## CHAPTER VI

**MARKETING AND PROMOTION OF RURAL TOURISM**

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CHAPTER VI
MARKETING AND PROMOTION OF RURAL TOURISM

6.1. TOURISM PLANNING

Tourism planning can be viewed either as a process or as an activity. Dredge and Moore (1992) define tourism planning as an activity developed for the benefits of local residents and outside visitors. Backman, Uysal, and Backman (1991) argue that tourism planning is an activity which necessitates the appraisal of current and future resources for tourism development in a given area. West Bengal tourism faces a dichotomies situation - the type of tourists Bengal really wants, it receives in small number, and the tourists Bengal actually receives, it does not want. This situation, which is faced not only by Bengal but also by other states in India, who are working towards developing their tourism marketing, raises questions about tourism development planning. Basically, there are three possible directions that tourism planners can follow:

- Emphasize individual tourism - (EIT) provides facilities and makes attempts to gradually change the certain images of tourist destination of West Bengal of different tourist destinations.
- Concentrate on Mass tourism, Showing the uniqueness of Bengal tourism resources to attract both domestic and as well as international tourist; provide incentive, to international tour operators; invest in advertising to change the image of Kolkata, Digha, Darjeeling, Sundarban, Build a luxury infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the mass tourism and also for the budget category tourist.
- Emphasize youth market, attempts to provide the basic facilities at reasonable prize. Change the nature of package tourism, make the circuit like golden triangle (Delhi-Agra-Jaipur, all are located in three different state; have to focus group tours towards certain themes - e.g., religious tour (to target the Bangladesh tourist and Mayanmar tourist); educational tour; Himalayan safari, Museums tour Archaeological and historical tours; Wildlife tours, tribal tours; Rural tour package etc.
Recognitions of the importance and value of planning for tourism is reflected in the number of tourism plans, which have been prepared in the last three decades. The world Tourism organization established an inventory of over 1600 assorted tourism plans in 1980 (WTO, 1980). Different scales of tourism planning were identified by the WTO intraregional, national, regional, local organizations.

Planning is a multi dimensional activity and seeks to be integrative. It embraces social, economic, political, psychological factors. It is concerned with the past, present and future (Rose, 1984).

Gets (1987) Defines tourism planning as: Planning is concerned with anticipating and regulating change in a system, to promote orderly development so as to increase the social, economic and environmental benefits of the development process. However Braddon (1982) suggest-

- There is no single definition of tourism planning so an analysis of its constituent elements helps an understanding of the terms
- Tourism planning is very closely associated with development planting in most parts of the world. The planning process needs to take account of very many factors ranging from topography to economy and from tourism needs to residents needs. It is subject to a great external influencing which both modify the process and the outcome- the implementation of the plan.
- Tourism is a social, economic and environmental activity. Its planning has to operate at various levels; nationally, regionally, locally.
- Tourism planning must take account of conservation of the physical environment; the spatial planning of tourism can vary effective in this regard.
- Ideally tourism planning should be fully integrated with all socio-economic activities and at all levels of involvement. This would ensure the optimal use tourist resources with least social, economic and environmental
- Tourism planning is not just the formulation of plans for the future. It is also about the implementation of plans. It is therefore important that the right economic conditions exit for development of take place in accordance with the plan. It is also
important that tourism planning is market-oriented, providing the right product for the consumer - the tourist.

Tourism is a rather an activity that overlaps several different sectors of the society and economy. Without planning, it may create unexpected and negative impacts. Tourism is also still a relatively new type industry in the state of West Bengal. Some state government and often the private sectors have little or no experience in how to develop tourism properly.

Firstly, tourism should be planned at the national and regional levels. At these levels, planning is concerned with tourist development policies, structure plans, facility standards, institutional factor, and all the other elements necessary to develop and manage tourism. And then, within the framework of national and regional planning, more details plans for tourist attraction, resorts, urban, rural and others forms of tourism development can be prepared.

6.1.1. Tourism Planning Process

Planning activities have expanded dramatically during the last few decades and have been developed and implemented by politicians, social scientists, and community representatives. Currently, the stages of implementation and development are significantly more complex than in the past. The new planning activities emphasize a cooperative approach, which results in better reasoned strategies. In the tourism domain three major entities direct the planning business: governmental agencies, supra-governmental agencies (World Tourism Organization), and professional planners. Generally, governmental and private representatives collaborate to develop a sustainable tourist area or destination. Gunn (1994) explained that in a typical tourism development council there are representatives of lodging, foodservice, transportation, entertainment, and travel businesses. Tourism associations, festival sponsors, recreational and sport groups normally represent the non-profit sector. From a governmental perspective, a number of agencies in charge of transportation, leisure and recreation, culture, health, security, and other fields directly or indirectly related to tourism are involved in the
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planning process. Despite the complexity of the decision making process that is produced by such bureaucracy, the outcomes generally guarantee a long-term integrated development of a tourist area. According to Pearce (1995), three principal assumptions need to be made in order to develop a solid and reliable tourism plan:

a) The tourism phenomenon involves many industries producing both goods and services. The more extensive the understanding of the inter-relationships between the different sectors contributing to the tourism industry, the more likely the tourism planning will be successful;

b) An intellectual grasp of the dynamics of tourism development and the forces influencing it; and

c) Coordination and integration of state and regional level planning activities with planning functions at the site and local levels. This is a priority for the overall success of the planning process.

Tourism is an interdisciplinary field and involves a number of different industries and natural settings. Tourism resource planning is essential to stimulate tourism sustainability. Without tourism resource planning, many unintended consequences may develop causing tourist and resident dissatisfaction. These include damage to the natural environment, adverse impacts upon cultural environment, and a decrease in the potential economic benefits. The negative experience of many unplanned tourist destinations (Acapulco) and the success of most of local and regional planned locations (Galapagos) demonstrate that tourism development should be based on a planning process that includes a solid assessment of the resources at destination and their attractiveness potential (Blank, 1989; Gunn, 1994; Inskeep, 1994).

