PREFACE

Tourism has become a major source of revenue for large number of economies throughout the globe. For a layman tourism is a temporary movement of people from their normal place of residence at any other destination, normally for the purpose of pleasure and leisure. This movement is as old as the birth of mankind itself; only the motives of travel have been different in different times. The tourism industry in India has over the time become one of the most efficient and dependable earners of precious foreign exchange for the country. Not only the central but the state governments too have begun to invest in tourism infrastructure and facilities in order to capitalize on this growing industry. As more and more people have acquired surplus purchasing power, a parallel demand for leisure activities is growing and more so with the development of the road, rail and air networks. In context of India a surprising fact is that despite being in possession of some of the most diverse natural assets; ranging from rugged mountains and picturesque hills to marvelous beaches and forests and from historical splendors of forts, palaces and shrines to an amazing variety of wildlife; for many decades past independence, no more than a cursory attention was given to these successive plans.

Tourism has emerged out as an upcoming industry in Himachal Pradesh. The state is blessed with the natural and cultural beauty, offering cool and comfortable climate, a serene environment, fascinating customs, fairs & festivals and breathtaking thrills of adventure. It will be apt to describe the state as a tourism land for all seasons and reasons. Despite having tremendous tourism potential, the state is not frequented by a large number of the tourists. The reasons for this are many and diverse. Some researchers have tried to probe into this aspect but very few have carried out serious research on this issue. For majority of the tourists, Himachal merely means a visit to Shimla, Kullu-Manali and Kangra. The majority of tourists have no idea about the varied attractions of the state which are far and many but remain either unexplored or less frequented. The state can
expect a larger number of tourists if the immense tourism potential that is yet to be tapped is taken into consideration. The fact remains that the scope for development of tourism in the state is enormous and the plan efforts represent only the tip of the iceberg. The private sector, due to obvious reasons, will continue to reap the major benefits of the hospitality industry and therefore will continue to make large investments in the sector through well-thought-out planning and projects. Travel agents and tour operators have only just begun to tap the huge potential in the adventure tourism sector. Climbing, trekking, river-rafting, hang-gliding and rapids-running are some of the more exciting lines of development.

Present study has been divided into nine chapters, first of which deals with the meaning, introduction and concept of tourism in India. The second and the third chapter deal with the performance of tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh and reviews some of the literature associated with it. Fourth chapter covers research methodology. The need and scope of the study along with various tools required and used for the fulfilment of this research work are discussed in detail. Fifth chapter is an empirical study of tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh. Various factors such as nationality, sex, age, educational qualification, occupation and annual income of the tourist have been considered before their perception regarding the scope of tourism Industry in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The nature, demography and other characteristics of the tourist are taken into consideration before their perceptions about the existing facilities in Himachal Pradesh can be noted in the sixth chapter. Seventh chapter describes the role of HPTDC and Department of Tourism for the promotion and development of tourism in Himachal Pradesh. Eighth chapter discuss those areas of Himachal Pradesh which are either neglected or hidden but have immense potential in them. Chapter ninth presents the summary of findings, recommendations and identification of areas for future research.