participation in creation of tourism infrastructure especially through public private partnerships;
- To promote sustainable tourism which is not only environmentally compatible but also leads to economics betterment of the rural people?
- To attract the high end tourist and to increase their stay in the State;
- To safeguard the State's natural and manmade heritage;
- To encourage civil societies & non-11 governmental organizations for promotion & the conducting of tourism related activities;
- To position Himachal Pradesh as a one stop destination for adventure tourism.
In order to critically evaluate the tourism policy of government, an analysis has been carried out on the basis of opinion of the respondents regarding various facilities provided to the tourists.

Keeping in view the objectives of the study, tourists' opinion regarding the tourism policy 2005 has been analyzed as under:

Table 6.1 shows the total tourist arrival in Himachal Pradesh and also the trend in percentage change over the base year. There is significant increase in the flow of tourists as compared to the base year 2004. The number of foreign tourists has also increased significantly to 84.36 percent in 2008 as compared to the base year. But there is still scope to further increase the flow of foreign tourists in Himachal Pradesh. This will also be helpful to generate foreign exchange for the state economy. The flow of domestic tourists has increased to 47.72 percent in 2008 as compared to the base year 2004. Due to terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir the tourists have started to visit other places which has ultimately increased the tourist inflow in Himachal Pradesh. It has a vast potential for tourism growth hence the various attraction and facilities are required to be increased as to attract more tourists to the state.
Table 6.1

Tourist Arrival in Himachal Pradesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Tourist arrival (In lacs)</th>
<th>% change over base year (i.e. 1993)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>Foreigner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>6345069</td>
<td>204344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>6927742</td>
<td>207790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>7671902</td>
<td>281569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>8481988</td>
<td>339409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>9372697</td>
<td>376736</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Himachal Tourism Department.

Figure 6.1
Tourist Arrival in Himachal Pradesh
It is evident from table 6.2 that majority of the tourists agree with the availability of activity based tourism in Himachal Pradesh. The mean value of the respondents is slightly higher than the average standard score i.e. 3 at five point scale. The variation in the opinion 1.1605, while skewness is -0.016. It shows that their opinion is distributed more towards higher side of the average score. The calculated value of the $x^2$ is significant at 1 percent level of significance. It shows that opinion of the respondents is not equally distributed. Thus, the above analysis leads to the conclusion that most of the respondents agree with the opinion that activity based tourism has been developed in the state.

As far as provisions of adventure tourism and safely standard is concerned, the majority of the responses do not agree with the same. The mean value of the responses depicts that majority of the responses are lying toward lower side of the mean standard score at five point scale. The variation in the opinion and skewness are noted 1.1955 and 475 respectively. It further supports the above analysis. Further, the chi square value is significant at 1 percent level of significance. It shows that the opinion of the respondents is not equally distributed. Thus, it can be concluded that they are not satisfied with the provision of adventure tourism and safely measures of international standard. Therefore, it is for the policy makers too, to take appropriate steps in these directions.

Table 6.2 further shows that majority of the respondents are uncertain about their opinion regarding development of religious tourism in Himachal Pradesh. The mean value of the responses is slightly lower than the average standard score at five-point scale. The standard
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Scaling</th>
<th>Activities based Tourism</th>
<th>Provision for Adventure Tourism Safety Standard at required Level</th>
<th>Religious Tourism</th>
<th>Provisions to prevent unfair trade practice</th>
<th>Promotion of Local Art &amp; Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%age</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%age</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>125</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.008</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.512</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.832</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1605</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1955</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.475</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.082</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data compiled through questionnaire.
deviation and skewness are noted 1.1197 and -0.0082 respectively. It shows that majority of the responses are distributed more towards higher side of mean score. The $x^2$ value is significant at 1 percent level of significance, which shows that the opinion of the respondents is not equally distributed. It leads to the conclusion that majority of the respondents do not have the same opinion over the issue of development of religions tourism in Himachal Pradesh and they are not satisfied with the provisions laid down in the tourism policy 2005.

It is further evident that majority of the respondent's are not certain over the issue of preventing unfair practices related to tourism in Himachal Pradesh. The value of mean score is noted less than the average standard score, which shows that opinion of the respondents is distributed more towards lower side. The standard deviation and skewness are found 1.0057 and 0.053 respectively. The calculated value of $x^2$ is higher than the table value which rejects the null hypothesis at 1 percent level of significance. It leads to the conclusion that majority respondent are not satisfied with the provisions related to control unfair practices, caused due to tourism development in Himachal Pradesh. Therefore, the policy documents must cover the provisions to control all these unfair practices.

Table 6.2 exhibits that majority respondents are uncertain over the provisions related to promotion of local Art and culture in the Tourism Policy-2005. The mean score of the respondents is slightly more than the average standard score. The variation in the opinion and skewers are noted 1.1811 and 0.014 respectively. The $x^2$ value is significant at 1 percent level of significance. It leads to the conclusion that
opinion of the respondents is not equally distributed over this issue. It further concludes that majority respondents do not agree with the provisions related to the development of local art and culture in the tourism policy.

