

## **A new mantra for a Rural Development : Rural Tourism**

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### **Abstract**

India is a multi destination country with a variety of tourist resource. Rural tourism has emerged as a new mantra for alternative tourism development. This concept has been already tested in the developed country & proved the best result. Our country & villages have so many things to cater the needs of the tourists. The rural people, its culture, tradition, arts, handicrafts, scene landscape can attract the tourists irrespective of its taste, perceptions & attitudes. Where almost 74% of the population resides in its seven lakh villages.

This research paper discusses the concept and principal of rural tourism, benefits of Rural tourism & Broad Area of Rural Tourism, The paper shall throw light on the government project and policies for development of rural tourism with Recommendations.

Rural tourism is a multidimensional destination because it has Eco, Ethnic, Farm, Cultural, Historical tourism within itself. The major challenge in developing rural tourism is to consider conservation of natural resources and environment and a proper understanding between the tourist and local people to participate in tourism development.

**Keywords: Rural tourism, culture, heritage, local people, Tourist**

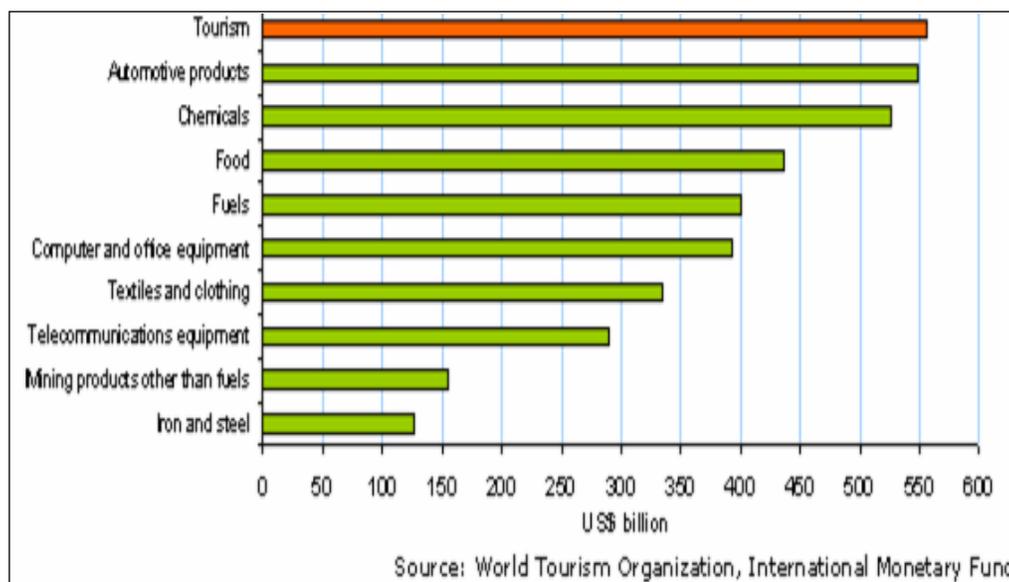
### **Introduction**

India has a stronghold for Rural tourism since rural India is the backbone of Indian society and economy. Since independence most of the national policies have been focusing upon rural development. But issues like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, regional imbalances, and environmental degradation through deforestation; health and sanitary factors in rural areas



remain unsolved. Many of the planners blame commercial viability for this matter. At the same time these rural areas possess natural and socio-cultural resources, which are fantastic sources for tourism and recreation, systematic tourism development in rural areas through public participation can contribute towards the socio-economic development of these areas, and on the other hand it can increase the attraction base for the modern tourists, which ultimately brings in foreign currencies and contributes to the GDP of the country. Tourism is the third largest foreign exchange earner after gem, jewellery & ready-made garments.

If the economic revolution comes to India then its base is in the plans which are made for rural areas. Rural Industry, Agriculture Industry, and Tourism in villages will become the base of our economy. Then our villages will become self-sufficient and attractive. For this rural culture which is just like a saint's life style and nurtured by nature will restore and be developed again. As India's culture resides in villages and hence by the development of rural tourism, India's life style, tradition, art, craft, culture, natural heritage will also progress.



## Objectives of studying rural tourism



- Rural tourism concept and principal .
- To understand the potential of Rural tourism.
- To develop some strategies to develop rural tourism
- To study Govt. projects of rural tourism.
- To identify the challenges in rural tourism.
- To offer suggestion and make recommendations.