6.1.2. Tourist Supply and its Elements

Tourism planning integrates all components of supply and their interaction. These components represent the drawing forces generating tourist demand. Lodging and other service facilities function as supporting units and should not be considered as prime motivations to travel (Gunn, 1994). Tourism supply is comprised of attractions, transportation, accommodation, other support services, and infrastructure.
i) Attractions:

This is an indispensable ingredient of tourism supply. In fact, all the other components of supply depend upon major tourist attractions. Attractions may be classified by ownership: nonprofits organizations, private businesses, and government agencies. Another classification is defined by the tourists' length of stay: the Blue Ridge Parkway, a zoo, or an historic site is touring attractions whereas convention centres, beach resorts, or "Club Med" vacation villages are destination attractions. The most widely used classification related to tourism attractions is based on the resource foundation criteria.

ii) Transportation:

This component of supply is critical in predicting tourism trends and development of tourism destinations. In the post World War II era mass tourism depended on the development of a railway network. Most early tourist attractions, amusement parks, beach resorts, and spas, were located in the areas surrounding railway stations. The post World War II rise in automobile travel and the most recent increase in air transportation have heavily affected the patterns of tourism flows as well as destinations planning and development.

iii) Accommodation:

Pearce (1981) classified accommodations in three major components. The commercial sectors, which is mostly represented by hotels, motels, and vacation villages. There is also the private sector, which includes second homes, time-sharing properties, and residential buildings used to host family members and friends. Last, there is a hybrid classification, defined by camping and caravanning activities, where private tents and campers or caravans are situated in areas- campsites- managed by business firms.

iv) Other Support Services:

Tourists need not only a place to sleep but also a wide range of services that ensure a pleasant stay. These services have been classified by Defert (1967) as: basic
(groceries), trade (communications), comfort (clothing), security (health care), and luxury (jewellery).

v) Infrastructure:

The tourism phenomenon relies heavily on public utilities and infrastructural support. Without roads, airports, harbours, electricity, sewage, and potable water tourism planning and development would not be possible. Generally, infrastructures developed only for residents need to be expanded to serve travellers. From a profitability perspective, infrastructure differs from attractions, transportation, and accommodation because it does not generate revenues directly. In literature, the constructs of "attraction" and that of "resource" have been loosely interpreted and used interchangeably.

6.2. A SYSTEM APPROACH TO TOURISM PLANNING

An overview of the literature on tourism planning has suggested that the most popular and modern planning approach to tourism is best defined as a systems analysis of tourism planning (Formica, 2000). It is an integrative approach that factors all the components influencing the tourism phenomenon and their inter-relationship. As set forth by Fagence (1991) a solid tourism plan for the 1990s and beyond is a tool for managers and investors to:

- Identify the geographical aspects of tourism attractions, transportation, and accommodation in a given area;
- Control the changing pattern of spatial suitability within the national or regional policy;
- Determine and encourage the integration of various kinds of tourism development and their interactions with other economic and social activities; and
- Conceive integrated strategies and policies to develop synergistic strategies with governmental and/or entrepreneurial activities with the ultimate goal of maximizing coordination between private investments and public infrastructures.
Tourism planning is now being recognized as a necessary complement to the tourism system. Most public and private tourism organizations integrate tourism planning to the already existing frenetic promotional activities that have been conducted in the recent past. Tourism planning is now used in conjunction with promotion to determine: "What needs to be promoted, where it is, how well it meets market needs, how well it fits the community, how it utilizes resources, and how it can be expanded or newly developed" (Gunn, 1994).

6.3. DESTINATION CONCEPT AND MARKETING

Tourist destinations are a mix of tourism products, experiences and other intangible items promoted to the consumer (tourists). At a general level, this concept of destination can be developed to represent geographically defined entities such as group of countries, country, and regions in a country, a resort or a wide range of experiences created tourism marketers. There are a range of six components which comprise a destination (i.e from an industry supply perspective or from consumer’s viewpoint). The destination is often referred to as an amalgam of six A’s. - Available packages; Accessibility; Attractions; Amenities; Activities; Ancillary services.

Kotler, Philip defines marketing as “the science and art of exploring, creating, and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market at a profit. Marketing identifies unfulfilled needs and desires. It defines measures and quantifies the size of the identified market and the profit potential. It pinpoints which segments the company is capable of serving best and it designs and promotes the appropriate products and services.” Marketing is based on thinking about the business in terms of customer needs and their satisfaction. Marketing differs from selling because (in the words of Harvard Business School's retired professor of marketing Theodore C. Levitt) "Selling concerns itself with the tricks and techniques of getting people to exchange their cash for your product. It is not concerned with the values that the exchange is all about. It does not, as marketing invariably does, view the entire business process as consisting of a tightly
integrated effort to discover, create, arouse and satisfy customer needs." In other words, marketing has less to do with getting customers to pay for your product as it does developing a demand for that product and fulfilling the customer's needs. According to the American Marketing Association (AMA) Board of Directors, Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.

6.3.1. Tourism Marketing Concept

Marketing gives importance to customer satisfaction. It is a combination of activities to motivate people to buy the product. It is nothing but actually shopping which is deeply associated by selling and buying products and services. Travel and tourism is no different where the word marketing as used by many, is restricted to negotiations and publicity. Many large Tourism organization adopted marketing as a business strategy.

Marketing is more emphasis on quality product and professionalism with proper aggression. Marketing always focuses around the satisfaction of customer needs, wants, and requirements. It expects to identify the future needs. Tourism is a service industry; these services are intangible which can be known only after the actual experience, so it carries an amount of risk to purchase. There has been an up market trend in tourism over the last few decades. Tourists have high levels of disposable income, considerable leisure time, are well educated, and have sophisticated tastes. There is now a demand for better quality products, which has resulted in a fragmenting of the mass market for beach vacations; people want more specialized versions, quieter resorts, family-oriented holidays or niche market-targeted destination hotels and there is a much awaited need for developing full proof marketing plan for the same.

Therefore a marketing plan contains number of aspects of integrated, viable and strategic plan, which is known as marketing mix. Marketing mix, as stated, is a right combination of elements designed to get a particular set of consumer, buy a product at a particular price. However, the state West Bengal tourism sector is facing challenges
such as lack of good quality tourism infrastructure, global concerns regarding health and safety of tourists, disparate passenger or road tax structures across various states and shortfall of adequately trained and skilled manpower. While several plans and programmes have already been devised for tackling these challenges, successful implementation would be critical to accelerate growth. Besides this it is a well-known fact that the complete potential of the West Bengal tourism has not been explored yet. Since tourism is a multidimensional activity which is principally a service industry. The wholesome participation of all departments of the Central and State governments, private sector and voluntary organizations, NGO’s will help to attain sustainable growth in tourism.

6.4. SYNTHESIS OF STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS AND LESSONS FOR STRATEGIC DESTINATION MARKETING

The discussion of the three models provides several interesting lessons. A close examination of strategies reveals that they share a similar base. Porter’s “differentiation”, Gilbert’s “status area” and Poon’s “flexible specialization” describe how firms and destinations can achieve value competitive advantages. Consumers appreciate special attributes and values and as a result they are inclined to visit areas more regularly, to increase their loyalty and to pay higher prices. In contrast, “cost leadership”, “commodity area” and “standardization or the “Fordism production model” describes the efforts of firms or destinations to achieve “cost competitive advantage” by offering their products for less than their competitors. This is achieved through economies of scales, standardization and mass production. Destinations and tourism products are treated as commodities and decisions are merely based on price. Hence the underlying concept of the two alternative strategies is the relationship between volume and price. The first set of strategies supports a “low volume-high profit margin” approach, where each consumer is paying premium prices for unique products; whilst the second set of strategies follow a “high volume-low profit margin” approach. Tourism destinations should avoid the cost advantage strategies as they are based on mass production and consumption and assume unlimited production capacity and resources. The inseparability of the tourism product determines that consumers should
be present at the time of product delivery. Therefore, the interaction of consumers should be present at the time of the product delivery. Therefore, the interaction of consumers with socio-cultural and environmental scarce resources can decay the very reasons, which attract people to places. Seasonality also generates demand peaks and inflates the problem during certain periods every year. Although economic benefits can also be achieved by using the “commodity area” or the “standard product model”, it is argued that on the long term these approaches reduce tourist satisfaction, consumer willingness to pay, and are against demand trends. In addition, the “high volume-low profit margins” strategy has catastrophic social and environmental impacts on destinations. As a result, not only their sustainability may be jeopardized but also the competitiveness of the region as a whole. Effectively these strategies push destinations through their lifecycle stages and force them to reach their consolidation stage. Destinations therefore should define and not exceed their carrying capacities in order to sustain their resources and at the same time avoid jeopardizing consumer satisfaction.

