



TOURISM IN ANDHRA PRADESH WITH SPECIAL REFERENCES TO CHITTOOR DISTRICT

Dr.R.Jyothi

Assistant Director-cum Lecturer, Department of History, D.D.E, S.V. University, Tirupati.

Abstract

Tourism is the second largest foreign exchange earner in India. The tourism industry employs a large number of people, both skilled and unskilled. Hostels, travel agencies, transport including airlines benefit a lot from this industry. Tourism promotes national integration and international understanding. It generates foreign exchange. It promotes cultural activities. Tourism also promotes the traditional handicrafts sector. The tourist gets an insight into the rich and diverse cultural heritage of India. India has a composite culture. There is a harmonious blend of art, religion and philosophy. Though India has been subjected to a serious of invasions, she has retained her originality even after absorbing the best of external influences. Religions like Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism etc. has co-existed in India. India has fascinated people from all over the world with her secularism and her culture. In and around Chittoor, you will find many places that represent the rich culture and tradition of the place. Chittoor not only has historic association, it has to offer some of the most picturesque landscapes in Andhra Pradesh. The richest temple in the world is located in Chittoor district. Chittoor has a perfect blend of various elements to satisfy spiritual, religious and artistic minded persons and not to leave out those who love history. Here are the most important places to visit in Chittoor that you need to see on you stay here. This paper focus on the tourism in chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh,

Key Words: *Tourism, Cultural, Fascinated, Picturesque, Spiritual, Important Places.*

Introduction

Tourism nowadays has become a global problem. Our country is also not an exception. The terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, Maoists attacks in West Bengal and Bihar, Bodo agitations in north0eastern hill areas greatly affect the tourism in our country. Kashmir is the paradise for domestic and international tourists. The terrorism in this valley not only affects the life of the common people but also the tourism, which is very important for the economy of the sate. Necessary steps should be taken by the state government as well as central government to prevent this menace.

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries of the world. It plays a vital role in the economic development of a country. India is one of the popular tourist destinations in Asia. Bounded by the Himalayan ranges in the north and surrounded, on three sides by water, India offers a wide array of places to see and things to do. The enchanting backwaters, hill stations and landscapes make India a beautiful country. They attract tourists from all over the world.

Tourism is the second largest foreign exchange earner in India. The tourism industry employs a large number of people both skilled and unskilled. Tourism is the largest service industry in India with a contribution of 6.23 percent of the national GDP and 8,78 percent of the total employment in India. Hotels, travel agencies, transport including airlines benefit a lot from this industry. Tourism promotes national integration and international understanding. It generates foreign exchange. It promotes cultural activities.

India has innumerable attractions for tourists. Throughout the country there are numerous beauty and scenic spots. There are very good hotels in big cities and tourist complexes on highways. There are several places where the tourists can enjoy adventure games. There are so many ancient temples, mosques, forts and other historical places in India which the tourists from various countries would like to visit. Our embassies should supply to the people and governments of other countries all the important information regarding objects and places which can attract the tourists. The coming of the tourists to India and their stay here should be made easier, smoother and more comfortable as far as possible.¹

Objectives: The main objective of this paper Tourism in Andhra Pradesh with special reference to Chittoor District.

Methodology: This paper is based on secondary data from various reports, journals and existing work on the topic has been analyzed to arrive at certain results.

Review of Literature

Biju (2011) highlighted the need for defining ecotourism properly. He also mentions tourism which is an ecologically sensitive area needs close monitoring. In short, tourism in the nature-based area should be ecologically sustainable. There should also be provision for learning process for a visitor. The economic benefit of such an activity should accure to local population to ensure sustainability.²



Harikumar (2012) advocate the role of backwater spots in ecotourism in Kerala. He explains the role of houseboats and backwaters in Kerala in ecotourism development.³

Noyal Thomas (2013) emphasis that regulated tourism has always been an important part of the protected area management to generate valuable revenue and also to raise the awareness levels of the people visiting these areas towards the conservation of these resources.⁴

Vinay Tandon (2014) in his article explains that a fundamental requirement for ecotourism to be practiced is control on access to an area. Various hill stations or beaches therefore don't get categorised as ecotourism destinations because it is impossible to control access to them. National parks and wildlife sanctuaries are, on the other hand must amendable to regulate access and thus most suitable as eco-tourist destinations.⁵

Tourism in India

India has a composite culture. There is a harmonious blend of art, religion and philosophy. Though India has been subjected to a series of invasions, she has retained her originality even after absorbing the best of the external influences. Religious like Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism, etc. have co existed in India. India has fascinated people from all over the world with her secularism and her culture. The diverse geographical locales of India delight the tourists. The monuments, museums, forts, sanctuaries, places of religious interest, palaces, etc. offer a treat to the eyes. Every region is identified with its handicrafts, fairs, folk dances, music and its people. Some of the places that attract a huge number of tourists are Agra, Jaipur jhansi , hyderabad, Nalanda, Mysore, Delhi , Mahabaleshwar , A urangabad , etc. Haridwar , Ujjain , Shirdi , V aransi , A llahabad , puri , Jammu , B adrinath etc. are famous hill resorts.