Further, it is observed that majority respondents are uncertain regarding the provisions relating to the development of eco-friendly tourism in Himachal Pradesh. The mean score is slightly less than the average standard score at five-point scale. The calculated value of x2 is significant at one percent level of significance. This reveals that responses of the tourists are not equally distributed over the issue of development of Eco-friendly tourism in Himachal Pradesh. It is distributed more towards lower side of the average standard score, which support the opinion that they are not satisfied with provisions relating to the eco-friendly tourism.

Tourists attitude towards trained and professional manpower in tourism industry has been analysed, on the basis of the opinion of the respondents (Table-6.3). It is observed that their opinion is distributed more towards lower side i.e. uncertain to disagree. The mean value is noted lower than the average standard score, while variation in the opinion and skewness is observed 1.0326 and 242 respectively. This supports the above analysis. Further, the X2 test is significant at one percent level of significance. It reveals that opinion of the respondents is not equally distributed. Thus above analysis leads to the conclusion that tourism industry is lacking in availability of trained and professional manpower.

Table 6.3 further depicts that majority of the respondents either disagree or strongly disagree with the
provisions of infrastructure development in the tourism policy. The mean value, standard deviation and skewness shows that their opinion is distributed towards lower end on this issue. The calculated value of $x^2$ depicts significant results at 1 percent level of significance. Thus it can be concluded that majority tourists disagree with the provision of infrastructure development, in the tourism policy 2005.

As far as tourist attitude towards availability of tourist information is concerned, they do not agree with the provisions made in the tourism policy 2005. The mean value, standard deviation and skewness support the above opinion. The significant value of $x^2$ depicts that there is significant variation in the opinion of tourists over this issue. The above analysis leads to the conclusion that their opinion is distributed more towards lower side. It further concludes that tourists do not agree with the provisions made in the tourism policy regarding availability of the tourist information in Himachal Pradesh.

It is evident that majority of the responses are distributed more towards lower side over the issue relating to the provisions regarding development of tourism activities in the rural and remote areas (Table 6.3). The mean value support the above opinion. The variation in opinion and skewness are observed, 9704 and .052 respectively. The calculated value of $x^2$ depicts significant results at one-percent level of significance. It concludes that provisions for development of tourism activities in the remote as well as rural areas are still not up to the mark.

The majority of the respondents do not agree with the provisions relating to the entertainment facilities and wayside amenities like cafeterias, parks etc. The mean value is noted to lower side of the average standard score, i.e. 3 at 5-point
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Responses</th>
<th>Scaling</th>
<th>Professional in the Tourism Industry</th>
<th>Infrastructure Development</th>
<th>Availability of Tourist Information</th>
<th>Member of Develop Rural Village Tourism</th>
<th>Provision amenities Cafeterias, etc.</th>
<th>Entertainment Facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency %age</td>
<td>Frequency %age</td>
<td>Frequency %age</td>
<td>Frequency %age</td>
<td>Frequency %age</td>
<td>Frequency %age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>125</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
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<td>2.2720</td>
<td>2.7440</td>
<td>2.8160</td>
<td>2.8080</td>
<td>2.2720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.0326</td>
<td>1.1315</td>
<td>1.1494</td>
<td>.9704</td>
<td>1.0754</td>
<td>1.1243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skewness</td>
<td></td>
<td>.242</td>
<td>.633</td>
<td>.097</td>
<td>-.052</td>
<td>.273</td>
<td>.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error of Skewness</td>
<td></td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>0217</td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>.217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$X^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>41.680</td>
<td>42.580</td>
<td>21.840</td>
<td>55.520</td>
<td>36.400</td>
<td>41.840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.01</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data compiled through questionnaire.
scale. This shows that their opinion is distributed more towards uncertain to disagree side. The standard deviation and skewness also supports the above opinion. While calculating the $x^2$ value, it is significant at one percent level of significance. It shows that opinion of the respondents is not equally distributed. Thus, it can be concluded that as far as the provisions relating to the entertainment facilities and wayside amenities are concerned, the majority of the tourists are not satisfied. Thus, the above analysis leads to overall conclusion that majority respondents are not satisfied with the various provisions made in the Tourism policy-2005 for the development of tourism activities in Himachal Pradesh.

TOURISM POLICY 2005: A SWOT ANALYSIS

After having analysed the tourists attitude towards various aspects of tourism policy, it is further proposed to evaluate the Tourism Policy critically. The tourism policy of Himachal Pradesh has been analysed with the help of SWOT analysis. In the 1st part the strengths and opportunities of the tourism policy have been discussed and in the second part the weaknesses and thereafter, threats has been analysed critically.

An analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) has been carried out as under:

STRENGTHS: An Analysis

**Scenic Beauty:** Scenic beauty is the main attraction of the Himachal Pradesh. It is one of the rare place in the world offering five distinct seasons. It has having potential to attract tourist inflow round the year;
Political and Social stability: The Himachal Pradesh is politically as well as socially stable state. It also helps to encourage more and more people to visit the state. It is also recognized as a peaceful and hospitable State;

Salubrious climate: The climate of Himachal Pradesh is very salubrious. The tourist from all over the world visit here to enjoy pollution free environment also. Further more it also offers a rare conglomerate a eco-tourism, pilgrimage adventure, culture, heritage leisure, wilderness etc.

Fairly good infrastructure: It has got fairly infrastructure. It is connected with good road network. The communication network is also excellent in the state. The state has a very good literacy rate which offers ample opportunities to the unemployed in the state in the field of tourism and its allied activities.

Rich history and heritage: It has something to offer to all. Its Buddhist monasteries, which are of thousand years of old, ancient temples, churches and cemeteries attract the tourists and pilgrimages throughout the year.

Special package of incentives of setting up of tourism units: The government of the Himachal Pradesh constantly encouraging private sector to enter in to the tourism industry. Various incentives are being provided by the government to boost tourism industry in the state. This also shows strong political will to promote tourism.

WEAKNESSES-An Analysis

The air and rail link in the state is negligible which restrict the flow of quality tourist's especially foreign tourist.
The inadequate flow of foreign tourist is a serious concern because it can enhance foreign exchange earning of the state. Non-disbursal of tourists during the year, putting severe strains on civic infrastructure during the peak season. The policy makers must address this problem on priority bases. The state do experienced lack of trained tourist guides at important tourist places and historical tourist sites. The proper training and orientations of tourist guide can help in the growth of this industry well. This will also be helpful to eliminate saturation at the established tourist destinations of the state. Further more, it is evident that no new major tourists destination has come up recently. Even the state has failed badly to maintain the existing destinations properly which is a serious concern. The lack of adequate parking places at important places is also a serious issue. It also depicts lack of commitment to develop this industry in the state.

The poor marketing of the tourism industry in abroad and inadequate marketing within the country is another serious factor. The tourism industry is lacking with poor marketing planning and thereafter control. Moreover, the state government seems to be little serious as it has provided very little budget to the industry which is now sufficient for its growth. The industry is also facing a problem of land acquisition. The growth of the industry is also restricted due to this problem. The main constraint which the government is experienced is the problem of conversation of the forest land to the tourist attractions. It is also restricted the growth of industry in the state truism.
OPPORTUNITIES: An Analysis

The industry do have strong potential for activity based tourism such as white water rafting, Para-gliding, trekking, mountain biking, Car Rallies etc. Therefore, the government especially the policy maker should take serious steps for its development in the state. Himachal Pradesh is a strong base for heritage tourism to attract persons from all walks of society and religious beliefs. The tourist visits have from all over the world. Therefore, it requires to be supported with world class facilities. It is an ideal place to develop and ideal destination for nature lovers by promoting eco-tourism also. Further more, the industrial document must focus to create synergy between heritage and pilgrimage tourism. The Himachal Pradesh is endowed with natural beauty. Therefore, the state policy maker must focus on the development of wetlands of the State to attract nature lovers especially bird watchers.

The Himachal Pradesh in an ideal destination to live. There is a scope to promote the state as an Open University and learning centre in mythology, anthropology and ornithology etc. as to attract tourist from the far flung areas across the world. Effort should be made to position it as an ideal destination for the film industry. But till now no such commitment was noted. Himachal has something to offer to persons of all ages, groups, beliefs and interests. There is unlimited scope for development of varied tourist packages. Therefore the policy makers must focus on this area to attract the tourists. Himachal can become one of the leading adventure destinations in the world. The topography of Himachal Pradesh is most suitable to promote adventure
tourist in the state. But it is lacking with infrastructure which is need a support of the government as well as private sector.

The promotion of wilderness tourism for lovers and seekers of nature, peace and quest for spiritual tourism can also be another area of interest. The tourists from across the world country may got attracted to get an enriched from such far flung. Creation of new destinations in yet unexplored beautiful areas should have to be an area of focus. This would also ease the burden on established tourist destinations. It is evident that a lot of untapped potential still exist in the state. The tourism should have to be in the priorities of the state list.

THREATS: An Analysis

Tremendous strain leading to collapse, at times, of civic amenities at leading tourist destinations during the season. The government failed to cope during the peak season. The environmental protection is an issue of serious concern. The government is also very serious on this issue but the haphazard growth & construction threatening the environment, especially at the leading destinations. Therefore, the policy maker must address this issue in the policy document seriously. Furthermore an alarming growth of concrete structures creating a disharmony with the local environment. The government must focus on eco-friendly infrastructural development at the tourist destinations.

The unscrupulous commercialization of tourism could erode the social and cultural values. This is an area where the seriousness is required otherwise it can dismantle our
socio-cultural aspects. The aggressive competition amongst the leading tourists states and a strong promotion of tourism by other States. The government should take it as a challenge and to convert these challenges in the opportunities on the basis of our natural strengths. The lack of coordinated strategy by the different Government Department is also a threat to tourism industry. There is a need to change our attitude towards tourism industry. It is evident that there is a large increase in volume but limited increase in value. Therefore, a proper balance must have maintained in this regards. The poor garbage/waste disposal posing threat to the environment which also need proper attention by providing proper infrastructure.