6.5. TOURISM DESTINATIONS MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT

The tourism destination marketing is becoming very challenging task because the international tourist market is changing with the globalisation effect where stake holder’s benefit has to be protected along with mutual association with the tourist in terms of value sharing. To sustain with the proper destination and its management monitoring of the environment is becoming very much important. For a good destination it is obvious that it must be equipped with tourism attractiveness, environmental management, utilisation of the resources in a positive direction. Destination must offer several elements like physical attribute, tangible benefits (such as services, experience and community attitude). It must offer the basic facilities like transportation, stay, safety. The marketing communication is also having a vital role in promoting the destination products and services because those are intangible here there should be zero gap in between offer, expectation and actual performance. Destination marketing facilitates the achievement of tourism policy, which should be co-ordinated with the regional development strategic plan. Marketing of destinations should also guide the tourism impacts optimization and the maximization of benefits for the region.
In order to appreciate the complexity of destination marketing this paper explains the destination concept and attempts to synthesize several models for strategic marketing and management of destinations. The analysis illustrates numerous frameworks for the development of a destination marketing strategy and a comprehensive marketing mix. Competitiveness among the subjects in the international tourist market becomes emphasized in the modern conditions of globalisation, liberalisation and deregulation. As a consequence, there is a need to obtain and maintain the competitive advantage of a particular tourist destination (Dwyer et al., 2009). The creation of tourist offers is carried out at the site of a particular tourist destination, which consists of many participants who offer their own partial tourist products; it is rational to coordinate the efforts of all participants, in order to create the integral tourist product (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999). Collaboration between different stakeholders improves the coordination of policies and related actions, and promotes consideration of the economic, environmental, and social impacts of tourism. The resulting outcomes are potentially more efficient and sustainable (Dredge, 1999).

The tourism destination is a link between all parts of the tourism industry, maintains and propels these parts, is a complex and specific element of the tourism industry (Stancioiu, 2002). The management of the tourism destination is a concept widely utilized in the theory and practice, while the image of the destination is an important point of interest for the researchers, as well as for the people managing the tourism industry. Destinations are regarded as well-defined geographical areas, such as a country, an island or a town, with an amalgam of tourism products, offering an integrated experience to tourists. Destinations are not a single product, but composite products consisting of a bundle of different components including: accommodation and food establishments, tourist attractions, arts establishments and cultural venues, and the natural environment (Pop et al., 2007).

It is a combination of tangible physical attributes (such as product, facilities, location and accessibility) and less tangible attributes (such as service, experience and community attitude). Destinations are places towards which people travel and where they choose to stay for a while, are places with personality and with consistent tourist product (Suarez, 2007), so the perceived attractiveness and the competitiveness of
destination are the most important issues to study. Tourism destinations are intangible or abstract because travel experiences cannot be processed or evaluated before purchasing (Awaritefe, 2003). Marketing communications has become important for destinations to promote their brand identity and brand image to target audiences (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991).

Hunt (1975) suggested that different natures of destinations may have different approaches of destination attractiveness in marketing planning and advertising proposals. Kotler and Gurtner (2002) specified that destinations can use logos in commercial advertisements, promotional materials and associated product package to present consistent communications to the target market. On the other words, brand messages or information as the form of brand knowledge may facilitate memory reinforcement to prospective visitors (Keller, 2003a; Mill & Morrison, 1985). Most destination products and services are intangible and simultaneous production and consumption (Ritchie & Ritchie, 1998).

Destination as an Amalgam of Tourism Services and Experiences

Destinations offer an amalgam of tourism products and services, which are consumed under the brand name of the destination. Leiper (1995, p.87) explains that destinations are places towards which people travel and where they choose to stay for a while in order to experience certain features or characteristics – or a perceived attraction of some sort. Cooper et al (1998) define destinations as the focus of facilities and services designed to meet the needs of the tourists. Most destinations comprise of a core of the following components, which can be characterized as the six ‘A’ framework as illustrated below. Therefore, a destination can be regarded as a combination (or even as a brand) of all products, services and ultimately experiences provided locally. It also enables us to assess the impact of tourism regionally, as well as manage demand and supply in order to maximize benefits for all stakeholders.
**Table 6.1: Six ‘A’s framework for the analysis of tourism destinations**

- **Attractions** (natural, man-made, artificial, purpose built, heritage, special events)
- **Accessibility** (entire transportation system comprising of routes, terminals and vehicles)
- **Amenities** (accommodation and catering facilities, retailing, other tourist services)
- **Available packages** (pre arranged packages by intermediaries)
- **Activities** (all activities available at the destination and what consumers do during their visit)
- **Ancillary services** (services used by tourists such as banks, telecommunications, post, news, agents, hospitals etc)

**The Strategic Purpose of Destinations and their Management and Marketing**

Destinations are some of the most difficult entities to manage and market, due to the complexity of the relationships of local stakeholders. Managing and marketing destinations is also challenging because of the variety of stakeholders involved in the development and production of tourism products. The destination experience is essentially comprised of regions, resources and amalgams of tourism facilities and services, which often do not belong to individuals. Instead they represent a collection of both professional and personal interests of all the people who live and work in the area. Managing conflicting stakeholders’ interests makes controlling and marketing destinations as a whole extremely challenging. Hence, strategies and actions should take into account the wishes of all stakeholders, namely indigenous people, businesses and investors, tourists, tour operators and intermediaries, and interest groups. Most service providers are small and medium sized tourism enterprises which have a wide range of strengths and weakness whilst are also characterized by their independent nature. Tourists overall experience is composed of numerous small encounters with a variety of tourism principals, such as taxi drivers, hoteliers, and waiters as well as with elements of the local attractions such as museums, theatres, beaches, theme parks etc. Their overall impression develops their image of a destination after their visitation. As a
consequence there is much overlapping between strategic marketing of the destination as a whole and each individual supplier at the region. Hence, the competitiveness of each player is often interrelated and almost indistinguishable from one another.

