



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Tourism In Arunachal Pradesh: Problems And Prospects

Dr. Modang Reena

Assistant Professor, Deptt. of Geography
Wangcha Rajkumar Govt College Deomali

Abstract

Tourism is an ever-expanding service industry with latent vast growth potential and has therefore become one of the crucial concerns of not only the nation but also of international community as a whole. It is being perceived as an important instrument of economic development. Arunachal Pradesh is blessed with magnificent and inimitable tourism resource that can be capitalized upon profitably to make it a big in tourism sector. Tourism as an industry in the state must be welcomed as a golden opportunity to promote and develop tourism on sustainable lines.

Keywords: Tourism, Potential, Infrastructure, Prospects.

Introduction:

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. It is a multidimensional activity with versatile positive socio-economic impact. The economic impact of tourism is manifold due to its high multiplier effect. It has the capacity to robust economic growth by activating forward and backward linkages across the sector in the economy, for the economies basking on tourism. It has proved to be a major engine for inclusive growth and a major source of foreign exchange earnings. It solves the pressing twin socio-economic problems of the unemployment and poverty by offering multifarious opportunities of employment and income generation. It contributes to establish global harmony and peace by enhancing mutual understanding, tolerance and awareness among the people further. Being smokeless the industry has minimal effect on the fragile environment.

Arunachal Pradesh the largest state in terms of geographical area (83,743 sq km) in North East India provides a large potential in terms of Tourism development by virtue of its unparalleled serene beauty of mountainous landscape, lush greenery with rich biodiversity and a unique mosaic of indigenous cultural system.

Arunachal Pradesh cannot afford to miss the golden opportunity of gaining from its latent tourism sector. Tourism can be a major economic game changer for a revenue strapped state like AP. The state recently added

yet another feather on its tourism cap, when it was awarded 'The Best Emerging Green Tourist Destination' on 15th Nov. 2019 by the Travel and Leisure magazines. Therefore, one can aptly say what art is to Arab countries, tourism can be to Arunachal Pradesh.

As of now, Tourism in AP is in its initial stage. The state has just begun to put sincere effort to capitalize on its core tourism assets and make it big as a global tourism brand in near future.

Objective of the study:

1. To highlight the prospect and challenges of Tourism industry in AP by analyzing its strength, weakness, opportunities and threats.
2. To suggest measures for the growth of Tourism industry in AP.

Methodology:

The study is analytical as well as descriptive in nature. The strength, weakness, opportunities and threat (SWOT) analysis is undertaken based on primary and secondary data. The findings are discussed in the light of published literature:

Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threat (SWOT) analysis of Tourism in AP:

Prospects

The following are the tangible and intangible factors which stands as the state strength in terms of potential tourist destination

1. Scenic Beauty and Natural Landscape: Arunachal Pradesh is a treasure house of natural beauty which consist of picturesque landscape, large forest areas with numerous and beautiful mountain peak. Hills, valleys, rivers, waterfall, hot springs etc. The nature has blessed state with all its mesmerizing beauty and freshness. The snow-capped mountain and glacier in the high altitudes of AP are always viewed with great interest. Tawang, Menchuka, Bomdila, Dirang and Ziro are some of the promising hill stations in AP, which tends to attract lot of tourists from other places of India. Nowadays, Anjaw district is also emerging as a potential tourist destination. Tourist are enthusiastic to visit the scenic beauty of the district and the very famous Dong village from where one can experience the first sunrise of India.

2. Adventure Tourism: Arunachal Pradesh offers many adventure activities and can be a perfect adventure tourism destination. It has the perfect natural treasure which can be capitalized to promote adventure tourism. The following two broad categories of adventure tourism can be promoted in the region.

3. River based adventure tourism: The rivers like Siang, Subansiri, Lohit etc. are very fast flowing river which offer challenges and adventure to the tourist. Adventure sports activities such as white-water rafting, angling, river crossing, kayaking etc. can be gainfully undertaken.

4. Terrain based adventure Tourism: Arunachal Pradesh possess many perfect landscapes for terrain adventure tourism. Mountaineering, sky diving, rafting, skiing, mountain car racing, rowing, paragliding, roping etc activities can be developed.

5. Religious/pilgrimage Tourism: Arunachal Pradesh has many important sites for religious and pilgrimage tourism. Tawang is considered as the major Buddhist pilgrimage destination not only in the state but also in the entire North India. Asia's oldest and second largest Buddhist monastery Ganden Namgyal Lhatse Gompa popularly known as Tawang Monastery. Some prominent names of Hindu pilgrimage sites in AP are Parashuram Kund in Lohit district. Malinithan in Lower Siang district. Akashi Ganga in West Siang which draws a large number of pilgrimage tourist. These religious and spiritual sites can offer the perfect and tranquil atmosphere for a spiritually rejuvenating treat to religious visitors.

6. Unique and rich Cultural base: Arunachal Pradesh is a home of 26 major tribe and 110 sub-tribe and it happens to be the largest state in the North East. Each tribe have their own culture and tradition. The time tested rich cultural heritage of the tribes can offer a strong base for the growth of cultural tourism. The ethnic festivals, rituals, folk dance & songs, ethnic cuisine and many other ethnic cultural aspects of the different tribe can offer as never before experienced tourism product.

Problems:

The following are the problems/weakness which act as a bottleneck in the process of tourism growth in the state.

1. Late starter: The state is a late starter in Tourism sector. It accorded industrial status to tourism very late. Although, the independent Tourism department was established in the year 1995 but the modern and exclusive state specific tourism policy could be formulated only in the year 2003.

2. Inconclusive and outdated Tourism policy: The maiden tourism policy is inconclusive and lack a detail policy framework for the vast tourism sector of the state. The policy lacks clear cut policies and plans regarding tourism growth in the state. Moreover, it is outmoded to cater to the pressing demand of the ever-changing tourism sector.

3. Insurgency problems in Tirap Changlang and Longding districts of AP has created panic situation among the tourist which caused ripple effect in the tourist inflow. This is reason tourism development is almost negligible in these districts.

4. Non-Monetization of Tourism product: Most of the district tourism resource especially natural scenic attraction and cultural attraction are not yet monetized at all. This has resulted in the loss of opportunity for revenue generation especially by the local communities.

5. Inner Line Permit: Tourist has to obtain Inner Line Permit (ILP) in order to enter AP because the state comes under protected/restricted area which sometimes discourage tourist to come to the state.

6. Ancillary Services: Ancillary activities include banking and insurance, hospital, police security, electricity, drinking water facilities etc. Some of the tourist destinations are having lack of these services which lead to the reluctance of the enthusiast tourist to visit these places. Govt and public sector agencies must initiate these services so that the tourist inflow is increased.

Conclusion:

Arunachal Pradesh, inspite of having potential to grow as the most favoured tourist destination in India suffers from lots of problems, tourist inflow in the state has been growing rapidly. The state govt has to develop transport and communication infrastructure to promote tourism because tourism as an economic activity improve the economic growth of the state by generating additional income and employment for local people of the state. The state govt has to upgrade hill station and places which are regularly visited by the tourist, meticulously planning should be worked out to take full advantage of the region's tourist potential. There should be well coordinated effort on the part of the stakeholder, led by the government both at the district and state level by striking the optimal public private partnership (PPP) in the sector. In fact, tourism could be the main revenue generating economic activity in the district. It could induce economic growth by offering a viable and dynamic entrepreneurial base.

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