STRATEGY ANALYSIS:

Tourism Sub Plan: There is no denying the fact that the total budget with the Department of Tourism is less in comparison to the other tourism-oriented States in the country. Tourism is linked with all development departments in the state. They are required to meet the infrastructure demands for promotion of tourism under their normal programmes. There is a need to mechanize and accelerate the activities of the tourism department is to integrate and coordinate with other departments like PWD, Urban Development, I&PH, Health, Horticulture, Forest, Power etc. This may yield good results and the deficiency of budget can be surmounted of it is properly co-coordinated. The government should take steps to manage the funds in such a way related departments must pool their resources with regard to such schemes should be monitored at government level through the Tourism Department.
Infrastructure development Demand has come up in some of the major tourist destinations like Shimla, Manali, Dalhousie, Mcleodganj, Kasauli and Chail. With rapid increasing tourist influx and expending hotel accommodation in these areas, the policy maker has to look in to the matter seriously. Therefore, the Government should upgrade the civic infrastructure in the needed towns on priority basis. The funds raised by the Tourism Department under various schemes should also be used to strengthen these areas. The role of private investments in infrastructure may be welcomed step. The priority areas should include setting up of hill stations, resorts, ski slopes, airports, tourist centers, multiplexes, parking areas, entertainment centers, amusement parks, ropeway, golf course, 4/5 Star Hotels, standardized budget accommodation etc.

The availability of skilled work force is essential for delivery of professional services of the highest order in the service industry like tourism. The Government should invest in human resource development so as to develop managerial and technical skill in the State. The Himachal Pradesh has one Food Craft Institute cum Hotel Management Institute at Kufri. The government has also an endeavor to open FCI's one in Kangra District and another in Kullu.

**Strengthening of Tourism Development Board: An Analysis**

The State Government has set up a Tourism Development Board under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Chief Minister to formulate policy guidelines for development and promotion of Tourism Industry in the State and to advise the State Government on matters regarding regulation and
licensing in the Tourism Industry. Efforts will be made to increase the resources of the Board so that the Board can carry out various developmental and other tourism promotional activities. The income of the Board will be built up through the user charges levied being level by Tourism Department., income from PPP projects, lease money, income from Tourism Councils etc. The Board will generally undertake improvements in the tourist areas; provide assistance to the Department of Tourism and to the Tourism Development Councils. The Manali model of collection of green fee from tourists will be replicated in other major tourism destinations. The funds so collected will be scrutinized for 10/15 years and sizeable Tourism Master Plans created and implemented in bound manner.

Rural tourism and Govt. Policy 2005:

In order to promote rural tourism and to give incentive to the entrepreneurs, luxury tax exempted for units up rooms. In addition to this, electricity and water charges will also be reduced to give investment in tourism project in rural areas. This incentive is provided for a period of 10 years from the date of their commercial operation. The Government will consider assigning the task of Luxury tax collection on the pattern of collection to the Department of State Road Tax (SRT) in Transport Department. The funds so collected by the department shall form part of the resources of the Board.

Single window clearances for tourism projects on the pattern of the industries department have been made applicable. The suitable Government land either through land bank or otherwise available in the State will be transferred to the Tourism Department, which will be further leased out to
the private entrepreneurs strictly on the open competitive bidding basis.

Effective regulation:

The State Government has passed the H.P. Registration Tourist Trade Act, 2002. It calls for inspection and checking of the hotels, travel agencies against over charging sub standard service etc. The Government proposes to carry out the inspection work by delegating necessary powers and also by involving the Hotel Associations.

The Role of Tourist Police:

The Tourist Police in the State will be strengthened concept of by placing a cadre of 500 police and home guards personnel who will be trained for regulating tourism related activities. They will be provided with special uniforms/distinguishing mark and will assist the tourist. The Tourist Information Centers will be manned apart from the Department./TDB staff by the students of Hotel Management Institute and MTA( University). The State government in its policy will take steps to ensure proper hygienic conditions and will prevent the exploitation of tourists on national and state highways and at tourist places. The Government proposes to classify the Dhabas situated on the National and State highways. The classification will be done on the basis of facilities provided, hygienic condition, quality of the food, availability of toilets, parking etc. The government will alone ensure to encourage ethnic Himachal cuisine in these Dhabas. Similarly all the Tourism Units in the State will be classified as per facilities provided so as to ensure that the
tourists will get their value for money. The Hotel Associations will be actively involved in the fulfillment of bold objective.

To promote excellence in tourism, the government will institute monetary and no monetary awards for institutions and individuals for their outstanding contribution in various sectors of tourism like; accommodation, catering, transport, travel agency, eco-friendliness, cleanliness etc. This scheme will be administered by a State level committee consisting of experts, representatives of the tourist trade and government officers.