The Tourism Advisory Board recommends measures for promotion of tourist traffic in India. It reviews the tourist trends and suggests appropriate measures. Some of the palaces havelis and castles have been converted into heritage hotels. In these hotels the tourists get to experience the exotic lifestyle of a bygone era. The exotic train Palace on Wheels which travels through Rajasthan attracts a lot of foreign tourists. The Indian Tourism Development Corporation organises entertainment programmes like folk dances and songs and provides shopping facilities. Today many private companies like Sita Travels, Club Mahindra , etc. arrange domestic as well as foreign tours. With the growth of the urban professional middle class, tourism n India is flourishing. Many states have taken necessary steps to promote tourism. Goa promotes water sports like sailing scuba diving and rafting. Kashmir offers the pleasure of winter sports like skiing and mountaineering. In2005 the Indian Tourism Development Corporation started a campaign called Incredible India to encourage tourism in India. The slogan of this campaign is Athithi Devoh Bhaboh. For a better growth the department divided different places in different sections like spiritual tourism spa tourism eco tourism and adventure tourism.

India's performance in tourism sector has been quite impressive. During the period 2002 to 2009 India witnessed an increase in the Foreign Tourist Arrivals from 2.38 million to 5.11 million resulting in the average annual increase of about 11.5 percent. Domestic tourism has also got a big boost. The number of domestic tourist visits increased from 270 million in 2002 to 650 million in 2009 with an average annual growth rate of 13.4 percent. India has a growing medical tourism sector. With an increasing number of foreign patients flocking to India for treatment, our country has become an attractive destination for medical tourism. Things have now started looking bright for the tourism industry.

On the negative side tourism may damage environment. In order to accommodate large number of tourists, sprawling resorts are built. The indiscriminate construction destroys local architectural styles and ecological balance. Arrangements as desired by tourists are provided in order to satisfy them. The Indian tourism industry has been hit by pollution. The effluents emitted by the Mathura Refinery has led to the discolourization of the Taj Mahal is Agra. The condition of many of our monuments is deteriorating due to the negligence of the authorities concerned. Terrorism now a days has become a global problem. Our country is also not an exception. The terrorist attacks agitations and separatist movements hinder the growth of tourism. Kashmir is the paradise for domestic and international tourists. The Skirmishes in this valley hamper the growth of tourism which is very important for the economy of the state.

The tourism infrastructure in India should be strengthened. Airports and railway stations should provide information to the tourists about the tourist destinations. Government owned hotels should be properly managed. The government should be taken to restore the ancient splendor of the monuments. Sincere efforts could help to further develop the Indian tourism industry. Over the years, tourism has grown as a flourishing industry. Some countries, even small ones, like Singapore, the Carribean, Japan, Hong-Kong (now under China), Thailand and even Malaysia have made great progress with the earnings obtained from tourists.



In India, earnings to the government and people from tourism as compared to such countries are only fractional. There may be several reasons for this. Tourism in India can become a viable industry if effective and concerted steps are taken. First of all, red-tapism should be ended. All bottlenecks and harassment to tourists that scare them should be removed. People at the helms of tourist affairs such as officials of ministry of tourism, hoteliers emporium-owners, etc. should be taught etiquette and given lessons in ideal behaviour that should be meted out to tourists.⁶

Tourism in Andhra Pradesh

Situated in the south-eastern coast of India, Andhra Pradesh is the 4th largest State of India. The capital of the state was Hyderabad which is also the largest city here. However, due to the announcement of the recently formed Telangana State, Hyderabad will be a part and capital of Telangana from the 2nd of June 2014. The State of Hyderabad will continue to function as the State Capital of Andhra Pradesh for a period not exceeding 10 years till a new capital is determined. The state of Andhra Pradesh is mentioned since 800 BC in the Sanskrit Epics like Aitareya Brahmana and Mahabharata.

