

TOURISM IN WESTERN RAJASTHAN: PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS

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Western Rajasthan is immensely rich from the viewpoint of tourism. But reasons best known to the situations prevailing in this part of the country the numerical data of tourists is comparatively quite less. One of the main reasons for this fact may be said to be its geographical condition. The best suited months for tourist activity in this region are between October and March. With the beginning of April to almost entire September adverse climatic conditions present unpalatable situation such as dust storms, scorching heat etc. In southern and eastern part of Rajasthan during rainy season things become still worse and most of the places become inaccessible. This precisely accounts for the problem of the development of tourist industry in Rajasthan.

After the adverse geographical condition which prevents the development of tourism, we may account yet another important reason for this. Rajasthan is underdeveloped and backward in means of transport and communication especially when compared with other regions of the country. The Western Rajasthan particularly has limited means and resources of communication network. To start with the railways, the share of Rajasthan regarding the development and modernization process is quite negligible. It is still continuing in the age old feudal railway system which has become obvious and rotten. To cope up with the facilities which ought to be provided to the tourists who are accustomed to modern comforts and luxuries of the west, the Government should take up the modernization of the railways in a big way. Important cultural, political and commercial centers of Rajasthan ought to be provided with broadcasting railway lines. The superfast trains with Air Conditioned coaches and dining car equipped with appropriate eatables and beverages and mineral water be started at the earliest. It has been observed that the tourists face great problem regarding drinking water while travelling. The tourism department and concerned agencies should see that this problem is solved. The important railway stations and terminals should be modernized to lodge the tourists at least temporarily. They should be provided with special reservation facilities and if possible some coaches be made reserved exclusively for the tourists. The medical postal and communication facility besides banking facility be also provided on important railway stations to encourage tourism. The experiment of palace on wheels should be extended and other such special trains be introduced to promote tourism in Rajasthan.

Similarly road transport should be also modernized. The roads should be built, repaired extended to different tourist spots in Rajasthan. It is an open secret that compared to neighboring States of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh the transport network is far from satisfactory in Rajasthan. The State Road Transport and private transport network ought to be improved to the satisfaction of the tourists. For this quite a good number of deluxe buses and luxury coaches should be introduced to facilitate the flow of tourists in Rajasthan in general and Western Rajasthan in particular. The tourist buses should be suitably equipped with modern amenities for the convenience of the tourists. It is important to mention here that Western Rajasthan is a vast region having its own peculiarities. Barmer-Jaisalmer parliamentary area alone is almost equal to the area of Kerala State. That is yet another reason making this area inaccessible to the tourists. The tourists have a given schedule of stay in the country and they visit this part of the country almost at the end of this period. It is suggested that about a fortnight's period may be given to them over and above the normal period so that they could visit the remote quarters of Western Rajasthan.

Coming to the problem of accommodation and lodging facilities vis-à-vis influx of the tourists in the Western Rajasthan since last ten years the picture is quite disappointing. To facilitate the comfortable stay of the tourists the hotel industry should be given all possible encouragement. For building standard hotels and lodges the Government should earmark the suitable lands, financial assistance and other such subsidies which can encourage the hotel business communities and agencies to build enough accommodation for tourists. The hotel business communities in their turn should evolve code of good behavior towards the tourists and refrain themselves from the mentality of extorting money and creating bad impression about the country and its people. Rajasthan in general and Western Rajasthan in particular is famous for its hospitality and respectful behavior towards the guests. Guests are always welcome like rains in the Western Rajasthan. In typical Marwari language the word Panvana (पानवणा) stands as synonym for guests and Panvana means son-in-law. Therefore, it is quite natural that guests are treated at par with son-in-law. People now are forgetting gradually this worthy tradition and have started mocking at the incoming guests and tourists. They never hesitate in extorting as money as is possible on flimsy pretexts. This tendency should now come to a stop and the age old tradition of utmost hospitality be revived.

The tourism department needs complete gearing of its administrative machinery to look into and solve various problems pertaining to lodging and transport of the tourists. The department ought to organize its activity in such a way that the tourist should be guided so that the tourists do not fall in the hands of unscrupulous people. The Government should make all arrangement in such a way that the tourists return with good impression about the country and its people in general. Only then they will encourage others to visit this glorious and wonderful country of ours.