**AREAS OF THRUST: An Analysis**

In order to achieve the policy objectives indicated above the Department/ Board has identified thrust areas for action and follow up some of which are as follows:-

**RURAL TOURISM**

The fruits of tourism must percolate down to the rural areas in order that it is truly sustainable and responsible. For this the Department/ Board proposes that Rural Tourism villages should identified and notified by the Department. The precondition for declaring these as RT villages would be that they must predominantly have traditional architecture and an MOU would be signed with the Panchayat that this would be maintained. The villagers may modify their houses internally but they must maintain their traditional outer facade. For the sake of easier marketing these villages must be near to the existing tourist centre which will also ensure dispersal of tourist to the rural areas and promote decongestion. These would be dovetailed with the Govt. of India Ministry Tourism Scheme under w funding is available up to Rs. 5 lacs. This
would be used to create infrastructure like roads, streets, drainage, lighting, parking stand, water supply sanitation, tourist reception centre, rural museum, open air theatre, parks, nature trails, crafts bazaar etc. This could also be funded - the Department/Board funds.

In such notified villages, there would be no luxury tax commercial rates for electricity to 5 bed room homesteads. The existing schemes of the Department would be reviewed and efforts would be made to provide for renovating the homesteads providing grant/loans to the weaker section of the society. The Department would actively work with the Department of Rural Development and nationalised banks for typing up in this regard. The government proposes that in these homesteads Himachali/local food will be served. Linkage would be sought to promote local handicrafts and cultural troupes. The procedure for registration of village tourism guest houses shall be simplified and adequate publicity given to the facilities available. The above scheme would be made applicable mutatis mutandis to Heritage and Orchard tourism.

The State has a number of old palaces, forts, have lies and other beautiful buildings in rural areas which if properly developed could become important tourist destinations themselves. The Government shall encourage the development of such sites for use as tourist accommodation and such new heritage hotels located in rural areas shall be exempted from the luxury tax for a period of five years. The Government would endeavour to associate the Archaeological Survey of India and private sector in the development of such sites. Shimla evokes memories linked to
the Raj, the freedom movement and in more recent times events such as the Shimla Agreement'. A monumental testimony to the times of the Raj are buildings like the Vice regal Lodge, which now houses the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, the Gaiety Theatre and more than a hundred other heritage buildings. Tourism Department/Board will endeavour to preserve these heritage buildings including churches and graves and promote nostalgia tourism linked to the colonial and freedom struggle era.

Apple and orchard tourism is also an area of focus as in the Districts of Shimla, Kinnaur, Kullu and parts of Mandi Distt traditional farm houses could be converted into homesteads wherein the tourists could enjoy the beauty right from apple blossom to harvesting. Apple Festival celebrated annually would be continued with active involvement of the Horticulture Department. and the Hotel Association. The Department/Board will co-ordinate with the watershed/livelihood related projects like Mid Himalaya Watershed Dev. Project funded by World Bank so that rural/eco tourism can be furthered in these project areas.

**ECO TOURISM**

Himachal offers a new era of nature enjoyment and learning. It also provides visitors an excellent exposure to the temperate forests. This makes it an ideal area for developing eco-tourism activities like judge safaris, trekking, rock climbing, forest trails, nature walks, angling (esp. golden mahaseer and brown trout), camping etc. All these activities are to be conducted in a manner that promotes awareness of the environment and helps maintain the ecological balance. The eco tourism projects being
predominantly situated in forest lands are technically under the Forest Department, which has already formulated an Eco Tourism policy in consultation with the Tourism Department under this Eco-tourism Societies have been established on CBET (Community Based Eco-Tourism basis) to cover the Great Himalayan National Park (Kullu), Himalayan Nature Park (Shimla), Renuka Wildlife Sanctuary (Sirmour) and Potter's Hill Van Vihar (Shimla).

The Government will harness the tourism potential of forests in the state by developing camping sites with basic infrastructure facilities and other public convenience services. A nominal fee shall also be determined by the Government for the use of camping site for the maintenance and for the conservation of these forests. The private parties shall be encouraged for setting up of such camping site environment friendly basis. Government will Endeavour to open forest rest houses for the tourists through the society. These would be run community based eco tourism tenets through public private partnership companies with good track record working in Eco-tourism.

WILD LIFE TOURISM

Wildlife Tourism is an integral part of Eco Tourism. Himachal Pradesh has a varied topography, climate and forest cover and in endowed with a vast vane: flora and fauna. At present there are 32 Sanctuaries, 2 National Parks and 3 Game Reserve sanctuaries include Simbalwara (Sirmour), Churdhar, (Solan), Maharana Pratap (Kangra) Manali (Kullu), Kalatop (Chamba) and Daeanghati (Shimla). The National Parks are Pin Valley National Park. Spiti and the Great Himalayan National Park, Kullu the Nature Park are
Kufri (Shimla); The National and Gopalpur (Kanga Tourism Department proposes actively with the Wild life -the Forest Department to -develop and improve parks/zoos, bird watching toward and other public utility services for the facility of the tourists. A reasonable shall be determined by the Government for use of such parks/zoos for its maintenance.