The native language 'Telugu' is often associated with the Early Cholas. Andhra Pradesh also came under the rule of the Maurya Empire, the Ikshvaku Dynasty, Pallava, Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas and Later Cholas. When it comes to geography, Andhra covers most of the eastern part of the Deccan plateau and the eastern plains of the Eastern Ghats. The Eastern Ghats being a mineral rich area is covered with thick vegetation and the two regions are connected by patch of sparse vegetation. The State of Andhra Pradesh is well promoted by their tourism department and is well known for its rich natural resources, temples and rivers. The state of Andhra also shares a part of the coastal areas of the Bay of Bengal. The rich cultural heritage, ancient architecture and historical importance have made Andhra Pradesh one of the top tourist destinations in India. We shall discuss in brief the top places to visit in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

Visakhapatnam was the second largest city in Andhra Pradesh and a major sea port of India. However, with the recently announced Telangana State, Vishakhapatnam will now be the largest city of Andhra Pradesh and a probable Capital of the future state of Andhra Pradesh. The climate is tropical and humidity is high throughout the year. The city has all the necessary attractions and resources to make it one of the top tourist destinations in India. Its various beaches, hilltops and a wildlife sanctuary attract a major tourist crowd. The place is the major port of the Indian National Army and is the deepest ports of India. There are various valleys like the Araku Valley, which is a picturesque location for picnics and is a hill station that has some really great trekking hotspots. The various beaches like Yarada and Rishikonda are situated in some of most picturesque locations and are relatively clean and are frequented by many tourists. Given below are the major tourist attractions of Visakhapatnam.

Vijayawada, being the third largest city of Andhra Pradesh is number 3 on this list. The city is an agriculturally rich state and has been recognized as the Global city of the future by McKinsey. The former name of the city was Bezawada and has been under the rule of various ancient kingdoms of the South and has been one of the places the Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang stayed at. The River Krishna runs through the city and is located at the hills of the Eastern Ghats. The city's location is unique as well as to its west lies the deep jungles of the Kondapalli Reserve Forests which is known to house leopards, jackals, wolves, wild boar and wild dogs. The city itself is a cultural and religious center with its various temples, religious monuments, rivers, ancient caves and many more. Do not forget to buy the famous Kondapalli Toys as souvenirs. Some popular tourist places in Vijayawada are.

The name 'Nellore' literally means 'Paddy Place' and is thus one of the primary agricultural cities in Andhra Pradesh. The vast paddy fields of Damaramadugu are one of the prime sources of rice in the state and in the country. The town is split in two by the Pennar River and is thus located at both the banks of the river. Towards the east of the city is the Bay of Bengal and thus Nellore is at a unique and strategic geographical location. The city has seen various ancient dynasties like the Mauryas, Chola, Pallava and Vijaynagar etc. Nellore is also famous for its ancient temples which are amazing owing to their stunning architecture and the cultural history associated with them. Nellore also has the Nelapattu bird sanctuary which is a great spot for the photography enthusiasts and professionals alike. The various lakes, temples, forts in the ancient agricultural town of Nellore are sure to keep you enchanted. Here are some important tourist destinations in Nellore.⁷

Tourism in Chittoor District

Tirupati is one of the major cultural and religious pilgrimage spots in India. The city is located at the southern part of Andhra Pradesh and is situated at the foothills of the Eastern Ghats in the Chittoor district. Although the major language spoken here is Telugu, the word Tirupati is a Tamil word as saint Ramanujacharya who was a Tamil Vaishnava saint was responsible for founding this city. The town is famous for its temple dedicated to 'Balaji', a form of Lord Vishnu. The temple's foundation history is unknown and it was expanded over the centuries by various kingdoms and dynasties including the Chola, Pallava and the Vijaynagar Empire. The temple is one of the major pilgrimage spots in India and especially in the southern India.



Apart from the temples, there are various other attractions like parks and zoos. Here are some of the major tourist attractions of Tirupati.

Situated in the state of Andhra Pradesh, Chittoor is a heaven for nature lovers and adventure enthusiasts. The place is also brimming with the divine aura and quaint architecture which attracts the attention of outsiders consistently. While looking for the best places to visit in Chittoor, one place which every curious traveller must remember of is the Horsley Hills. A sought after weekend getaway for the people of Chittoor and its neighboring cities, the Horsley Hills has a thick cover of awe inspiring greens, undulating hill slopes and an atmosphere that casts a tranquil spell on its visitors. Another vibrant spot here is the Sri Govindaraja Swamy Temple, which sees hordes of devotees constantly throughout the year. It is one of the most adored places to visit in Chittoor. For movie buffs, the Devi Theatre is the diva of entertainment in this little, pristine town. Watch a Telugu flick in an authentic setup while soaking the real flavor of Chittoor. Among other interesting and attractive places to see in Chittoor, the Talakona Waterfall steal the limelight, handsdown! To be precise, Chittoor is a heavenly abode to ditch the clamor and hustle of the city life for a few days, and discover love in an unconventional.