DMOs tend to be part of the local, regional or national government and have political and legislative power as well as the financial means to manage resources rationally and to ensure that all stakeholders can benefit in the long term. Destination management and marketing should act as tools and facilitators to achieve a complex range of strategic objectives, which will ultimately need to satisfy the needs and wants of stakeholders. The development and implementation of strategic objectives at destinations depends on relationships between stakeholders and thus the implementation of the key generic strategic objectives. Inevitably, the interest of some stakeholders may be conflicting with others and thus some of the four key strategic objectives may be jeopardized. This is often a result of some stakeholder trying to enhance its benefit at the expense of others.

Table 6.2: Strategic management and marketing objectives for destinations

- Enhance the long term prosperity of local people
- Delight visitors by maximizing their satisfaction
- Maximise profitability of local enterprises and maximize multiplier effects
- Optimise tourism impacts by ensuring a sustainable balance between economic benefits and socio-cultural and environmental costs.
6.6. TOURISM DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

According to Cooper et al (1998), the tourist area life cycle (TALC), states that destinations go through a cycle of evolution similar to the life cycle of a product (see fig). In the model, numbers of visitors replace sales of the product. The shape of the TALC curve varies as it is dependent on factors such as the rate of employment, access,
government policy, market trends and competing destinations (ibid). TALC includes seven stages: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, decline or rejuvenation that the authors define by adapting Butler (1980) and Cooper (1997).

**Exploration**

In exploration stage the destination is visited by a small volume of explorer-type tourists. The natural attractions, scale and culture are the main factors drawing to the destinations. The volume of visitors is constrained by lack of access and facilities. In this stage, the attractions of the destination remain unchanged by tourism. Contact with local people is considered to be high (ibid).

**Involvement**

At the involvement stage, local communities have to decide whether they are willing to support tourism, and if so, the type and scale of tourism they have a preference on. Advertising, for example conducted by local initiatives, may lead to an increased and regular volume of visitors. As the tourism market area emerges, it creates pressure to public sector to provide, for example, infrastructure. It is important to establish appropriate organization and decision making process for tourism, and ensure locally determined capacity limits as well as sustainable principles (ibid).

**Development**

In this stage, large numbers of visitors are attracted: the number of visitors at peak periods perhaps equal or exceed the number of local inhabitants. The control of the development may pass out of local hands, which can lead to changes in the organization of tourism. Companies from outside the destination move in and start providing products and facilities. Problems may occur if local decision-taking structure is weak. Sustainable development is one example that the new entrants and local community may have differing views about. In this stage, regional and national planning may take place and marketing is started in order to draw international tourist. Overuse and deterioration may occur in this stage (ibid).
**Consolidation**

In this stage, the rate of increase of visitors declines. However, the total number of visitors is still increasing and exceeds permanent residents. The resort is now a fully fledged part of the tourism industry and has an identifiable recreational business region (ibid).

**Stagnation**

In this stage peak tourist volumes have now been reached. The destination is no longer fashionable and relies upon visits from more conservative travellers. Major promotional and development efforts are needed in order to maintain the number of visits. Environmental, social and economic problems are typical for a destination in this stage, and competition is fierce (ibid).

**Decline or Rejuvenation**

After stagnation the destination either declines or rejuvenates. According to Cooper et al (1998, p.116), in the decline stage visitors are being lost to newer resorts, and a smaller geographical catchment for day trips and weekend visits is common whereas in the rejuvenation stage destination managers have a choice to rejuvenate or re-launch the destination by looking at new markets or developing the product. A destination should try to protect its traditional markets, but also try to establish new markets and products such as business, conference or special interest tourism. This helps to stabilize visitation and overcome the seasonality related issues (ibid).

### 6.7. MARKETING APPROACH TO TOURISM

According to William J. Stanton, 'marketing is a total system of interacting business activities designed to plan, place, price, promote and distribute want-satisfying products and services to present and potential customers. This definition honours customer needs and desires. It emphasizes the need for marketing programme covering all aspects of a good marketing mix. The American Marketing Association is more concise in defining marketing as 'the performance of business activities that direct the
flow of goods and service from producer to customer’. This definition is open to a variety of interpretations, depending upon the perception of the exponents. In reality, the marketing job of banks today is somewhat wider than what is perceived in the definition. According to Kotler, a marketing concept means that 'a management orientation that holds the key task of the organization is to determine the needs and wants of target markets and to adopt the organization to delivering the desired satisfaction more effectively and efficiently than its competitors. Without going into the details of the ways by which it is looked at, the concept may be considered for our purpose from the enterprise orientation to the satisfaction of the needs of the customers. For tourism industry, the concept implies a corporate philosophy which recognizes that the Department of Tourism should provide their customers with the services they want and need. In tourism the market consists of heterogeneous consumers. In this situation, the industry cannot appeal to all consumers in the same way. The consumers must be accessed with distinct services according to their needs and preferences. For this purpose, the department must resort to marketing strategy planning to attain the objectives of business. The marketing strategy must consist a specific strategy bearing on target market, marketing mix and marketing expenditure level. Under target marketing, the department (the service provider) must distinguish between market segments, select one or more segments and develop services and marketing mix tailored to each segment. The target marketing calls for three major steps.

- Market segmentation
- Market targeting
- Market positioning

6.7.1. Segmentation of Tourism Market

Market segmentation is the process of dividing the total heterogeneous market for a product or service into several markets or segments, each of which tends to be homogeneous in all significant aspects. Traditionally, segmentation was based on demographic characteristics, later on other variables were used, e.g. geographic, psychographic, and behaviouristic variables (Bowen, 1998). For example, Legoherel (1998) focuses on expenditure-levels in terms of consumers’ estimation of travel expenditures; Grazin and Olsen (1997) identify groups depending on their frequency
of use with regard to fast food restaurants; Nayga and Capps (1994) relate demand for different types of restaurants to different socio-economic segments; and Binckley (1998) shows that population density has a powerful effect on demand. Victorino, Karniouchina, and Verma (2009) use segmentation based on consumers’ comfort with technology to tailor communication service to guests’ computing and connectivity needs. Oh and Jeong (1996) base their segmentation on characteristics of the organization. In benefit segmentation (Frochot, 2005; Kemperman and Timmermans, 2006; Sarigo¨llu¨ and Huang, 2005), tourists are distinguished according to the benefits they seek rather than traditional factors such as demographic, socio-economic or geographic characteristics (Frochot and Morrison, 2000). This method has yielded valid results in many studies (Frochot, 2005; Yannopoulos and Rotenberg, 1999), in which benefits refer to travellers’ push motivations (Beh and Bruyere, 2007; Boksberger and Laesser, 2009; Koh et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2004; Park and Yoon, 2009) or pull attributes of a destination (Kastenholz et al., 1999; Sarigo¨llu¨ and Huang, 2005; Yannopoulos and Rotenberg, 1999), or a combination of these (Bieger and Laesser, 2002; Jang et al., 2002; May et al., 2001). There are many studies dealing with consumer segmentation in the hospitality industry. For an exhaustive overview of different segmentation approaches and there are some pros and cons, Bowen (1998) and Johns and Pine (2002).

