ABSTRACT

Tourism is essentially a twentieth century phenomenon. In early times indeed merchants, missionaries, and explorers travelled long distance by land and sea in pursuit of their vocations and missions. But today, travelling designated as tourism is undertaken by literate masses for acquiring knowledge of how others live and what the different countries look like. It is an exciting hobby. Ours is not a monotonous globe. The natural and geographical, the political, economic and cultural variances are immense. It is this wide and fascinating canvas that attracts the tourists to make their acquaintance of other parts of the world and its native inhabitants. It is undertaken mainly out of curiosity, enhancing ones knowledge and experience and thereby deriving satisfaction and joy. Business could also be combined with it, if so required.

Tourism is essentially the temporary movement of people for holiday to destinations outside their normal place of residence or work. It differs from migration, which is a permanent shift of residence.

Strictly speaking the conventional type of pilgrimage (religious) does not qualify to be called tourism but in India the distinction is being overlooked, because of its scale and also because Indian tourists often include religious places and festivals in their itinerary. However, the Indian tourist industry
(private sector) caters to the foreign and domestic tourism and not the pilgrims who come within the purview of the public sector.

It may also be underlined that to-day tourism has assumed a global character. Domestic tourism, that is within the confines of the home country, is being speedily over shadowed by international (global) tourism. This is particularly so in the case of foreign tourists. However, Indian tourists have more recently tended to embark on global tourism, which is possible only in the case of the very rich. Or, when business trips abroad also take in 'sight seeing' in the visited country or countries. Global tourism has picked up because of present day travel facilities, particularly by air.

Thus, tourism includes both domestic and international (foreign) tourism. Like wise, tourists include both domestic and foreign tourists. The Indian tourism industry caters to both domestic and foreign tourism but it is the foreign tourist, who receives more particular attention for obvious reasons. The tide of foreign tourists the world over is rapidly rising and the Orient is their main venue. India wants to take advantage of the rising tide and is infact eager to increase its share of the global tourist traffic. It is both economically rewarding and stimulates a national pride because of our immense quality tourism potential. Uttar Pradesh stands out as a tourist's paradise.

Global tourism tends to bring people resident in different countries and climes, far and near, together to share their
respective gifts of nature, flora and fauna, historic monuments, architecture, arts and crafts, varied customs and cultures, festivals, novel delectable cuisine and styles of living. While the differences are noticed, what amazes the foreign tourists is how much there is also common between different linguistic, racial, religious, cultural groups and in respect of economic and political aspirations. This tends to make one feel that despite variations in outward expression the underlying sentiments are virtually the same. Mankind is essentially one human race and the world a big 'Global Village'. To day’s tourist is not a mere globe trotter. He is a potential World Citizen in the making.

Frankly speaking, India’s sole interest in promoting tourism does not arise from an emotional pride in presenting to the foreign tourist a ‘show piece’. This is incidental. The principal motive is earning much valued foreign exchange. Tourism today is a major source of foreign exchange almost outstripping the traditional sources of precious stones and jewellery and ready made clothes.

While this may be true. It is not a matter of mere wishful thinking. India has taken to promoting tourism seriously both at the centres and state levels. The initiative was obviously taken by the centre. The Central ministers are actively participating in promoting tourism to the extent of their respective compulsive involvement, the stress being on widespread publicity to attract foreign tourists and minimizing bureaucratic routine procedures and formalities on their arrival. One must not fail to mention
the specific role of the Archaeological Survey of India (as also State Archaeological Departments) in ensuring proper maintenance and professional site management of important tourist attractions. This apart, the Central Government is simultaneously playing an active role in providing infrastructure, such as adequate and appropriate accommodation and travel facilities particularly by rail and air. While the role of the Centre is crucial, the main responsibility in tourism promotion falls on the shoulders of the state governments. Here we are concerned with the specific role played by the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Before we embark on the task of detailing and critically evaluating the role of tourism promotion in Uttar Pradesh, attention may be drawn to a matter of all India interest. There is apparently considerable international competition, particularly amongst Asian countries, in promoting tourism and attracting progressively more foreign tourists. The point to note is that the outlays set aside for tourism promotion is relatively larger in the case of several Far East Third World countries compared to India and what is even more striking is that the cost of various services extended to foreign tourists is also relatively cheaper. These aspects need to be taken seriously.