DEVELOPMENT OF LAKES AND WETLANDS : AN ANALYSIS

This is also part of eco tourism. The State Government will make special efforts to make natural and man made lakes as important tourist destinations. Steps will be taken to maintain and enhance their beauty by undertaking development in an integrated manner. Facilities for water sports in Maharana Pratap Sagar,Chamera and Gobind Sagar will be developed to International standard and national and international level events will also be organised to popularize these destinations. Maharana Pratap Sagar will be developed as a world class water sports destination with the financial assistance of the Central Government in order to develop activities like water sports, angling, bird watching, setting up of house boats, development of artificial beaches etc.. The Government will also encourage the private sector to set up houseboats and operate shikaras in the Maharana Pratap Sagar. Improvement of the forest rest houses will also be carried out in the area and will also be made available to the tourists in order to accommodate them.
PILGRIMAGE TOURISM: An Analysis

Himachal has emerged as an important pilgrim destination. A large number of religious tourists visit sacred shrines of Himachal Pradesh throughout the year. A large number of religious places for people of almost all religions are situated in the State. The State Government propose to develop wayside/civic amenities, parkings, landscaping and beautification around the temple, Sulabh Shauchalyas, drinking water, garbage disposal etc. at these religious places in coordination with the temple trusts on the lines of Vaishno Devi Trust. During important festivals special measures will be taken up for the safety and security of the tourists like setting up of information centers, tented colonies to accommodate tourists and to deploy special Tourist Police Force on the lines of Vaishno Devi. As a deliberate policy the Department / Board will make efforts to integrate the important temples of Himachal with Vaishno Devi in J&K or the Chaar Dhaam in Uttaranchal. The Department / Board will work in coordination with the Department of Language Art and Culture and also the Temple Trusts so that Tourist information centers are established in all the major temples and run by the temple trusts.

ADVENTURE TOURISM: An Analysis

The Tourism Department/ Board will make comprehensive adventure tourism promotion plan for the State and shall lay down the regulatory framework for enforcement of safety standards. For the promotion of adventure sports, the department/Board will impart training in different sports to the youths. International competitions in such sports will be organised for attracting participants not
only from the country but also from the abroad in coordination with the Department of Sports. The Tourism Department / Board will support all efforts to promote and set up adventure sports schools at various locations in order to train more youths in Paragliding, Rafting, Water Sports, Angling, Sking, Mountaineering, Motor Sports etc. in coordination with the WHMI Manali and the State Level Associations. The Department / Board will help the WHMI in setting up more Sub Centers in the State to take adventure tourism the hitherto unexplored places. It will assist in training the local youth in adventure tourist so that they also benefit through employment & other means. Similarly it will work at tandem with Forest Department and the Eco Tourism Societies to meet the above ends.

The State was the first are continues to be the only State which has heli-skiing in the country. This attracts foreigners and quality tourists with paying capacity to some of the best powder-snows that the world can offer. The experience in the venture has been very positive despite the initial apprehensions about possible disturbances the environment and fauna, proposed to expand the concept of heli-skiing by introducing activities like heli-trekking and cross-country skiing. Conventional skiing and setting up of more ski lifts and ski resorts in the public private partner will be a major thrust area range beyond Rohru which has great potential will specially be explored. The State started promoting paragliding from 1984 onwards. Himachal is now the leading States in the country in this field. Bir Billing in Kangra, Solang and Marhi in Kullu, Bilaspur, Kasauli etc will continue as important centres for the sport. More areas will be explored and opened up with the objective of providing a
source of livelihood to the local youth. The Bir Billing Pre World Cup Event will continue to be an annual event. A paragliding School will be opened at Dhelu. Bir Billing will be developed over the years into a top class paragliding destination internationally on self financing basis with the local community benefiting the most.

The Tourism Department, focused on other adventure sports operators will encourage mountaineering expeditions internationally. Similarly Trekking and adventure activities will be undertaken on large scale through WHMI sustainable basis especially during the holiday season for school and college students. The Department /Board will continue to hold annual events of as many adventure sports activities as possible through their respective associations paragliding, river rafting, sailing, mountain biking, endurance events, marathons, motoring events, vintage car rallies (biannually) etc. The objective is that eventually all these events must become self sustainable. One of the major aims in this area will be to get the latest technology in the field of adventure sports in terms of equipments and know how it skiing /ropeway projects, water sports or paragliding be. All PPP projects in this field of adventure tourism will have this as a necessary precondition.

PROMOTING UNEXPLORED POTENTIAL IN HIMACHAL PRADESH: An Analysis

The main tourism circuits in Himachal are fairly well known and even remote districts like Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur are now becoming popular destinations to relax and unwind. Himachal also has many undiscovered spots with unspoiled charm that are worth a visit for a quiet rewarding
holiday spent amidst the splendor of nature away from the crowds. The State Government will make special efforts to develop unexplored destinations with the assistance of Central Government, to improve the sanitation, roads, parking, toilets, accommodation, beautification and landscaping of tourist interest places, wayside amenities etc. Efforts will be made to keep these new areas neat and clean and only limited construction will be allowed, so that these areas may not become over saturated and the construction so allowed will preserve the architecture and ecology of the State.

