

## **ROLE OF TOURISM IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA**

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**Abstract:**

*From time immemorial it is the inherent desire of man to see the unseen and to know the known. We have seen in History that foreign travelers namely Megasthenes Fa-Hien, Hiuen-T-Sang etc. made their extensive tour on our country which has been rich in natural beauties, architectural relics, snow covered mountains that allure thousands and thousands of people to make their extensive tour to this country of India. India is an ancient country. Historical monuments, archaeological wealth and relics are spread all over the country. Therefore, people of various countries come to India every year to see innumerable lovely spots, historic sites and places of pilgrimage. Tourism has now been accepted as an industry like all other industries that earn foreign money from the touring people of the world. Tourism plays an important role in Indian Economy. The Central and State Governments acknowledges the importance of tourism industry. It is no doubt a fact, that in ancient time travelling was limited to some wealthy classes of people. But at present with the improvement of transport and communication system – tourism has been made very much attractive all over the country. Tourism helps the visitors to get acquainted with the culture, customs and conventions, language and mode of living of the local people. The economic importance of tourism in India can by no means be underestimated. It benefits the people living in and around tourist centers financially. Fortunately for India, the Ministry of Tourism of the Central Government and the departments of Tourism of the State Governments are jointly trying to make all possible attempts to attract the tourists to our country. Tourist hotels, tourist lodges, dormitories and rest houses maintained by Government helps the local economy. The Natural Tourism Board and the Tourism Finance Corporation of India have been working in full swing to bring about the improvement of tourist centers in India.*

*Key words: Tourism, economic development, pilgrimage.*

Tourism refer to the trips that involve travelling of people outside the place of their residence or work for leisure, pleasure, vacation, business, personal, or other purposes. Tourism is an important source of income for many countries. Nowadays, it is considered an industry. Tourism is important for the growth and development of a developing country like India. The concept of tourism has become a new coinage in the field of travelling. Few years back travelling was a term which men used in case of tour. People now are more habituated with the concept of 'tourism' and all want to know the unknown historic sites and also to see the unseen. In India, from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari there are so many lovely spots, historic sites places of pilgrimages, various temples and Musjids spread over the country. In ancient times, Uttaranchal was the land of God. Badrinath, Kedarnath, Amarnath, Gangotri, and Hemkund- all surrounded by snow-capped peaks attract pious souls and tourists alike. The beautiful places like Simla, Nainital and Ranikhet with snow-clad ranges attract the tourists of India and abroad. Trips to Puri, to Kanyakumari, the southernmost tip of land in India, to Chennai, Mumbai and Goa are equally excellent. Tajmahal of Agra, the Red-Fort of Delhi, the ruins of Nalanda, cave-temples of Ajanta and Ellora, shrines of Mathura, Somnath and Benaras charm the tourists. Kashmir and Shillong are also great places in the tourist Map.

Tourism helps the visitors get acquainted with the culture, customs, language and way of life of the local people. The modern life of Indian people are very complex. Tour and holidays brings the much-needed relaxation to our mind, body and soul. It refreshes our body and gives back our fitness. The spirit of happiness becomes visible on our beaming faces. Tourism is flourishing as an industry. The economy of many tourist places depends upon tourism. Presently, tourism industry is a big source of income of foreign money. "Spiritual Tourism" is the new aspect in the concept of tourism. It is more about visiting hearts and minds of intellectuals and rich civilizations than just seeing places and their physical dimensions. Therefore, the Tourism is a force and it can guide us in the period of unrest.

Now-a-days, tourism is the flourishing industry. The advantages of tourism includes employment opportunity, growth of service sector, foreign exchange earnings, opportunity for recreation, economic growth, cultural exchange, better international relations, enjoyment, better health and wellness. Tourism provides employment opportunity for local people. Tourism industry is growing very rapidly in India employing millions of people. Services sector engaged in tourism sector get the most out of tourism sector. A large number of businesses engaged in service sector such as airlines, hotel, surface transportation, etc. grows with the growth of tourism industry. Many tourist destinations attract a good number of foreign tourists. This helps the country earn foreign exchange. Travel based recreation provides relief from the monotony of daily routine. A change in place and climate helps a traveler to recharge his mind, body and spirit.

Tourism helps in the development of economy of a country. It helps in the overall GDP development of a country. It helps the local people to earn their livelihood. The tourists spend lavishly during vacation. The local people engaged in assisting the tourists earn a good income. It helps the local people to get in touch with the people and country. It also helps building international relations. Tourism gives opportunity to people of various cultures to assimilate together. People belonging to various cultures meet together and understand each other. This gives them an opportunity to build respect for each other. Hence, it fosters cultural harmony. Many people visit other places for the purpose of getting treatment for diseases, improving health and prevent diseases. This is called Medical and health tourism. Wellness tourism aim at achieving complete mental, psychological and physical well-being. There are many tourism destinations offering yoga, aerobics, and other therapies for improving health and wellness. People travel for fun and enjoyment. The life of modern people is hectic and are too busy in their professional life. There is immense pressure even on children. Hence, such people plan for a holiday trip to spend quality time with their families.

**Conclusion:**

Though there are many advantages ,tourism includes increased expenditure, time-consuming, environmental hazards, loss of architecture and ecological balance, increase in waste products, damage to wild-life, and disruption in socio-economic and cultural setup. As a result of indiscriminate construction of high-rise buildings and infrastructure facilities, the provision of water supply and waste disposal facilities may get disrupted. Famous tourist spots attract an inflow of residing population. This may lead to an increase in demand for residential houses, roads, and food for permanent population. Under such situation, an increase in tourist activities beyond certain level may adversely affect the

economy of the state. Due immense changes, pollution, and dirt, the landscape may lose its scenic beauty. These ill effects can be reduced by promoting tourism with care. Once the natural beauty and human-made beauties are lost, tourism loses its charm and attraction and will collapse. The benefits of tourism will stay only if due care is taken for the longevity and survival of natural environment. So, today environment friendly or green tourism are being introduced by tourism industries. Every care should be taken to avoid ecological imbalance and health hazards. Stability of nation is necessary for development of tourism industry. India can reap benefits from this industry, can add to own coiffure, earn foreign money if tourists are attracted to Buddhist stupas, Hindu temples, Mughal, Rajput palaces, forts, and victory towers, rock-cut caves, elaborately laid gardens. Indian tourism is only a small portion of the world tourism industry. So, we must use all potentialities by proper planning, financing acquiring experience and marketing to develop our country economically.

**The opportunities for those with a passion for travel and tourism are practically endless – tourism is not only a huge growth market it's a worldwide phenomenon.**