The people of Rajasthan had been hearing since long that important tourist spots such as Jaisalmer, Abu Ranakpur, Osian etc. are going to be connected with air service. But unfortunately nothing had been done so far in this regard. Similarly no efforts to

conserve and protect spots of historical importance have been made by giving good publicity through exhibition of photographs and other means of audio-visual system. It would be wrong to presume that only by organizing festivals and meals the tourist department has the satisfaction of the performance of its duty. Instead we ought to have taken the realistic view of the situation. As for example while serving food and drinks to the tourists in the tourist lodges in particular and retiring rooms, midways and other such places in general, the quality should be taken care of. It may be suggested that suitable food and drinks of Rajasthan should be given. The menu should invariably incorporate a list of the ingredients of the Rajasthan delicious in French and English language. Similarly nobody can understand ones cultural tradition only by reading the name of restaurants as Ghoomar, Dholamaru and Moomal. For this expertise knowledge is essential. Only those persons be appointed as guides who are well versed in the history and culture of Rajasthan.

It is a general tendency of the tourists to possess some of the typical objects of the country or region they visit. The tourists like to buy things for presentation to their near and dear. The foreign tourists are specially attracted by the antiques, art objects and things of daily use such as Rajasthani Shoes, Garments, Ornaments etc. There is no dearth of private shops dealing in such commodities in almost all the places of tourist interest. These shops owners and businessmen are minting money by cheating the tourists through their touts. It is imperative on the Government and tourism department to organize the selling of these commodities through their agencies on reasonable cost. The Government should purchase the handicrafts and artifacts directly from the manufacturers and avoid the middle-man profiteering. This will check mat-practice of cheating, the tourist on one hand and help create good impression in the minds of visiting tourists on the other.

It would not be out of place to mention that gangsters and smugglers are engaged in the nefarious activities of smuggling sculptures, icons, paintings, coins, manuscripts and other rare art objects and antiquities. This national treasure of antiquities finds its way to affluent Western countries and people. We are losing this heritage so fast that it has become a great problem for the Government to check it. It is possible that some unscrupulous persons in the garb of tourist are engaged directly or indirectly in this illegal trade. Steps should be taken in right earnest for the eradication of this evil and persons responsible for the maintenance of law and order should be extra vigilant. The people connected with the smuggling activity should be dealt with the law of the land. And also they should be socially boycotted.

The wild life of a region of a country is closely associated with its tourist industry. Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania in east Africa are famous world over for their wild life attraction. These countries earn millions of dollars in foreign exchange on account of their wild life sanctuaries. The semi-arid and arid conditions of Western Rajasthan present a different profile of wild life to the tourists. Here we have bushy vegetation, best suited for the animals and birds like antelopes, chinkara, black buck, bustard partridge etc. The tourists can take the maximum pleasure in watching them in their

natural habitat. Perhaps Western Rajasthan is the only place in the world where protection of wild life and trees is regarded as a sacred duty or religion. The Bishnoi community is famous for its supreme sacrifices in this regard. This has led to the growth of wild life population and these animals are almost domesticated to the extent that they feel no fear in approaching the visitors. Therefore, it is suggested that the entire region of Jodhpur, Jaisalmer and Bikaner be converted into wild life sanctuaries. Sardar Samand in Jodhpur and Sharda in Pali district attract birds of Central Asia and South Europe. The migration of the birds from these faraway places is being noticed every year. These places may also be developed at par with Bharatpur's Ghana bird sanctuary. Similarly Guda, about twenty five kilometers away from Jodhpur is famous for its prized possession of Chinkara and black buck. This place should also be converted into sanctuary.