OPENING-UP TRIBAL AREAS TO FOREIGNERS:--

Ever since the opening-up of tribal/border areas of Himachal Pradesh to foreigners, the number of domestic and foreign tourists visiting these tribal areas has increased manifold. Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur districts have emerged as important destinations. Yet compared to the potential it is just a trickle. These areas being enormously rich in culture the effort would be to invite culturally conscious tourists who enjoy the quality and difference of experience. Preservation of the cultural uniqueness of these areas therefore will remain the prime concern of the Government. The Government will only allow such construction, which preserves the architecture and ecology of the area. The private sector will continue to be encouraged to set up guest houses for which subsidy will be provided from the State budget. Tented accommodation will be encouraged with local participation so that maximum benefits accrue to the local economy. The centuries old monasteries are also being upgraded where foreign tourists show lot of interest. Tourism
Councils will be set up under the Tourism Act 2000 in these areas so that some fee is charged from the trekkers/tourists the proceeds of which will go to the local Panchayats for the maintenance and upkeep of the tourism related infrastructure and for regulating tourism or sustainable basis.

The Department will take up the opening up of Tribal/Border area: further so that the preset restrictions on travel in the inner line areas is removed. The Manali Leh route which has already become a favorite for both domestic as well as international tourists will be further improved in coordinates with the Govt., of J & K and efforts would be made to link it to the Buddhist Circuits of Shimla Kinnaur - Spiti Udaipur - Pangi and Palampur-Dharamshala -Dalhousie.

HEALTH TOURISM: An Analysis

There is tremendous scope to set up spas, health resorts, recuperative centers etc. all over the State. Himachal Pradesh has an enormous wealth of medicinal plants. Herbal Gardens, Herbal Trails will be developed as tourist attractions The Tourism Department /Board in collaboration with Department of Indian System of Medicine, Department of Ayurveda and Forests will organize such tours which will further develop awareness and interest about medicinal plants amongst the school children and tourists. The Government also proposes to develop spa/health resorts in association with the private sector at various locations in the State. The Government will also harness the potential of Panchkarma and start it in a big way in the State in order to attract large number of tourist for Panchkarma treatment. Training the youth in Panchkarma will be undertaken through
the Department of Ayurveda who will then be employed in spas and health resorts.

ARTS CRAFTS AND SOUVENIR

Promotion of local art and culture and generation of income of employment through it is a major component of tourism policy. The State Government shall endeavour to encourage the development of souvenir industry linked to local crafts, events and places which would promote a distinctive image of the State both within and without the State. The private sector will also be encouraged to patronize and promote local folk, culture and crafts for the visiting tourists. Development of souvenir industry including standardized packaging is of utmost importance for which is leading institutions and voluntary organisations in the country like NID, NIFT, Auroville, Tilonia etc. will be actively engaged.

Finally, Tourism as a socio-economic phenomenon has evolved into one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world. The main factors which have been responsible for the vast expansion of tourism are affluence of people in the industrialized nations of the west, increase in leisure time, advance in transport technology, besides the raising curiosity about people in other lands. Tourism is recognized as an important area in the world economy although we are not making best use of our untapped potential in India. The tourism has got second position in earning foreign exchange after agriculture sector, which provides 47.5 new job opportunities with every investment of Rs. 10 lacs. It is more as compared to agriculture sector, which provides 44.7 new job opportunities with the same investment. The world has
realized that tourism is a main pillar of development in the new millennium.

Himachal Pradesh is a paradise for the tourists, peace lovers, pilgrims, writers and the adventurers who can enjoy the scent of pine trees while walking is the hilltops to visit temples and enjoy the most fascinating scenery. It caters to the needs of all young and old by providing facilities of roller and ice skating, golfing, amusement parks and museums, paragliding, water sports and adventure tourism of all kinds. HPTDC, established in the year of 1972, is a pioneer in the development of tourism in Himachal Pradesh. It provides a complete package of tourism facilities i.e. accommodation, entertainment, transport & sports activities. Through a network of information centers, the department helps tourists by answering their queries and assists them in drawing up a suitable itinerary. In the rest houses at tourist resorts, the department provides facilities like bedding, small libraries, indoor games radius, binoculars, lawn-umbrellas etc. for the convenience of tourist.

From tourism point of view in Himachal Pradesh, the main attractions of tourist's paradise are Kullu, Manali, Lahaul, Spiti, Shimla, Kufri, Narkanda, Naldhera, Tatta Pani, Kasauli, Chail, Kangra-Palampur, Mandi, Bilaspur, Dalhousic Ghamba, Khajiar, Nahan, Renuka, Paonta Sahib, Rajgarh, Shilai etc. It can be summarized on the basis of above discussion that the tourism policy is focused to promote sustainable tourism in Himachal Pradesh. The main emphasis is given to the economic, cultural and ecological factors. It is certainly helpful for the overall development of the state. The state government is committed through its policy to give new
employment opportunities in rural, tribal and remote areas. It will be helpful to overcome with the problem of unemployment up to the certain extent. The private sector investment in the tourism sector is another big step in the way of tourism development in the state. It will ensure quality as well as cost effectiveness. The government is aimed to develop activity-based tourism and adventure tourism in the state, which will be helpful in increasing the duration of the stay of tourists. The safety measures and other facilities have been ensured of international standard in this regard.

