CHAPTER VII

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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VII A.1 THE TOURISM PRODUCT

1. ATTRACTIONS

Though most popular attractions of North Karnataka are monuments and places, there are equally important institutions, events and product that are unique and special in their own way.

1. The places of attraction are to be scientifically and systematically preserved and protected from the adversities of climate, over crowding, over visiting, vandalizing and encroachments. Even most popular monuments in Hampi and Bijapur are endangered ones. A large number of less popular or unknown monuments are vulnerable to the threats of neglect by administration and public, poor preservation and maintenance, vandalism and encroachment. Maximum efforts must be put in to ensure the original form of the monuments. Any developments or additions, alterations to the monument or premises are to be in tune with the architectural or aesthetic aspects. Tourism policy should concentrate more on the understanding that our descendants will most probably not thank us for what we actually have built, but for what we have not built any more.\textsuperscript{121}

Scarcity of financial resources has been the main limiting factor in the preservation and protection of monuments. Mobilisation of resources should be given top priority. This can be done by:

\checkmark Reasonably hiking the entrance fees to the monuments.

\textsuperscript{121} Prof. Dr. Jost Krippendorf, Berne (Switzerland) op cit, p. 93.
Creating funds at local and regional level, to which contributions from hotels, travel firms and other industrial or commercial establishments can be collected.

Soliciting sponsorship by commercial establishments with due care that the hoardings displayed are not striking discord with the monuments and surroundings.

Wherever possible outright contracts of maintenance and preservation of tourist sites can be awarded on merit and performance basis, to the private firms, who can recover the expenses from entrance fees. An autonomous body of experts should take care of the following:

a. The awardees are meritorious, having sufficient resources - financial, manpower, technical know-how and equipment to preserve, protect and maintain the monument and conserve its environment.

b. Periodical renewal or awarding of contracts is done procedurally in the best interests of the regional tourism (city design, structural design, surrounding the attractions).

2. The institutions, visited by increasing number of visitors, should equip themselves very well so as to handle the stream of visitors efficiently. They should be more visitors-friendly. A scheduled timetable of events, facilities etc., should be communicated to the visitors and patrons so that maximum participation is ensured in the programmes and functions. The institutions should design their functioning in total harmony with the local and regional culture.
3. The religious-socio-cultural events in North Karnataka should be properly organized and marketed. The calendar of events should be prepared and published well in advance. The contents of the events should be enriched as relevantly as possible, with maximum care to keep the genuine characters intact.

4. The product specialties require proper marketing efforts. Particularly the regional cuisine should be made popular among the tourists – both foreign and domestic. ...Proper stress must be attached to local food and every effort should be made to prepare and make popular various Indian dishes so that the foreigners may be familiar with Indian culture and traditions through the foodstuffs.\textsuperscript{122} Presentation, packing, distribution channels are to be drastically improved. At the same time efforts should be put in to check duplicate articles entering the market. The tradition of producers and artisans should be encouraged and preserved by Government agencies, NGOs, Industrial and commercial establishments. (Department of Kannada and Culture, Local organizations).

5. Co-ordination should be achieved in marketing the different attractions so that on an average maximum number of places, institutions, events and products are exposed to a tourist. This can also be used for spreading the fruits of tourism to all attractions as evenly as possible. Seasonal variations can also be smoothened out to some extent. With increasing exposure higher socio-economic benefits of tourism will flow to the destination

\textsuperscript{122} Batra, K. L. 'Problems and Prospects of Tourism Industry', Printwell Publishers, Jaipur, 1990, P.134

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6. Maximum care should be taken to protect and preserve the unique character of the North Karnataka tourism - its places, events, institutions and products. In today's competitive travel market, excessive replication of the same theme of tourism development dampens rather than fosters economic success. The increasing influence of Western culture, life style, construction materials and designs, food and consumption habits, garment designs are the potential dangers of destroying the regional culture, to which North Karnataka is not an exception. Hence, necessary care and caution must be taken to keep the unique characters, genuineness of the tourist attractions. In tourism, India must present itself on its own terms - not as an echo of other countries, other cultures and other life-styles.

7. Management and marketing of the events should be given reasonable importance. A large number of fairs, festivals, socio-religious-cultural events carry tremendous potential for the development of the Domestic as well as Foreign tourism.

8. Tourism Festivals: The 'Tourism Festivals' organized and conducted by the State and Central Governments are to be improved in connection with the following aspects.

   i. Organisation: The festivals should be organized systematically, keeping in mind, attractions surrounding the venue of the festival, the regional / local culture, the economy and environment.