Lewis (1981) finds that segments in restaurants differ in their opinions about the importance of several service attributes, while Bahn and Granzin (1985) find that nutritional concerns affected restaurant selection. As hospitality organizations provide a number of services, it seems appropriate to consider the benefits in terms of the attributes of the total service product provided (Bahn and Granzin, 1985). According to Palacio and McCool (1997), knowledge of the benefits sought by tourists helps to provide facilities which are attractive to them and to understand the preferences of different market segments as well as to design effective promotion. Understanding of preferences is particularly important when the aim is to identify markets for a certain tourism product. Frochot and Morrison (2000) strongly argued about the further application and benefit of segmentation in specific tourism market for long run destination management. Nature-based tourism, eco-tourism and rural tourism have been contexts for several benefit segmentation studies (Frochot, 2005; Jang et al.,
These studies are closely related to the topic at hand as nature-based tourism and rural tourism are important and very prominent parts of destination marketing.

Travel and tourism markets are changing. Socio-demographic changes marked by an active aging population, two-income families, childless couples, and a rising population of single adults have led to substantial changes in travel and leisure demand and in patterns of travel markets (Chon and Singh 1995; Loverseed 1997; Morrison et al. 1996; Ross 1999). Various studies have dealt with tourist motivations and market segmentation. Factors that motivate tourists for leisure travel are classified into two types, i.e. “push” and “pull” factors (Crompton, 1979; Dann, 1977; Pearce, 1993; Uysal and Hagan, 1993; Uysal and Jurowski, 1994). An analysis on tourist motivation and activities is important for destinations to understand leisure tourist destination choice (Moscardo, et al, 1996); it can also enhance destination image (Beerli and Martin, 2004; Trauer and Ryan, 2005) and its interplay with tourist satisfaction and loyalty (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). The analysis of tourist motivation can focus on one destination (Kim, Lee and Klenosky, 2003); or it can be conducted by a comparative study by nationality and destination (Kozak, 2002). The motivation study can also focus on one type of target group such as on senior travellers (Jang and Wu, 2006) and on backpackers (Maoz, 2007). There are a number of articles dealing with tourism motivation, tourist perception and market positioning (Calantone, et al, 1989; Chen and Uysal, 2002; Uysal, et al, 2000; Crompton, Fakeye and Lue, 1992; Oh, Uysal and Weaverm, 1995), have recognized the relationship among the tourism motivation, tourist perception and market positioning.

The segmentation is the crucial part of the marketing which divides the prospective markets into several groups in terms of homogeneous characteristics. Though the consumers are different with their different need sets the marketing approach should be different for different group. In the field of tourism it has been observed tourists are different and they are having different set of needs. Some people are having inclination towards spiritual and holiness they will prefer spiritual tourism. Some tourist likes fun and food they may prefer festival and event tourism. Some are
very much motivated with historical monuments and places they may prefer historical tourism. So the segmentation principle is also applied for tourism marketing. The specific tourism destination is catering to the certain target group. In promoting that tourism destination marketing communication must hit the proper segment. In doing the segmentation better, the tourist data has to be properly analysed to get the in-depth idea about the target group. There are several factors which are involved in analysing tourism segmentation those are geographic, demographic, behavioural pattern of the tourist. Segmentation principle is very much helpful in marketing of the tourism product which helps in developing marketing mix strategies to enjoy the tourism competitive advantages. There is several push and pull factor which motivate the tourist in selecting the destinations those factors includes pleasure, the attractiveness of the place, facilities available, safety etc. Those factors require proper marketing communication. The tourist motivation analysis is becoming crucial day by day because the test and preference of tourist are changing so fast. The tourism marketer should follow that trend of changing motivation which will help them in formulating marketing strategies.

A consumer market can be segmented on the basis of geographical variables, demographic variables, psychographic variables and behaviouristic variables.

6.7.2. Targeting of Tourism Market

A proper marketing strategy must be developed to match service offerings to customer needs. For this purpose, the market segment opportunities are identified through the process of market segmentation. There are three basic strategies available for achieving customer satisfaction.

- In differentiated marketing
- Differentiated marketing
- Concentrated marketing

In differentiated Marketing

When the same type of service is offered in all segments, then it is known as 'Undifferentiated Marketing'. It focuses on what is common among the needs of the
customers rather than on what is different. No distinction is made as to the travelling area. The area is treated as one and aggregate. It aims to instil in the customers minds that the service is a superior one. For example, the transport facility is introduced in all tourist spots.

**Differentiated Marketing**

Differentiated marketing attempts to satisfy a part of the total market by marketing a number of services designed to appeal to individual parts of the total market. In other words, when a particular type of service is designed for a particular segment, it is known as 'differentiated marketing'. It is introduced with a separate marketing programme. For example free accommodation facility is available in specified locations along with other services.

**Concentrated Marketing**

When a service is introduced only on segment after a careful study and is like to be extended to other segments later, then it is known as 'concentrated marketing'. When a newly introduced service seems to be successful, it will be extended to all other segments. Otherwise it will be dropped.

**6.7.3. Tourism Market Positioning**

The Department of Tourism must decide on the position it wants to occupy in those segments after identifying the most attractive segments for entry. The way in which the product is defined by the consumers on important attributes is known as product's position. It is the place the product occupies in the consumers’ minds, considering the competing products. The marketer can follow several positioning strategies. The providers can position its product on the basis of the attributes of the product, the benefits it offers, the usage occasions and the like. As a result, the Department of Tourism in India offering similar services at similar charges, try to build their image to make the customers familiar with a particular aspect of their organization. Thus in tourism market positioning is the image building. The Department offers similar services with different symbols. Positioning aims at helping customers see the differences between competing tourist places so that they can match themselves to the
service that can be of most value to them. At present the Department of Tourism has entered into the market with certain slogans to position their names in the minds of the customers.

**Adjust of Marketing Mix**

Once market segmentation is carried out, for each segment there must be an appropriate marketing mix. As the tourism industry has recently recognized the possibility of market segmentation and is slowly identifying new segments of market potential, a different marketing mix for each segment is very difficult to ascertain. But certainly, some aspects of the mix particularly 'promotion' can be geared to particular target markets. Each market segment has different characteristics. The decision on marketing mix receives greater attention in developing the tourist marketing programme. To exploit any one segment effectively, these characteristics must be known and accordingly the marketing mix must be adopted. The service provider must also be aware of the restraints that exist with regard to marketing decisions. There are five broad areas that influence and often restrain the service providers’ decisions. They are:

- Economic environment
- Cultural environment
- Legal environment
- Competitive environment and
- Resources and policies of the Department of tourism

In the light of the restraints stated above, the marketing decisions must be made, as they interact within a single marketing mix.