Himachal Pradesh is a land of Gods and the flow of pilgrims is increasing here every year. The government of Himachal Pradesh through its policy (documents is committed to give more and more facilities to attract pilgrims to the state. The new concepts in tourism such as time-share have been proposed to promote tourism in the state. The government's role as facilitator will be helpful to reduce various appreciable in the way of tourism development in Himachal Pradesh. At the end it can be concluded here that the state government in its Tourism Policy-2005 has taken various appreciable steps and has shown its commitment to promote tourism activities in the state.

As far as weaknesses and threats in the tourism policy are concerned, it is observed that policy has ignored safety factors, which are very important. It is evident that some tourists have lost their lives and valuables in the past, especially foreign tourists. Therefore, the government should ensure safety measure so that tourists could travel freely without any fear, all over the state. It is noted that maintenance of tourist spots is below average and there is no
such proposal in the policy as to how the traffic flow will be controlled, with the increase in the number of tourists in the state. It must be supported by the proposals to make various roadways and walkways in the state.

It is observed that number of tourists visited Himachal Pradesh varies in different seasons. It is more in summer season and less in winter and autumn. But it is noted that there is no such proposal in the tourism policy to encourage tourists in the seasons other than summer. The tourism policy is focused to give emphasis to protect environmental factors and to develop eco-friendly tourism in the state. It is noted that majority respondent are not satisfied with the provisions relating the Eco-friendly tourism. Safety of ecological damage is very important from tourism point of view. Protection of soil, plant life, animal life and safety of other geological factors must be ensured. Further the infrastructure development is considered the backbone for tourism development. It also attracts the tourists to visit certain destinations. But unfortunately it is still required to be strengthened more in Himachal Pradesh. Strict and time bound efforts are required to be taken in this regard, which is missing in the tourism policy-2005.

It is evident that the tourist inflow varies in Himachal Pradesh due, to the seasonal variations. The Tourism Policy-2005 has ignored the tolerance level on the special occasions, when the flow of tourists increases. Efforts should also be made in the policy to make our traditional values safe which may attract the tourist flow. The tourism policy has also ignored the negative impact of tourism development. It includes drug abuse, habit of alcoholism, pollution, prices of
the essential commodities, corruption, adoption of westernized culture, prostitution and over and congestion in the state. It is observed no significant efforts have been made to control all these negative impacts of tourism development in the tourism policy.

The Tourism Policy-2005 indicates that it is encouraging private sector investment in the state. But it is not clear in the policy that whether all the profit earned by the private investors will be drained off from the state or some part of the profit earned will be invested for the development of the state. Therefore it should be ensured that some part of the profit earned be invested for the development activities in Himachal Pradesh. Further the policy is concentrating on providing opportunities to the people of rural areas, tribal areas and backward areas. It is required to be added here that job opportunities at every level will be given to the resident of Himachal only. It will be helpful to overcome the problem of unemployment in the state.

The tourism policy of the state government has ignored the human factor in the Industry. Human resource development plays a major role in the success of any industry. Therefore there should be a provision in the policy, which can evaluate the various systems or activities relating to the human resource. It is observed that the industry has yet to be equipped with the latest technology. It is very important to provide necessary training to the professionals to keep them updated with the latest technological know how and others. This particular aspect is found missing in the policy. There is a need to make certain provisions to
strengthen this area, so that overall objectives could be achieved by the Tourism Policy-2005.

It can be concluded on the basis of above analysis that tourism policy of the state comprises most of those aspects, which are essential for the development of economic, social, cultural and environmental point of views. The tourism policy must be developed in accordance with national objectives of tourism and should be consistent with the role that tourism is assigned to play in the national development. The role is required to be defined and recognized clearly as such. The critical evaluation of tourism policy may be helpful to the state for providing the critical aspect of the policy. It requires paying more attention on the basic aspects as to make the tourism policy more practical and beneficial. Keeping in view the vast potential of tourism in Himachal Pradesh, there is an urgent need for a successful implementation of ambitious programs of promoting tourism. An ambitious plan especially pilgrim and adventure tourism has been drawn for the development of tourism in Himachal Pradesh but much efforts are yet to be made to tap the great potential. An evaluation of tourism policy of government can help in identifying the pit falls and prospects of tourism in Himachal Pradesh. This can provide impetus to the ongoing promotional activities thereby making Himachal Pradesh a tourist paradise. Finally, if all these factors are considered and government takes precau-
tions, it is possible to make the existing tourism policy of the state, a success in a big way.