When a foreign tourist contemplates a visit to the East he or she invariably dreams of seeing the incomparable Taj Mahal, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. The Taj Mahal happens to be located at Agra on the bank of the river Yamuna in India’s
Uttar Pradesh. But Uttar Pradesh has many tourist attractions besides the Taj Mahal.

The majestic Himalayas in the north, the unique multi-river system covering the whole of the Gangetic plane from west to east. The rich and abundant flora and fauna, the historical architectural mausoleums and monuments, and the innumerable holy places. Uttar Pradesh is the birth place of age old Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. It is also the venue of the famous Hindu mythologies, the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Uttar Pradesh continues to present till this day its ancient spectacular religious rituals, fairs and festivals. It is the centre of classical music and dance. It was also the adopted home of the Great Moghul rulers and their sophisticated culture which still survives. Uttar Pradesh is a virtual paradise for eco tourism and adventure tourism because of its natural assets.

From the tourist point of view Uttar Pradesh has been divided into nine tourism Circuits, each with its own characteristic features (described in detail in chapter 4 and select features in Chapter 5).

The approach to tourism promotion in Uttar Pradesh is highly commendable and appropriate. Publicity has been given the highest initial priority, as also a sustained one. This has been simultaneously followed up by duly pruning up of existing centres of tourist interest and also providing new attractions. Also, special programmes (Mahotsavas) have been devised and put in to effect to woo tourists in anticipation of
their possible predilections and also exposing them to new vistas. Priority attention has been given to the provision of all essential infrastructural facilities encompassing hotel accommodation to suit all pockets and road, rail, river and air travel facilities in conjunction with the Central Government. Adequate measures have also been taken for the safety and protection against exploitation of tourists, specially foreigners. While the tourist programmes are largely on conventional lines attention may also be drawn to Uttar Pradesh’s innovative approach as evident from the novel ‘Visit Your Roots’ Scheme described at the end of chapter 3.

The private sector has been appropriately roped in for the promotion of tourism in the state and assumes active participation in providing the required infrastructure and assuming the responsibility of organizing guided tours, while the state offers, inter alia, ‘tourist packages’ and specially designed and organized various Mahotsavas referred to in Chapter 5.

Uttar Pradesh’s official policy was consistent with that of the Central Government which had declared tourism as an Industry and sought the cooperation of the private sector, which was readily forthcoming. Various tax concessions had been announced to make the private ventures more viable. Financial assistance was also extended to the private sector. In turn, central financial assistance has been accorded to the state, as in the case of the other states.
Uttar Pradesh had also bagged the largest number of foreign tourists visiting India. Its outlay on tourism has also been the highest. Its diverse targets for the future are indeed ambitious and inspiring and one would wish Uttar Pradesh every success in achieving them.

For its appropriate approach and outstanding achievements, it is no surprise that Uttar Pradesh had been, as early as 1997-1998, bestowed the 'Best Performing Tourism State Award'.

Success in diverse directions has indeed been achieved in Uttar Pradesh. Nevertheless, there remains much to be achieved considering the expected rise in the inflow of foreign tourists in particular. This is undoubtedly achievable in view of Uttar Pradesh’s policy approach, its natural and historical potential and the performance so far. To reach the pinnacle will take time, money and dedication. The potential is there for sure and the state does not lack the enthusiasm or the knowhow. The manner in which tourism programmes are being implemented it inspires optimism. Nevertheless, over confidence is not justified because there remains much to be achieved to provide the necessary infrastructure to meet the anticipated needs of the expected growing inflow of foreign tourists. Domestic tourism may also pick up.

To conclude, there are many features of the Indian panorama that will greatly impress the foreign visitor or tourist but there are also features that may shock him, for example,
defecating in public, religious intolerance accompanied by barbaric violence and mass poverty.

Attention has already been drawn to the shortcomings of our tourist promotion programmes in chapter 5. To recall it needs to be emphasised that compared to our sister nations in East Asia, our outlays on tourism is significantly less. Outlays have to be stepped up to provide the anticipated arrival of foreign tourist in larger numbers, as well as the likely increase of domestic tourists. The infrastructure programmes (residence, that is, rooms and other associated facilities and transport) are needed to be stepped up and expedited. The quality of the services have also to be improved speedily to keep up with international standards.

Another major factor to be kept well in mind is that the services offered to tourist by East Asia Countries is much cheaper than what prevails here. This is noteworthy because the quality of service offered by them is also superior.

These aspects are to be borne in mind not only by the Uttar Pradesh Government but by all Indian States and the Central Government.