### 6.8. DESTINATION BRANDING AND POSITIONING

According to Gunn (1988) proposition of evolving brand images (organic, induced, and complex), Fakeye & Crompton (1991) proposed that image promotions can be developed through informative, persuasive, and reminding messages. In tourism marketing, destination branding has become a powerful force for transmitting a
favourable brand image to target market. An optimal branding campaign should build both functional and symbolic attributes into the brand construct to bring about a memorable experience. Any branding effort should be specially designed in accordance with the unique nature of the destination place (Jalilvand et al., 2010). During informative stage, the formation of organic image is dependent on the exposures of general information sources, such as newspapers, magazines, television or other media (Gunn, 1988). This informing process coincides with name awareness for promoting brand recognition and brand recall (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993, 2001, 2003b). Fakeye & Crompton (1991) insisted that effective informing can impress prospective visitors with brand messages in their minds. They believed that persuasive promotions can be achieved by the use of commercial advertisements or posters to motivate potential visitors to choose a specific destination. Thus, this stage helps prospective visitors refine their perceptions of brand images (Goodrich, 1978). This is also where induced images form by the comparison of organic images, word of mouth, and marketing promotions (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). The reminding promotion is to retain the image in visitors’ minds, which may lead to repeat visits. The complex image forms after visitors have travel experiences to judge and help readjust the destination brand (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). Just as the complex image can change by the frequency of visitation, travel experiences can influence visitors’ original perceptions or attitudes toward the destination (Pool, 1965). Therefore, a successful image promotion at this stage lays the groundwork for brand loyalty through positive reminders (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991). In view of the above three types of image formation, Bieger & Laesser (2004) noted destination hosts should seek effective communication channels. The literature in this area emphasises the importance of establishing a balance between competing objectives and environmental objectives relevant to the tourist (Walker, Hanson, 1998). Gnoth (2002), for example, sees destination branding as a management process that leads to a strategic plan to build a brand identity based upon destination attributes selected on the basis of competitiveness, uniqueness and desired identity.

Positioning involves identifying potential visitors’ perception of the strong attributes of a destination, comparing them with their perceptions of the attributes of competitive destinations, and selecting those which differentiate a destination from its competitors. These features are then emphasized and form the cornerstone of marketing
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strategy (Crompton, Fakeye and Lue, 1992). Hall (1999) defines the core objective of destination branding as the production of a consistent, focused communication strategy, based upon the selection of a collection of core intangible values existing in the mind of the consumer. Calantone, et al (1989) point out that multinational tourism research requires researchers to investigate the problem of multinational origin, multinational (or multi-regional) destination, and multi-attribute criteria. Tourism planners should have a sound understanding of tourist perceptions and how they may differ across countries (Calantone, et al, 1989). Chen and Uysal (2002) use a new approach that could be applied to market positioning studies from a regional perspective (Chen and Uysal, 2002).

The strength of a brand’s position is built on six elements: brand domain, brand heritage, brand values, brand assets, brand personality and brand reflection. Brand domain refers to the choice of target market. Other five factors provide ways for creating a clear and differentiated advantage (Jobber, 2004, pp.269-271).

- **Brand Domain** – Refers to the brand’s target market, for example, where the brand competes in the market place.
- **Brand Heritage** – Refers to the brand’s background and culture. Answer to question how the brand has achieved success and/or failure over its life.
- **Brand Values** – Refers to the brand’s core values and characteristics.
- **Brand Assets** – refers to symbols, features, images and relationships that distinct the brand from its competitors.
- **Brand personality** – Refers to the brand’s character which can be described through, for example: people, animals, or objects.
- **Brand reflection** – Refers to how the brand relates to self identity which means how the customer perceives him/ herself as a result of buying/ using the brand (ibid).

Recent reviews of the literature (e.g., Ritchie et al., 2011; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010; Tasci et al., 2007) indicate that significant progress has been made in research into destination image as well as its theoretical antecedents and consequences. Destination image has been one of the major topics in tourism scholarly inquiry due to
its importance for destination marketing, management, and branding (Chon, 1990; Ritchie, Tung, & Ritchie, 2011; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010; Tasci, Gardner, & Cavusgil, 2007). To name a few, both Kim and Yoon (2003) and Martín and Rodrígues del Bosque (2008) document that destination image has both cognitive and affective components. Beerli and Martín (2004) note that destination image is influenced by personal factors including motivations and vacation experiences. A number of scholars (e.g. Byon & Zhang, 2010; Chi & Qu, 2008; Lee, 2009; Rittichainuwat, Qu, & Mongknonvanit, 2002) have provided empirical support for the notion that destination image has direct and/or indirect influences on destination loyalty in terms of tourists' behavioural intentions such as spreading positive word-of-mouth information.

As tourism services are intangible, images become more important than reality (Gallarza, Saura, and Garcia, 2002) and the tourism destination images projected in information space will greatly influence the destination images as perceived by consumers. The latter are generally accepted (Echtner and Ritchie, 1993; Padgett and Allen, 1997; Tapachai and Waryszak, 2000) to be based on attributes functional consequences or expected benefits and the psychological characteristics that consumers associate with a specific destination or tourism service. As a consequence, projected images influence destination positioning and ultimately the tourist’s buying behaviour. Tourism destinations use promotion and marketing communication strategy to influence destination image (Beerli and Martín, 2004; Fridgen 1984; Gartner 1993). Narratives and visuals, for example, are used to create meaning in the market, deploying media and information and communication technology as enablers (Magala 2001). Destinations can influence image formation indirectly through secondary place interactions with consumers that is “vicarious experiences” (Kim and Richardson 2003). These are facilitated by intermediaries and produced imagination in, for instance, the media, literature, arts, and popular culture (e.g., motion pictures, TV shows, or music) (Cohen-Hattab and Kerber, 2004). Fairweather and Swaffield (2002) found that “destination image also sets up criteria for negative evaluation. The promotional image is largely skewed towards a set of favourable experiences. When visitors encounter settings or experiences that differ markedly from their expectations, their evaluations can be very negative.”
In the modern time branding, positioning is becoming so much crucial for any marketing activity especially in the case of tourism marketing it is so important compare to the product marketing because tourism is so dynamic in nature. The image of a destination is depending how correctly it is branded and positioned within the mind of the target group. The positioning and the branding of tourism destination creates the attractiveness and also help in increasing the pull factor in positioning and branding of the tourism destination depends on promotional activities. It helps in projecting the image in front of the target group with proper media. Promotion helps in providing the in-depth information about the destination properly it works as a tool of motivating prospective tourist in selecting a tourism destination.

6.9. A MODEL OF DESTINATION IMAGE FORMULATION

These determinants help shape the TDI as an attitudinal construct that comprises of a consumers mental understanding of knowledge, feelings and global impression of a destination. The image has a perceptual/cognitive as well as an effective element which generate response to create an overall image of the destination as shown in the figure. Baloglu and Mc Cleary (1999) provided a framework to analyse TDI, which is conditioned by two key elements.