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123 Gunn, 'Tourism Planning' Taylor & Francis, New York, 1994, p.278
124 P. N. Seth, Appendix I, Tourism Policy of Govt, op. cit. p 295
Maximum care should be taken to ensure that

a) The festival is not imposed on the local tourism firms and the localites

b) The attractions and their surroundings are not affected negatively

c) No permanent alterations are brought / effected on the sites and cities

d) The government officials, political groups and participating artistes, do not over occupy the tourist plant. It may put the genuine tourists to a lot of inconvenience.

ii. Planning: The festivals have to be planned well in advance, followed by meticulous implementation and strict control. This ensures that the festivals serve the purpose for which they are conducted.

iii. Involvement of localites and tourism firms: Involvement of the localites and the local tourism firms in each and every stage of the festivals is very much essential. It should be a Janotsava (festival of people) and not mere a Sarkari Jamboori or a government formality or a show of political strength.

The local / regional tourism firms (hotels, travel agents, tour operators, transporters, souvenir producers and vendors and other genuinely interested groups) should actively be involved in planning and organizing the events. The D0T, the Department of Kannada and Culture, and the local firms and people should share the ultimate decisions.
These decisions must be in the best interests of the festival as well as the regional tourism.

The entire stake holders of the regional tourism should also contribute financially and materially, to the resources mobilized for the festival. Railways and the KSRTC can also be roped in for this purpose. With tourism firms having financial stake in the event, they will put in every effort to make the festival successful.

To the maximum possible extent the local talent and resources should be used. This will make the cost of the festival affordable and also bring to the light local talents and specialties, which otherwise may remain unexposed. This helps a long way in preserving the local/regional traditions over generations.

iv. **Regularity of conduct:** The regularity of the conduct of the festivals facilitates proper planning, organizing and promotion. This will fetch a permanent place for the festival in the annual calendar of events and help the interested tourists to plan their visits.

v. **Effective publicity and promotion:** The promotion and publicity of the festival should be on ‘revolver approach’ rather than on ‘shot gun approach’. The organisers should identify the target segments of the tourist market and focus the promotional efforts. This will ensure maximum response and return on every rupee spent on promotion.

2. **ACCESSIBILITIES**

1. Though entering and coming out of North Karnataka is relatively easy by Road and Rail, Air accessibility is rather poor. Busy National Highways – No.4, 13, 62 prove to be easy accesses by road.
2. Similarly Trunk Rail Line passing via Gulbarga and Raichur on Eastern sector has tremendously contributed to increase the accessibility to North Karnataka both from South and North India. Belgaum and Hubli, which are entry points can also be accessed by Rail from Goa, Mumbai and Bangalore.

3. The ongoing Uniguage Project definitely proves to be a boon by increasing the accessibility of the Tourist region in the years to come.

4. Since accessibility is the major constraint for the development of tourism in India and particularly in North Karnataka, and also financial and administrative capabilities of the National and State Tourist Organisations hardly meet the requirements for the development of easy and quick accessibilities, it is very much necessary to evolve a mechanism for effective coordination with the Civil Aviation, Railways and Surface Transport Ministries.¹²⁵

5. Until remedial measures are taken and India is able to provide surface transport of International standards, it will be difficult to promote travel within India by road effectively, specially during the summer and the monsoon.¹²⁶ The accessibility of North Karnataka needs drastic improvements in connection with the following:

i. The Road Link between Belgaum and Gulbarga via Bijapur should be upgraded as a National Highway. This will be very strategic in the sense that on one side hottest tourist destination Goa and on the other side fast growing Hyderabad are connected by a National Highway. This will ensure increasing Tourist flow from both sides to the region.

¹²⁵ Sunday Times, 29-06-1997 p.11

¹²⁶
ii. At the same time a Rail route linking Belgaum and Gulbarga via Bijapur is very much necessary to increase the accessibility of the region by Rail.

iii. Apart from National Highways, the roads taking the tourists to the different spots of Tourist interest such as State Highways, District Highways should be built, maintained and upgraded on continuous basis. It should be ensured that the Road travel is speedier, safer and more comfortable. The more the Tourists travel by road, higher will be the distribution effect of the Tourist Rupee throughout the region.