Located near the south western border of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, the mighty Horsley Hills is a hill station which is the perfect amalgam of the charms of Andhra Pradesh and Ooty. This natural marvel is situated at an astonishing height of 4312 metres and is very well known for its breath taking landscape, rich biodiversity, countless holiday options and comparative exclusivity. Home to the largest Banyan tree in the world and the oldest Eucalyptus, it is an environmental hub lined with thick foliage dense forest areas with trees such Gulmohar, Allamanda, Reeta, Amla, Beedi leaves, Blue Gum, and Sandalwood. As many as 113 species of birds including yellow throated bulbul, black eagle and white - rumped shama. The picturesque landscape of Horsley also doubles up as a destination for adventure sports and activities such as trampoline, shooting, bow and arrow, wall climbing, water walking, rappelling, swimming pool, fish spa and a mini zoo. And if you're in the mood to just relax and unwind, then the endearing beauty of this hill station will surely cater to that as well.

Situated in Nagari Valley near Tirupati, Kailasakonda Waterfalls are beautiful perennial waterfalls with an interesting story behind them. Legend has it that Lord Kailasanatheshwara performed the marriage of Lord Venkateshwara Swami and Goddess Padmavati and later performed penance here. The water here is crystal clear and is rich with minerals and is believed to have medicinal properties and healing effect. The foot of the waterfall can be reached and one can only gape at the awe inspiring sight. To reach the waterfall, look out for the 10 km milestone on the way to Puttur and take a left deviation and drive for about 2 km. Known for its juicy, delectable mangoes, Chittoor offers around 58 varieties of the King of Fruits to its customers. The mangoes are grown in this region and are of export quality. Horde your bags with the mouth watering mangoes on your way back home Chittoor is a district laden with important temples, one of them being the Kanipakkam Vinayagar Temple. Apart from Tirupati, Tirumala and Srikalahasti, the Vinayagar Temple in Kanipakkam is another reason why pilgrims flock to the district of Chittoor. Situated 56 km from Tirupati, the small town of Kanapakam is the abode of great deity Vinayaka. It makes for an ideal weekend getaway trip for city dwellers as well as a major pilgrimage site.

Needless to say, this world renowned temple is a must visit on a trip to Chittoor. Located on the seventh peak, Venkatachala, of the Tirupati hill, this temple houses the most breathtaking idol of Lord Venkateshwara, and it is said that a look at the idol is sure to leave one spellbound. Ancient Hindu texts mention that worshipping Lord Venkateshwara is the only way to salvation. Soaked in sanctity, religion, history and culture, a visit to this temple is a memorable one. One can offer different darshanams to the deity.⁸

Conclusion

Tourism activities can refer to an extension of a brand–consumer relationship. While growth in many industries is flat, worldwide tourism revenues continue to grow. A literature review is not only a crucial endeavour for any academic research, but also the foundation and inspiration for substantial, useful research. Chittoor is a place that everyone should visit at least once in their lifetime. Also blessed with scenic beauty, cascading waterfalls and a beautiful hill station, Chittoor is not a disappointment to the traveller who seeks redemption from the busy metro life. Also known as the Mango City, Chittoor offers myriad varieties of heavenly mangoes to please its visitors. A contemporary district situated on the banks of Ponnai River has a remarkable history of ancient tales engraved in its beauty. Chittoor is a Tamil word which means a small town as it was a part of the Tamil constituency Thondai Nadu. The rich historical evidence of this district has been found in Paleolithic tools of Tirupathi, This historic temple with Ganesha as its primary deity is also known as Shrine of Water and is in Irala Mandal of Chittoor district. The idol of Lord Ganesha in this temple is believed to be continually growing in size. The regal temple has immense religious significance and importance because of its miraculous idol. The water found in the complex is believed to be holy and can cure various deformities. Pilgrims visit this temple before going to Tirupati since it is a Vinayaka Temple.



References

1. www.evirtualguru.com.
2. M.R. Biju, "Eco-Tourism in Kerala". South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies (SAJOSPS), Vol.12, No.1 (July-Dec 2011) PP 94-102.
3. P.N. Harikumar, "Ecotourism-Backeater Spots in Kerala".Yojana, Vol.13, No.7, June 2012 PP 32-40.
4. Noyal Thomas, "Ecotourism Unique Natural Heritage". Kerala Calling, Vol.10, No.12, April 2013, PP 26-29.
5. Vinay Tandon, Ecotourism, "Environmental Panacea or Poison". Kurushetra, Vol.14, No.7, June 2014, PP 3-6.
6. www.publishyourarticles.net.
7. www.transindiatravels.com.
8. <http://www.chittooronline.in>.