- Stimulus Factors (external stimuli, physical objects, personal experience)
- Personal Factors (Social and Psychological characteristics of the consumer)

As a result, three determinants of TDI were identified by Baloglu and Mc Cleary (1999)

- Tourism motivation
- Socio demographic factors
- Information sources

The cognitive image is analogous to behaviour since it is the intent or action component. Intent refers to the likelihood of brand purchase (Howard & Sheth 1969). Conation may be considered as the likelihood of visiting a destination within a given time period. Woodside & Sherrell (1977) found intent to visit was higher for
destinations in the evoked set, as did Thompson & Cooper (1979) and Pike (2002). The Figure highlights how the cognition/affect/conation relationships apply in decision making. The process is similar to the AIDA model used by advertisers, where the aim is to guide a consumer through the stages of awareness, interest, desire and action.

**Figure 6.2: Cognition/affect/conation**

| Need awareness | Develop alternatives (Cognition) | Evaluate alternatives (Affect) | Choice (Conation) |

Source: Adapted from Myers (1992)

### 6.10. ENHANCING INDIA'S COMPETITIVENESS AS A TOURIST DESTINATION

There are some ways for enhancing the competitiveness of India as Tourist Destination-

- Visa on Arrival- Implement visa on arrival and consider strategies for the fast issuance of visas and permits including electronic visa approaches, and improved processing of arrivals by customs and immigration officials.
- Computerization of the system of issue of visas by Embassies or High Commissions.
- Air capacity available to India is woefully short during peak travel months ranging from October to March and especially from main tourism originating destinations like North America, Western Europe and South East Asia. Additional seat capacity from the major destinations would provide a major impetus to tourism and economic development. An analysis by Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) reveals that the benefits of the additional seat capacity whether provided by the national carrier or any other international carrier would have a significant benefit for national economy.
• Improve the standard of facilities and services at the nations international and major domestic airports by employing professional property management agencies to manage the physical premises on an outsource basis, and speeding up the privatization or leasing of airports.

• There is a need for creation of special tourism police force for deployment at major tourism destinations. This will provide travellers security through a spirit of courtesy and hospitality.

6.11. CUSTOMER SERVICES IN INDIA

The wind of rapid change has been blowing in the tourism arena over the last few years. Therefore, in the tourism industry, the changing environment is set for a spectacular transformation. There has been a radical shift in the market power from service providers to their customers. Effectiveness and efficiency became the buzzword of the success of tour operation particularly in respect of providing services to the travellers. Service is an invisible thing that is indispensable from the person who extends it. An efficient or effective service is one which is extended appropriately by identifying and understanding the needs of the individual customer from time to time. Customer service is a dynamic interactive process, which needs continuous improvement. With the advancement of information technology and communication system, the whole world has been reduced to a global village. The customers at the present juncture are well exposed to Internet and Satellite, TV and so on. They are aware of the fact of the service level available around the world and thus expect the best from their providers. Customer service is not only a critical function but is also becoming a key posture for the business. It is the next most important business strategy. Improved customer service will definitely increase the profitability. Various earlier studies, Gronroos Lewis and Booms, suggested that service quality should stem from the point of the seller’ actual service performance to meet customer expectations. A broad-based study conducted by Parasuraman et al. reinforced the idea of service quality as a function of the customer expectation-performance gap. Several authors have also articulated different criteria that the customers use in evaluating the quality of services. Lehtinen included three kinds of quality: Physical quality that is, physical
aspects associated with the service such as equipment and building; corporate quality that is firm's image or reputation in rendering service and interactive quality, which indicates interaction between service personal and customers. Berry et al. suggested four essential approaches of quality of services. It includes transaction surveys, customer complaints, comments and inquiry, total market survey and employee survey. Global competition continues to heat up in markets around the world and emerging technologies continue to empower the customer with more market knowledge and wider choices. As such, the quality of service will increasingly become the pivotal determinant on a sustained basis. Moreover, conventional marketing will increasingly appear as a ticket to enter the competitive arena. In this context Parasuraman opined that superior customer service and marketing excellence are the two sides of the same coin. Competition for customer services is reflected in increased use of customer and telecommunication technology by all to provide improved and faster services with greater emphasis on value added services. The improved technology has led to low cost, instantaneous communications and electronic fund transfers. This has led to the integration of the domestic tourist market with the inter-national tourist markets. Moreover, due to the increase in awareness and literacy ratio the customers of today have become more aware of inherent risks, costs, and returns, associated with various tourism services. To combat with the volatility and risks associated with these tourism markets; a specialized marketing functions has to be developed in the banking sector. Without money and related technology, tourism will not grow. Both are inter dependent services.

6.12. TOURISM AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

IT helps to meet the demands for timely and accurate information by customers and the IT diffusion in the tourism and hospitality industries has recently increased at an unprecedented rate (Connolly & Lee, 2006; Singh & Kasavana, 2005). Researchers have stated that the tourism and hospitality industries have widely adopted information technology (IT) to reduce costs, enhance operational efficiency, and most importantly to improve service quality and customer experience. (Kim & Ham, 2007; Singh, Kim, & Huh, 2006; Winata & Mia, 2005).
Previous research has revealed that more customers now purchase tourism products through websites, and perceive that a website’s image and usability directly affects their purchase intentions (Chiang & Jang, 2006; Law & Cheung, 2006; Law & Hsu, 2006). Various research has claimed that tourists expect to find functional information, education information, and emotional information on heritage websites (Poria & Gvili, 2006), and such websites should therefore be customized in accordance with tourist perceptions of the site in relation to their own heritage (Gvili & Poria, 2005). It is obvious that to maximize the utility of websites as marketing tools, consistency among the website elements is vital (Lee, Cai, & O’Leary, 2006). Kim and Han (2007) examined the perceptions of potential customers of seven online travel agencies through an online survey, and identified low fares and security as being the most important website attributes.

The IT has added the extra power with the tourism marketing which helps in exchanging the information’s in a systematic manner. Research in the field of tourism has become much more impactful with the help of IT. The modern time is the era of internet. Internet has become the blessing for tourism industry which helps in promoting the information to the target market in cost effective manner. The IT has created the platform for better accountability of the tourism initiatives, marketing and customer relationship. With the help of e-marketing tourism as a commodity is getting better market and acceptability. It has also created the platform for direct (B2C i.e. Business to Customer) selling.