Map VII A.1-1 Proposed Rail line and National Highway

iv. The Airstrips at Belgaum, Hubli, Bidar and Ballary are having the potentialities of being developed into Airports. A full-fledged Airport, with sophisticated facilities, should be developed at any one of the above places. It

120 Batra K. L., op. cit. p.133
should have sufficient infrastructure for landing and take off of bigger aircraft, during day as well as night. Sufficient security arrangements must be provided without any compromise.

v. It has been proposed in the Master Plan – 97, prepared by the DoT, GoK that Airports be developed in almost every District of North Karnataka. This may increase the accessibility but in the absence of proper feeder Roads and Railways, one cannot ensure the percolation of Tourist Rupee to the grass roots of the Regional Economy. If direct Air links are established between Bangalore, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Goa on the one side and the places of Tourist interest in North Karnataka on the other, the Tourists will hardly travel by Road and Rail. Moreover owing to frequent Air services, they may not even stay for longer time at North Karnataka places. So this results in minimum Economic benefits to the region. Though Air accessibility brings in more Tourists at the same time it requires a wide and efficient network of Roads and Railways, which feed the Air traffic.

3. AMENITIES

1. The amenities available for the tourist in North Karnataka are far below average standard. Though a section of the respondents are happy with the amenities it is because of their low socio-economic class or lower exposure or lower sophistications required.

2. Entry to and exit from North Karnataka

   i. By road there are a good number of coach services to enter North Karnataka
as well as to go out of North Karnataka. These services need improvement on Eastern sector. Still higher number of luxury coaches are needed to be introduced at Gulbarga, Hospet, Bellary sector. Gulbarga and Raichur being on the trunk route, [number of trains entering North Karnataka are very few at Belgaum, Hospet and Hubli as compared to Gulbarga] increasing the frequency of train services on Mumbai-Belgaum-Hubli-Bangalore, Mumbai - Hubli - Guntkal, Hyderabad –Guntkal - Hubli routes will facilitate easy quick entry into and exit from North Karnataka.

ii. A fully functional air connection to North Karnataka is very much necessary. Regular air connections to any one or two of the North Karnataka places (Belgaum / Biday / Hubli / Ballary )will definitely prove to be a boon. Already existent air strips at these facilities can be upgraded to enable 24 hour, year round landing and take off of bigger air crafts.

iii. The Master plan provides for creation of air strips / air connectivity to almost every District. This is neither practicable in the near future nor feasible. Even if air ports are developed at each district head quarter, connectivity improves at the cost of percolation of Tourist Rupee to the grass roots of the regions economy.

iv. Inter-city transport in North Karnataka is quite well in Belgaum-Hubli sector. Upclass coach services are needed on Belgaum-Bijapur-Gulbarga, Bidar-Gulbarga-Hospet-Ballary, Ballary-Gadag-Hubli sectors. Coaches moving in the interior areas require improvements particularly to attract upper – middle class and upper class domestic tourists and foreign tourists. Since the Government
coaches catering to budget class tourists are in good number, private travel firms should be brought into service.

v. The local transport throughout North Karnataka needs urgent attention for improvement. Auto rickshaws and tempos plying between city centers and suburbs should be subjected to strict policing, with adherence to tariff charging according to meter reading. Public or mass transport systems capacity as well as efficiency should be improved to ensure lesser private vehicles on the road and ease traffic conditions. It will also bring down the noise and air pollution to a considerable extent.

vi. Though North Karnataka offers widest range of accommodation facilities, the concentration of up-class facilities in Dharwad district are to be matched by provision of such facilities in the remaining districts. Excepting a handful of units, lot of improvements are to be brought about with reference to cleanliness, room services, furnishings, reception staff and overall environment. Garbage, filth and touts around the accommodation units should be done away with.

vii. At the same time the tourists vulnerable to the exploitation by touts should be protected by providing sufficient information, caution and policing.

viii. There should be strict regulation in connection with room tariffs, check-out times, safety and security of tourists and their belongings and overall decency of the tourists as well as the hoteliers and hotel staff.

ix. The wide network of Travelers' Bungalows, Inspection Bungalows and Circuit Houses can be conveniently integrated into the Tourism Industry.
Though the basic purpose of these establishments is that of administrative convenience, the PWD, Irrigation Department and Forest Department can take initiative by marginally adding accommodation facilities to their existing IBs, TBs, and CHs and earmark them specifically for the purpose of Tourists on regular commercial basis.

x. Apart from hotels and restaurants at the tourist destinations, sufficient number of wayside amenities should be established at regular intervals to ensure that the freshness and comfort is retained throughout the travel. Though high sophistication is unwarranted, minimum decency, cleanliness and hygiene are a must at such facilities. Along with restaurant and boarding, minimum lodging and toilet facilities are also to be provided. The present wayside amenity units need major up-gradations.

xi. The most urgent matter to be attended to with respect to eateries is **hygiene**. Food Inspectors should be put into action for genuine cause. The severity of the situation is more in the case of roadside amenities.

xii. The tariffs charged at the eateries nearby the places of attraction are highly exploitative. The tariffs charged need strict regulation to ensure zero exploitation.

