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## Rural Tourism and Cultural Heritage of Chhattisgarh

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### Abstract

Tourism is a rapidly growing phenomenon and has become one of the largest service industries in the world. The development of tourism as an industry had to wait for a long time until the early 20th century. Today tourism has become a white collar, environment-friendly and one of the largest and fastest growing industries employing the highest number of labour force. According to the World Trade Organization (WTO), more than 700 million tourists travel internationally every year spending more the 300 billion US dollars, accounting to 8% of the total world exports, 30% of international trade and providing one billion jobs. India has been ranked as the 4th most favoured country for holidays, above south Africa and Switzerland. The Campaign like “Incredible India” and “Atithi Devo Bhavah” have already yielded significant result in promoting tourism in the country. India lives in village and for the world to know the real

spirit of India, it is essential to have a peep into tourist areas. Any form of tourism that showcases the rural life art, culture and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community economically and socially, as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and local community for a more enriching tourism experience, can be termed as rural tourism. Tourist is one of the key stake holders under the rural tourism scheme. The flow of tourist to rural destination depends upon the facilities provided during their stay in the village site, require proper accommodation, sanitation, drinking water facility and medical facilities. Besides the tourists also look for healthy and hygienic food in the village. Proper knowledge sharing about the historical importance of the visited village with the tourist can be done only by a knowledgeable tour guide. There has been 5 to 10% increase in the arrival of tourists to the village sites office the launch of the rural tourism scheme. Rural tourism may be a new concept for Chhattisgarh Scope of Rural Tourism is very vast in India, where 72 present of the total population lives in its 7 lakh villages, India is one of the most diverse nations in the world. The diversity can be seen with its flora and fauna, watering cuisine, scenic beauty that is breath taking simply enchanting folk dances.

### Key Words

Chhattisgarh, Rural Tourism, Cultural Heritage, Income.

## **Rural Tourism in India**

Rural Tourism can be one of the most happening segments of tourism industry in India. The ministry of Tourism, Government of India is implementing Rural Tourism Scheme to promote village tourism as the primary tourism product to spread tourism and its socio-economic benefits to rural and its new geographic regions in India. The primary beneficiaries are rural communities (especially women and unemployed youth) PRI representatives, tourists etc. The implementation is done through Convergence Committee headed by the District Collector/District Magistrate. To achieve rural tourism objectives, various hardware and software activities were coordinated with key identified project partners/implementing agencies. Further to build capacity and enhance the participation of local community, various software activities are undertaken by implementing agencies like Non-Government Organisations (NGO)/Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRI)/ etc. The objectives of the software activities are to develop a sustainable Rural Tourism product, convergence with the Ministry's Rural Tourism Scheme (Hardware through tourism awareness, capacity building for tourism/hospitality services, gender equity, creation of Gurukul, environment care and marketing of traditional art and folk forms. Based on the Tenth Five Year Plan goals of the Government of India, and on the United Nations Development Assistance Framework priorities of strengthening decentralization and promoting gender equality, Government of India-United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Programme (2003-2007) has been initiated UNDP has committed funding support to the Government of India (Ministry of Tourism for the Endogenous Tourism Project initiative. The Project seeks to promote local culture and craft based eco-tourism for sustainable livelihoods and integrated rural development during the 10th Five Year plan. The primary facilitation of the Endogenous Tourism Project is for capacity building/direct training: thereby enabling to income village communities create and articulate their skills from within. One of the most important objectives of the rural tourism programme is to increase the income flow of the local population and improving their quality of life.

After receiving training on various aspects like hospitality management, guide training visitor handling, linguistic ability etc, many rural unemployed youths have come forward and started working as guides. As majority of activities in the rural tourism do not require advanced training, local residents with minimum training on skill development are capable of providing services like food serving etc. Since tourism is accepted as a legitimate form of economic development, it is serving as a vehicle for other types of business development opportunities for local communities. Due to the Government initiative to promote rural tourism, a number of avenues for the employment of local population have opened up.

## **Measured Determinants of Rural Tourism**

- a. The employment of local youth as tour guide has given gainful employment to the large number of unemployed in the village.
- b. The concept of homestay with toilet has potential of enhancing the income of the host population.
- c. A large number of teas stall a small restaurant pen of etc. have started functioning due to the increase in flow of tourists, which has again enhanced the income of the local people.
- d. The revival of tourism products like folk art by formation of activity. Group has helped in the local population This folk art provides links with the past and bring to life ancient tradition and culture. They have also helped in Perpetuating legacy for the future. The support to rejuvenate the folk art has led to the revival of the folk art and also providing livelihood to the art Practitioners.
- e. A vital aspect of the rural tourism was to shake the migration of the artisans from the village The problem has been effectively addressed in most of the villages. The artisan in different categories, like a stone carvers, court maker, food carvers, Panthers, Beavers, etc, have been given trainees and exposure visit to town. Their product has been effectively promoted via different min and they have been talked about product diversification and emerging trend, which has ultimately enhanced their income.