### 6.13. ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT FOR TOURISM PROMOTION

The role of the Government in tourism development has been redefined from that of a regulator to that of a catalyst. Apart from marketing and promotion, the focus of tourism development plan is now on integrated development of enabling infrastructure through effective partnership with various stakeholders. Tourism development in India has passed through many phases. The development of tourist facilities was taken up in a planned manner in 1956 coinciding with the Second Five
Year Plan. The approach has evolved from isolated planning of single unit facilities in the Second and Third Five Year Plans. The Sixth Plan marked the beginning of a new era when tourism began to be considered a major instrument for social integration and economic development. However, it was only after the 80’s that tourism activity gained momentum. A National Policy on Tourism was announced in 1982. In 1992, a National Action Plan was prepared and in 1996 the National Strategy for Promotion of Tourism was drafted. In 1997, a draft New Tourism Policy in tune with the economic policies of the Government and the trends in tourism development was published for public debate. The draft policy is now under revision. The proposed policy recognizes the roles of Central and State Governments, Public Sector Undertakings and the Private Sector in the development of tourism.

The need for involvement of Panchayati Raj institutions, local bodies, nongovernmental organizations and the local youth in the creation of tourism facilities has also been recognized.

As per the working strategy for the 12th Five Year Plan, the Ministry of Tourism has adopted a pro-poor tourism approach which could contribute significantly to poverty reduction. More than half of Tourism Ministry’s Plan budget is channelized for funding the development of destinations, circuits, mega projects as also for rural tourism infrastructure projects. The Ministry also ensured that 10 per cent and 2.5 per cent of its total Annual Plan (2012-13) outlay went to the tourism projects in the North-Eastern region and the tribal areas respectively.

The other major development that took place where the setting up of the India Tourism Development Corporation in 1966 to promote India as a tourist destination and the Tourism Finance Corporation in 1989 to finance tourism projects. Altogether, 21 Government-run Hotel Management and Catering Technology Institutes and 14 Food Craft Institutes were also established for imparting specialized training in hotel and catering.
6.14. ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN TOURISM PROMOTION IN WEST BENGAL

West Bengal Tourism comprises of Tourism Department, Government of West Bengal to formulate policies and implement programmes for the development of tourism in the state. To show case rural life, art, culture and heritage of rural locations in villages and to benefit the local community economically and socially, the West Bengal tourism has decided to develop and promote rural tourism. Some Tourism Schemes have been formulated for focusing on developing tourism related infrastructure that would help promote tourism. Later this was complemented in collaboration with UNDP and Ministry of Tourism, Government of India for Endogenous Rural Tourism as a pilot project. The Government of India extends the scheme of Capacity Building for Service Providers (CBSP) to the rural sites. West Bengal tourism has identified rural tourism areas for development and they have been developed it in a phased manner. The government of West Bengal has taken steps to strengthen the existing infrastructure at the tourist destinations and to identify the areas of tourist importance and to develop them with adequate infrastructure for the benefit of tourists. The strategies for tourism promotion in West Bengal are as follows-

- Promotion and development of places of local importance and identifying new tourism potential for development.
- Providing facilities for recreation and adventure sports at select tourist places.
- Organizing fairs and festivals in and outside West Bengal.
- To appoint marketing agents inside and outside the country effective promotion of tourism.
- To produce quality guides.

Tourism promotion also generates employment in urban as well as rural areas. It may arrest the large scale migration of rural mass to urban centres. The Government of West Bengal has taken steps to strengthen the existing infrastructure at the tourist destinations and to identify the areas of tourist importance and to develop them with adequate infrastructure. The villages in West Bengal are a treasure of unadulterated culture, fine arts, martial arts, handicrafts, herbal cures etc. The tourist mostly foreigners
show keen interest in watching the day-to-day activities of Indian villages including West Bengal.

**Policy Oriented Approach**

In India, rural tourism as a concept was envisaged in the National Tourism Policy 2002. A Rural Tourism scheme was formulated in 2002 focusing on developing tourism related infrastructure that would help to promote rural tourism. This was later supplemented and complemented by a pilot project called Endogenous Tourism Project (ETP) in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) by building and strengthening livelihoods linked with local communities.

**6.15. INITIATIVES BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR TOURISM PROMOTION**

A special initiative was launched in 2009-10 for the creation of employable skills among youth belonging to economically weaker sections of the society in the age group of 18-25 years (upper age limit raised to 28 years in November, 2010) with the basic objective to reduce the skill gap affecting the hospitality and tourism sector and to ensure the spread of economic benefit of tourism to the poor. The programme offers short duration courses of 6 to 8 weeks which are fully funded by the Ministry of Tourism. Initially covering two courses namely, (i) food and beverage service; and (ii) food production, courses in Housekeeping, and Utility. Bakery and Patisserie were added subsequently. With the growing acceptability of the initiative more trades or training areas were added like to bring up drivers, golf caddies, stone mason, security guards and tourist facilitators etc. For the year 2012-13, 21,175 persons have been trained under the initiative up to 31st January 2013.

**Visa on Arrival (VOA)**

Considering the importance of Visa facilities in enhancing tourist inflow, the facility of Long Term Tourist Visas of five years duration with multiple entries, carrying a stipulation of 90 days for each visit, has been introduced on a pilot basis for the nationals of the 18 selected countries. The findings of an evaluation study conducted by this Ministry have reinforced the belief that the presence of the facility of “Visa on
**Arrival** (VoA) significantly influences the tourists travel plans to any country. During 2012, a total number of 16,084 VoAs (Visa on Arrival) were issued as compared to 12,761 VoAs during the corresponding period of 2011, thereby showing a growth of 26 per cent. Efforts are on to extend the VoA facility for the nationals of more countries.

**Publicity and Marketing Strategy**

As part of its domestic and global publicity and marketing strategy to promote tourism and create social awareness through the print and electronic media, the Ministry of Tourism launched campaigns on **Clean India, Atithi Devo Bhava and Hunar Se Rozgaar** through radio channels. Campaigns highlighting the tourism potential of North-East and J and K were also carried out through Doordarshan. Campaigns were also taken up for **“Incredible India”** branding on TV during 2nd Formula Grand Prix and London Olympics, 2012, during the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) held in Goa, and during the International India Film Academy (IIFA) Awards 2012 in Singapore. The Ministry had participated in major international Travel Fairs and Exhibitions in important tourist generating markets the world over, as well as in emerging and potential markets, to showcase and promote the tourism products of the country. These included Arabian Travel Market (ATM) in Dubai, International Trade Business (ITB-Asia) in Singapore, World Travel Market (WTM) in London, International Meetings Exhibitions (IMEX) in Frankfurt, International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR) in Madrid and the like. To showcase and project the Buddhist Heritage of India, an International Buddhist Conclave was organized by the Ministry of Tourism in Varanasi in September 2012 and attended by 132 international delegates from around 30 countries. The delegates were taken for a visit to Sarnath and Bodh Gaya. For the first time, an International Tourism Mart was held at Guwahati in January, 2013 to showcase the largely untapped tourism potential of the north-Eastern region in the domestic and international markets. There are 79 International Buyers and media delegates from 23 countries and hundreds of tour operators from different parts of India participated in the Mart and engaged in one-to-one meetings with sellers from the North East Region and West Bengal. The international delegates were taken on Familiarization Tours of the North Eastern Region.