For greater flow of tourists it may be suggested that the tourism department should plan the appropriate strategy. Several measures may be adopted to meet this objective such as:-

1. It should be determined that which country and area is prone to tourist activities for example countries like Britain, France and United States of America and other European countries send good number of tourists to visit Western Rajasthan. The Tourism Department should propagate the features of Western Rajasthan and places and things of especial interest to these countries.
2. Special cultural delegation of intellectuals, writers, journalists etc. should be invited by the Tourism Department to pay a visit to Western Rajasthan and educate the people of their respective countries regarding the cultural heritage of India in general and Rajasthan in particular.
3. Literature pertaining to history, tradition, art, culture, artifacts and handicrafts, natural phenomenon etc. be prepared and given wide publicity.
4. The maps of important tourist spots should be prepared incorporating details of these spots means of transport and communication available for the tourists. Lodging and boarding facilities and photographs of important objects such as monuments, sculptures, paintings, ornaments, musical instruments, objects of handicrafts etc. should be published in form of leaflets and handy books for the convenience of the tourists. Similarly calendars containing photographs of typical objects of Western Rajasthan be prepared and if possible distributed among the tourists and exhibited in hotels, railway stations, air ports, tourist lodges and other public places. At least a calendar incorporating the most important tourist spots of every district of Western Rajasthan be printed and distributed.
5. Handbooks and pamphlets in different languages of the world especially English and French are prepared to highlight the main features of tourism in Western Rajasthan. This should be done in such a way that when a tourist visits a particular place of interest he should have the feeling of some association with that place. In another words the tourist should be given

proper information and education regarding different places and objects of the tourist interest.

6. The tourist guides can play a big role in the development of tourist industry in Western Rajasthan. They should not only be given proper education and training regarding the culture and tradition places of historical interest, history of place and monuments and main features of art and craft of Western Rajasthan but also they should be made committed the norms of their profession. They should have sense of involvement in the whole gamut of tourism, instead of taking it as a mere money making business. They should be given excellent training in understanding, speaking and writing foreign languages such as English, French etc. They would not hesitate in helping the tourists in whatever little manner they could do and solve their minor problems in routine way. The educated youth are employed in tourism industry to meet the twin ends of solving unemployment problem of the country and development of tourist industry.
7. The problem of beggars is a menace for the country as a whole and it affects the tourists also in its own way. This is a social evil and the solution should be found to meet it in an appropriate way. The tourism department should make arrangement to keep the tourist spots free from beggars, thieves and cheats and discourage all such nasty activities. They not only bring bad name to our country but also hamper the tourist influx in the country.
8. It has been observed that the festivals and melas are organized by the tourist department have not yielded the desired results. A large amount of money is being spent on them every year. Instead of these festivals and melas the tourist department should organize symposia and seminars to highlight the features of tourist interest. Competitions of different types such as photography, music, handicrafts etc be organized and given due publicity.
9. The technology of audio-visual system be pressed into service to present features of history and life of the people of Rajasthan who are quite distinct from others in several respects. The radio and television should give due coverage to these features. It is the pins duty of the journalists of Rajasthan to highlight its culture and tradition by writing articles and publishing photographs in newspapers and magazines.

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10. My personal Interview with a number of tourists visiting western Rajasthan, A majority of them were French.

Tourism in Rajasthan caters to couples, friends, and families who can enjoy a luxurious retreat in this medieval wonderland. So grab a Rajasthan tourism map and start discovering the largest state in India, and don't forget to cover all of the popular destinations and be a part of its culture. Another thing that this state is most famous for is its folk songs. Most of these songs are foot-tapping numbers. All this while humming the very catchy Rajasthan tourism song by the Rajasthan Tourism Corporation. So, there were many good points but also some issues or problems were there were travel triangle team and agent should work upon. 1- Regarding driver , all the trips driver was really nice . Experienced enough to guide but in Rajasthan one the driver was consistently busy on call. Rajasthan is one of the most popular tourist destinations in India, for both domestic and international tourists. Rajasthan attracts tourists for its historical forts, palaces, art and culture with its slogan 'Padharo mahare desh'. Every third foreign tourist visiting India travels to Rajasthan as it is part of the Golden Triangle for tourists visiting India. Rajasthan Tourism Department is responsible for promoting tourism and culture of the state. Get information on Rajasthan's architecture, music, handicraft, etc. in various languages. Users can get details of destinations such as Alwar, Bikaner, Bundi, etc. Find information on attractions like Palace on wheels, fairs and festivals, wild life and heritage of the state. Facilities of online air ticket booking and package tours are available. Information on hotels in Ajmer and Pushkar of Rajasthan. Share This.