Expansion of essential facilities and of high quality conforming to international standards and at comparatively cheaper rates will enable us to successfully compete against other nations in attracting more tourists and increasing our world share of tourism. At the same time, enhancing foreign exchange earnings and employment opportunities.
Chapter 5 Identifies the problems of tourism in Uttar Pradesh. This chapter is based on the results of the survey conducted with regard to:

(a) Problems and difficulties faced by the tourism in Uttar Pradesh such as theft, sanitation, lack of water supply facilities high coolies rates, parking problems, lack of local transport, lack of lifts and ropeways and enbehaviour of shopkeepers lack of professionalism, unhygienic condition, lack of easily accessible information, lack of safety, poor visitor experience, restrictive air transport policy, multiplicity of taxes and the low priority accorded to tourism;

(b) The problems of tourism agencies/department such as lack of qualified trained staff, dissatisfaction among emloyees, political appointment of chairman etc;

(c) Difficulties of the local people due to tourism such as high price level during tourism season, high price level during tourist season, high cost of land, lack of training courses to people etc., and

(d) Problems of general nature of tourism such as lack of finance and lack of transportation facilities etc.
Suggestions

The problems identified by the study can be overcome through concerted effort of the Central and State Governments. A number of suggestions have been offered in the last chapter and a few of them being important are noteworthy hereto below.

1. The functioning of Uttar Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation though satisfactory to a great extent, yet it needs improvement in respect of the following:

   (a) The members of the Board of Directors, should have relevant qualification and experience in the field of business/tourism management, etc.

   (b) Uttar Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation should exercise proper control on the operating costs so that the losses be reduced and additional profits could be utilized to meet the long term demands of the undertaking.

   (c) The Uttar Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation publicity wing which publishes tourism material and advertisement in various newspapers and periodicals should be strengthened in active cooperation with the Department of Tourism.

   (d) Professional approach should be introduced while providing the training to its employees.
Professionalists should be asked to impart training to the employees in different fields and training programmes should be properly reviewed from time to time, and

(e) Seminars and refresher courses should be conducted for Uttar Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation employees at frequent intervals giving them up-to-date knowledge with regard to professional ethics of newly emerging mass tourism.

2. The facilitation services in the country are quite inadequate. The poor airport facilities are a constraint in the development of tourism. The airport infrastructure services need to be improved and modernized. The Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs can consider liberalisation of the system for issue of visa/permit streamlining the process of migration/customs clearance. Prevention of touting and misguiding of tourists are also essential.

3. A multiplicity of taxes exists in the tourism sector. The quantum of taxes also varies from place to place. This creates hurdle in packaging of the tourism product and is also irksome to the tourists; it makes the product expensive as well. Uniformity in taxes on tourist transport should be adopted to facilitate free flow of tourist traffic across the State borders.
4. To make effective use of the resources for overseas publicity, the application of information technology needs to be promoted in the sector. It may be advantageous to strengthen the Government of India Tourist Offices overseas and in addition promote publicity through the Internet and television.

5. In spite of the significant role of tourism in employment generation and socio-economic development in the country, tourism has not attracted the desired priority. It is necessary to focus attention on the potential role of tourism as an effective instrument of employment generation, particularly in backward areas.

6. Tourism organizations all over the world are constantly trying to persuade Governments to increase outlays money on tourism. China spends about 3.8 percent of its budget, Malaysia 5.1 percent, Singapore 9.1 percent and Nepal 12 percent but in the case of India, according to WTTC, it is only about 0.9 percent and according to the Planning Commissions it is merely 0.1 percent. In any case the Government of India should enhance its budget allocation for tourism development.

7. Local people in the rural areas should be encouraged to participate in tourism related projects, which may preferably be formulated by the tourist official in consultation with locals and NGOs.
8. While the image of India in the knowledgeable circles is adequate but we have to build an international communication to market India as a safe tourist destination to counter adverse publicity.

9. We also need to create a better infrastructure in terms of domestic flights, road transport, railway transport availabilities and maintain its quality all over the country. For example the Railway tracks are needed from Harpalpur and Satna via Mahoba to connect Varanasi with Khajuraho and for Jhansi Agra-Delhi as the roads are not motorable to drive from Agra to Jhansi- Khajuraho; entrance fees for the monuments must be reduced by at least 50% to make it more attractive for tourists. Also the LTC for the Government employees should be reintroduced.

In the end, it may be emphasised that tourism is not only an industry, foreign exchange earner, but it also takes the massage of our seers, the characters of our culture and the hospitality of our people to different countries the world over.