xiii. Wherever, boarding (veg. / non-veg) and restaurant (veg / non-veg), are combined due care should be taken of pure vegetarians, non-drinkers and non-smokers. A separate section should be created for them.

xiv. The guide services in North Karnataka require up-gradation. Though the
Department of Tourism trains and issues licences to tourist guides every year, a lot of improvement is necessary as far as fluency in language (Kannada, English, Hindi and other languages), communication skill, mastery over the subject and behavioural decency, are concerned.

xv. A directory of guides at local and regional level should be prepared, containing their addresses, contact members. A common agency should assign jobs on Queue-basis to these guides. The fees should be prescribed in the directory itself and paid through the agency. The common agency should take initiative in improving and updating guide services.

xvi. To increase the exposure of North Karnataka Tourist Places a systematic compilation, edition of presentation of tourist information in colourful, attractive, brochures, pamphlets and signboards is to be done. These materials should be prepared by the joint efforts of the Department of Tourism, the hotels, travel companies etc. Apart from the Government Tourist Offices, a widest possible distribution network should be developed—all important hotels, travel firms, bus terminus, railway station, prominent public places.

xvii. The information should be in detail in different languages regarding attractions, accessibilities and amenities available at the places and surroundings. A regular updating should be made.

xviii. Latest developments in Information Technology should be extensively used in collection, processing and dissemination of the tourist information. All details should be systematically presented on the web. There should also be continuous
xxi. An accurate signage system should be developed. The signage on highways and other roads is very poor. At many places the matter is distorted by mischievous people. Many milestones are missing or blank. It is a must that signage be in all the three scripts Kannada, English and Devanagari.

xxii. The only improvement in telecommunications is the tariff. Let it be a round figure and fixed one. Owing to non-availability of exact change the callers have to pay more than the meter reading. Automatically they feel exploited. At strategic places Bus Stand, Railway station, telephone booths should be kept open round the clock.

xxiii. The timing of postal services also requires extension both in the morning and the late evening hours at some of the important places.

xxiv. Provision of safe drinking water is the most urgent throughout North Karnataka. The concerned Civil Authorities should design proper system of water collection, storage, filtration and consistent supply throughout the year.
xxv. To ensure standard services to the tourists, during their visit to the region, a flying squad appointed by the industry and the government jointly, should keep close watch on the functioning of different establishments – travel agencies, tour operators, tourist information centres, hotels, restaurants, wayside amenities, tourist sites, souvenir shops and the like. A culture of self-discipline should be developed in the industry and the DoT. The hotel associations themselves may form ‘Flying Squads’. Their frequent visits will definitely inculcate a habit of self-discipline. Volunteers from NGO’s, N.C.C and N.S.S can be made to play a lead role in this connection.

xxvi. Local and regional food-drink specialities should be offered and popularised. The regional gastronomy should be developed.

VII A.2 DEVELOPING DOMESTIC TOURISM

1. Domestic tourism should be given its due share in promotion efforts by the Government and private agencies.

2. In fact domestic tourism in this country has contributed more to local self-employment than foreign tourism. Those who travel by road and halt at several places, leave behind chunks of expenditure for those halting movements.\(^\text{127}\)

3. It is very important to develop internal tourism ... parallel to external tourism. Internal tourism may be done in a modest way at first but it is important that such tourism exists. The idea amongst the local population and service personnel: I can also be a

\(^{127}\) Dr. S. C. Bhatia, in ‘Tourism and Area Development’, Problems and Prospects of Tourism… op. cit. p.122.
tourist whenever I like, relieves(d) social tensions considerably. That is a first bridge over the ditch between the working class and the leisure class, educated and uneducated people, the rich and the poor.\textsuperscript{128}

4. By tapping the upper class and upper middle class market we can bring down the outbound tourist traffic to a considerable extent. This in turn reduces the out flow of foreign exchange on travel account and increases our net foreign exchange earnings from tourism.

VII A.3 DEVELOPING A STATISTICAL DATABASE

1. Collection of statistics with reference to different aspects of tourism on a continuous basis is necessary. Government and non-Government agencies should equally participate in this connection.

2. A sound database should be developed at micro as well as macro level. It should have exhaustive coverage of the 3 A’s of tourism and all the influential factors.

3. The statistics collected should be properly classified, analysed and stored for the use of planners, policy-makers, researchers, academicians, industrialists, investors and the general public.

4. The main aspects to be covered should be:

   a. The tourists, their profile, their movements, stay, consumption and activities at the destination.