- f. Rural tourism cannot succeed without the participation of rural society under the rural tourism. It comes the rural tourism. Had the multiplier effect on rural society. It has developed the rural economy and improving the rural income by providing employment for people in the village, providing a new market for food such as eggs, fruit, vegetable and rice, all of which is produced by local farmers and supporting small business such as restaurant and art shop.
- g. One of the most common features of rural tourism has offered to local communities as an incentive to consider starting a tourism business. It is ability to generate an alternative income stream. This income can come at times that supplement income during seasonal functions.

## **Rural tourism in Chhattisgarh**

The location of our village is specially in Chhattisgarh, or predominantly in natural environment, then mesh with seasonally and local events, and are based on preservation of cultural heritage and tradition. Rural area attract tourists because of their mystic and District culture historical ethnic and geographical characteristics. Nagarnar village is located 19 kilometres from Jharkhand is district headquarter of Bastar District. It is situated on NH43 towards SE Direction, twenty kilometres away from Jagdalpur. The place is well connected to other major cities, like Visakhapatnam, with bus and train. The places surrounded by beautiful views of old edges. This place is located at distance of 40 kilometres from Nagarnar village on the banks of Kholab/Sabri River. The excellent road linking Bastar passes through verdant forest land, the nearest airport is Raipur in the northern Visakhapatnam in the Nagarnar village is mainly dominated by tribal families who are central of attraction for the tourism. The village houses a variety of artisan large number quarters blacksmith views Bell-metal artisan bamboo artisan etc. The village is equally rich in the cultural heritage and attracts lot of tourists. It has its typical dance form like Oriya Naat, Ghiloriya, Bhatri Nath, Sahion, Getichait Parab and Dhundka.

In Nagarnar tourists are fairly satisfied with the development at different side. Even some of these tourists were repeat customers and put clearly identify that have taken place in the village. For instance, prior to the intervention of the Government, there was number straight illumination which restricted the movement of the villagers beside the creation of facilities like toilet drinking water and restaurant was highly appreciated by the visitors, there has been a drastic change in the attitude of the people towards hygienic and the cleanliness. The visitors, especially the foreigners, have appreciated the beautification and landscaping in the villages. There is a strong participation of the local community towards the development of tourist infrastructure in the village. The villagers have formed different self-help groups which are actively involved in maintenance of infrastructure. They have participated in different workshops, seminar to expose their art and culture. The community has formed several self-help groups of men and women in the village. This group actively involved themselves. In gaining training in environment safeguards solid waste management, etc. They have been functioning for almost one year now, and have been promoted as self-sustainable federation. The sustainability of this new group and other existing SHG, which were formed prior to the rural tourism scheme, has been ensured by providing a regular. SS to saving and credit. The member of the various SHGS have been given training on aspect of bookkeeping institutes building and management. They have been taken to different trade fair and other exposure visit with the object to expose. Them to the trend of market and get the real value of their product. Most of the sites have their own traditional importance and place in history. Some of them are known for the beautiful temples, Musk churches and some of their scenic beauty and environment. The capacity building for visitor handling has been undertaken at rural tourism site, the employment of guides manager, administrators, hoops, etc, from outside the village, would have led to a loss in interest of community in sustaining and promoting the rural tourism. Hence, community members wear encourages cheque active part in training process. The capacity building stage is at its nascent stage in most of the site. For instance, in guide training programme, though youths have been identified and training imported, but due to low tourist visit to the site, the potential of guides is not fully utilised. Similarly, the host community needs more time to pick up the art of visitor handling, or Cousin making etc. However, the skill building programmes for visitor

handling have been successful in this short run. There is requirement of special monetizing self or steering committee to evaluate the rural tourism skin. The members would include members from Ministry of tourism, Government of Chhattisgarh, Senior Academies from Management Department of University, district collector, local serpants, village level council heads implementing agency representative as well as local artisans' representative. Strict deadline on exclusion of its project components should be in place, and which can be periodically monitored by an external agency. There are well furnished portal govt rest house located in Jagdalpur. There is no proper place where they can stay in the village. Their concept of host families does is unique in Nagar. People have been friends for guide, empowering the rural women so that they can become productive citizen of the global economy, has been apt of rural tourism. Integration of gender perspective in the tourism industry is one of the most important aspects of rural tourism. It is the major employer of women and offer various opportunities for independent income generation activities for them. Like many states in India, where efforts are made to promote rural tourism in Chhattisgarh. Also, there is gender sanitization, which has been very successful in most of the rural sites. The woman folk in the village have been given necessary skill building programme for sustainable livelihood Prior to intervention of the Government in most of the places in the area, there were no self-help group in place where they existed. Most of them had no financial power and were not recognised. The rural tourism programme has undoubtedly helped the women artisan and the women community in and around the villages, thereby improved, improving their livelihood.