\textsuperscript{128} Paul Rieger, in ‘The Cultural and Sociological Aspects of World Tourism’, Problems and Prospects of Tourism..., op. cit. p 131
b. The amenities for tourists, their capacity utilisation, revenues, profits, employment generation etc.

c. Investment behaviour in Government and private sector, in different categories of tourism venture.

d. Carrying capacity of the destination and matters relating to natural, social and cultural environment.

5. While measuring the volume of tourism the number of tourist visits should not be over-focussed. Along with that due importance should also be given to the length of stay, per day expenditure, coverage of places and the like.

6. For a country of India's size it is not just sufficient to know the number of tourists entering the country. The important thing is to know how the traffic is distributed throughout the country. This can help us in channelising the tourist traffic in desired directions. This is very much necessary to ensure that tourism takes development to the regions wherever needed.

7. Tourism being the most dynamic phenomenon of the contemporary world, R & D on a continuous basis is required much more than any other sector. Intermittent and ad hoc surveys will never serve the requirements of ever changing tourist business. An exhaustive research in the tourists, the 3 A’s, the generating countries, micro and macro environmental forces, competing destinations is a must to fine tune the tourism product to the changes in the environment.

VII A.4 TOURISM POLICY MAKING

Akehurst concluded that any post 1992 tourism policy would have to be judged on
how well it meets a number of criteria and factors, including the following.\textsuperscript{129}

- Is it clearly stated, well communicated and well co-ordinated?
- Does it identify and prioritise the policy problems?
- Is there a consistency of approach over time in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of agreed action programmes, combined with a flexibility to accommodate un-foreseen changes?
- Is it based on a detailed understanding and knowledge of the tourism phenomenon, with information flows helping business decision-making?
- Does it channel and distribute the impacts of tourism?

In the light of the above it is evident that, tourism policy making, implementation and monitoring have got a long way to go in the Indian context, both at micro and macro levels.

Given the federal democratic structure of our country, every effort should be made to achieve co-ordination, communication and consensus among different state governments, central government and the tourism industry at large in forming a consistent, objective and practical tourism policy.

\textbf{VII A.5 Development of Infrastructure and Superstructure}

1. To place India notably on world tourist map, drastic measures are needed to be taken to improve our civic infrastructure and social infrastructure. They include

\textsuperscript{129} Pradhan Kamal Maiya, op cit. p. 24-25
roads, railways, airports, power supply, water supply, sanitation, health and medicals facilities, security, public instruction and education, communication network, crisis management systems and so forth.

2. Development of superstructure is necessary to ensure increasing flow of tourists and resultant socio-economic benefits. While developing superstructure maximum care should be taken of the requirements of the target tourist segment, the carrying capacity, the socio-cultural-environmental aspects of the destination region.

3. Infrastructure and superstructure should be developed in such a way that, tourist activities are spread over as wide an area as possible and resulting in the percolation of tourist expenditure to the grass roots of the socio-economic structure of the destination region.

4. The development of infrastructure and superstructure should in no way disturb the present environmental balance or destroy the unique characters of the destination region.

VII A.6 DEVELOPING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

The approach and attitude towards tourism and its development need a drastic positive shift among bureaucrats, politicians, administrators, planners, entrepreneurs, financiers, academicians, researchers and the general public. For this, tourism experts, thinkers and environmentalists should actively engage in educating and orienting different classes of the community.

VII A.7 MARKETING APPROACH

An effective system should be developed to deal with the marketing of tourism
opportunities to the tourists, facilitators, other business classes, the government and the
general public. The marketing efforts should be based on sound research base, with high
professionalism and result orientation. A perfect link should be established between
market research, marketing efforts and the tourist plant.

VII A.8 CHANGING THE ROLE AND FOCUS OF THE TOURIST ORGANISATIONS

The STO's and NTO's should change their role-playing from licensing, approving,
sanctioning, promoting etc. to managing and coordinating the tourist plant and tourism
opportunities. Such agencies should function at local, regional and national levels. For this,
effective coordination and communication should be achieved among the different
government departments and ministries- PWD, Irrigation, Forests, Surface transport, water
transport, Civil aviation, Environment, Health and Sanitation, Finance, Foreign affairs and
Defence. A platform should be provided for effective dialogue and discussion between the
government, tourism entrepreneurs, other business classes, academicians, researchers and
the local community. The tourist organisation should act as a Friend, Philosopher and
Guide of the tourism industry, the tourists and the community in general.

VII A.9 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Following areas have been identified for further research in the Indian context in
particular and developing countries in general.

1. Tourism –communication-Information Technology

2. Policy implications at the grass root level

3. Strategies for developing destination traffic
4. Managing seasons

5. Tourism and event management

6. Marketing tourism to the 'Host'