### **Publicity and Awareness of Rural Tourism in Chhattisgarh**

The publicity of Nagarnar village as rural tourism site is done through brochures and leaflets. Besides, there has been extensive training imparted to the villagers of Nagarnar on developing marketing skills and promoting the arts and culture of the village. Different exhibitions and workshops have been conducted in Delhi Haat, Pragati Maidan etc to market this rural tourism destination. The handicrafts and rural art products have been marketed by participation in various exhibitions. These exhibitions or the so-called fairs and mela, lasting for at least a week provides many positive results by generating awareness about the traditional products among the public. Participation in National and international events like a food mela or an exposure visit provides the required exposure to the artisans and instills a sense of competition. The artisans meet people from other parts of the country specializing in the same trade domain and learn the worth of their product such events like the one organized by UNDP at Delhi Haat, gave the requisite exposure to the rural people.

1. The sale of handicrafts to the tourists and in local melas has generated little money. In addition the revival of cultural values and associated social network and activities.
2. Nagarnar village is famous for the handicraft skills of the village. Around 20% of the village population comprises of artisan families. There are 52 potter families, 40 weaver families, 5 Blacksmith families and around 25 Bell Artisan families. Training has been provided to artisans in skill development. 16 artisans were trained in pottery and weavers in traditional textile under guidance of experienced master craftsmen. The weavers were exposed to various kinds of artistic products like motifs, sarees, hunries etc. The artisans have been trained to make artistic artifacts as per market demand. These artisans provide extensive training in product related marketing and developing presentation skills. They are allowed to attend different workshops/seminars organized in different regions of the country.
3. It has been reported that tourist's rural sites have a main motivation of relaxation. Of course, these visits contribute to the development of infrastructure in the given areas, and also to the retention of certain services (especially retailing).
4. The rural tourism destinations and their people expect to receive mainly foreign visitors. The foreign tourists are mostly interested in two types of rural tourism; Firstly, accommodation in the vicinity of popular tourist destinations (being motivated by the much lower prices) and secondly in cultural/ heritage/ historical aspects of the area.

## **Strategy of Strengthen Rural Tourism in Chhattisgarh**

1. At the local level, the understanding of the relationship between commercial sustainability, protect and conservation of natural and cultural assets is taking time to develop. The state Government should make efforts to provide one to two years of intensive training and community mobilization is require to understand the importance of protection and conservation of natural and cultural assets at the identified rural tourism sites.
2. One of the biggest challenges of the tourism industry is that our success should not destroy the environment which attracts the visitors in the first place. Gradually a change is needed in the attitude of the villagers towards cleanliness, hygiene and sensitiveness towards environment. Protection of environment need to be the primary aim. of the rural tourism project. In order to make the villages clean, the use of plastics have been banned. Instead of this, paper bags, cloth bags need to be used and for non-degradable litter such as empty bottles, tins, plastic bags etc. dustbins have been put in different places. In some places, the use of polythene and plastics bags, tins, gutkas, cigarettes have also been banned so that their refuse do not cause pollution.
3. In order to ensured environmental and ecological sustainability in the village self-help group (SHG) need to be formed in villages. The SHG's key concern needs to be addressed. The natural resources. in the village like forests, water, lands, animals are rapidly decreasing. There is less awareness of solid waste disposal and waste management among the villagers.
4. Rural tourism sites create awareness about what the rural areas have to offer. Tourism supports direct or indirect employment opportunities in rural areas without adversely affecting agricultural workforce. Overall, its contribution to rural economy is considered to be substantial. It has helped in reducing the out-migration by providing employment opportunities in the villages by restructuring rural entrepreneurial system. Therefore, it is high time for the tourism department to look after this issue.
5. Since rural tourism has generated two types of cash income for rural households and community:
  - a. Regular wages for those with jobs; It has been reported that the income from tourism activities in the villages in not regular but spurt in cash during some season to rural families has lifted their status socio-economically. These earnings, in turn, ate partially recycled within the local economy creating a multiplier effect.
  - b. Casual earnings opportunities from selling food, handicraft products etc. The artisans, casual labourers and others sell their products or labour to tourists. They earn smaller amounts from casual sales than is earned by those in waged employment. Therefore, state Government should make policy to prompt rural tourism in the state.
6. One of the key stakeholders of the Rural Tourism scheme is the members of the Panchayati Raj Institution. The positive social impacts occur only when strong leadership and repeated & new training opportunities are offered. These enable collective action among NGOS/ PRI representatives to provide consistently good support When this happens, and tourists do return on repeat visits, the community is likely to support rural tourism and new partnerships can be built with other key stakeholders in tourism sector. The state tourism department has to prompt rural tourism through Panchayat Raj Institutions.

## **Conclusion**

India is no doubt a unique country looking into its vastness in size, variety of culture, climate food, languages, religious etc. Above all time and again it is loudly said, India lives in village. To make it feel amongst the people of our country and other people of the world need of hours is to promote rural tourism paradoxically, there exist scanty of efforts in the country, so is the case in the state of Chhattisgarh It is high time to promote it to make the tourism industry flourish in the state not only to generate revenue for the state exchequer but to expose the state to the people of the country and foreigners about its unique culture, tradition and scenic beauties of different places so that the hidden facts will be of great use for the leisure and pleasure of tourists.

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