### **Contributions of rural Tourism Industry**

- Economic development
- Infrastructure development
- Employment generation
- Community development
- Restoration of culture
- Environmental preservation
- Promotion of harmony and understanding

### **What is ‘Rural Tourism’?**

As per Gannon, ‘Rural Tourism’ covers “a range of activities provided by farmers and rural people to attract tourists to their area in order to generate extra income for their business.” 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 the locals for a more enriching tourism experience can be termed as rural tourism. Rural tourism is essentially an activity which takes place in the countryside. It is multi-faceted and may entail farm/agricultural tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, and eco-tourism.

That means rural tourism takes place in the countryside and creates value from rural opportunities. Typical characteristics of Rural tourism are:-

- Sparsely populated locations
- Predominant natural environment



- Focus on out door activities
- Small establishments with mainly part time involvement in tourism by the local community
- Locally owned enterprises
- Meshing with seasonal and local events

The important elements of Rural tourism are:-

- Tourists rent out cottages in country side or sometimes become paying guests of villagers by residing with them
- Village tourism activities like farm-camping, horse riding will be provided to tourists in villages
- Traditionally furnished accommodation and food

### **Concept of Rural Tourism**

Development of rural tourism is now its nascent stage. The complexity of attractions makes it difficult to draw an exact definition. However, Lane B (1994) gives a framework.

In his view rural tourism should be

- Located in rural areas.
- Functionally rural i.e., small scale enterprises, open space, natural contact, heritage, traditional and societal practices etc.
- Rural in scale.
- Traditional in character.
- Take different forms representing the complex pattern of rural environment, economy, history and location.

According to Getz. D. and Page S.J. (1997) rural tourism can be described as

- The spectrum i.e., rural and wild.
- The rural appeal i.e., peace, solitude, lifestyle, nature, scenery, traditional people, recreation and adventure.
- The rural product and services.
- Involvement of rural entrepreneurs and operators

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**Broad Area of Rural Tourism**





### **Benefits of ‘Rural Tourism’**

Rural tourism’s greatest potential benefit is its ability to generate money which can translate in to numerous positive economic opportunities for locals and their communities. For local the first benefit of tourism development is jobs both within the tourism sector and outside of it. Tourism development means more income and profits for tourist related business. The economic multiplier model suggests that if local income form tourist expenditures is spent within local area, an increase in local income and jobs will follow. The following points will highlight the Benefits of rural tourism in Indian context.

- i) It is kind of sustainable Tourism.
- ii) Exploits resources in rural regions, causing little or no harmful impact .
- iii) Increases rural productivity.
- iv) Generates employment.
- v) Improves distribution of wealth.
- vi) Helps in conservation of the rural environment and culture.

- vii) Increases local people involvement and participation.
- viii) Boost local handicrafts, painting ,performing arts ,dance forms etc.
- ix) A suitable way of adapting traditional beliefs and values to modern time.
- x) Helps prevent rural – urban migration.
- xi) Infrastructure development.

### **UNDP Govt. Project - Rural tourism in India**

Rural tourism is gaining importance in Indian tourism with its economic and social benefits. It is estimated that Rs 4,300 crore additional revenue can be generated through rural tourism. It is going to play a vital role in bridging the gap between rural & urban India.

The Government of late, has realized what the rural India can offer to the rest of World. The tenth five-year plan has notified Tourism as one of the major sources for generating employment and promoting sustainable livelihoods. The union ministry of Tourism in collaboration with UNDP has launched the Endogenous Tourism project in the year 2004, linked to the existing rural tourism scheme of the government. The UNDP has committed \$ 2.5 million for the project.

UNDP will help in areas of capacity building, involvement of NGOs, local communities and artisans forge strong community – private and public sector partnerships.

The government has decided to develop necessary infrastructure for facilitating rural tourism. So far the Ministry of Tourism Government of India, with the help of State tourism department has identified 31 villages across the country as tourist sites and providing Rs. 50,000 lakh as financial assistance for each project. Besides, an additional amount of Rs. 20 lakh would be provided for developing logistic facilities and starting community participation centers through self-help groups.



In addition the following 30 GOI-UNDP Endogenous Rural Tourism Projects for software component for Software of Rs. 20.00 lakh each have also been sanctioned during 2004-2005:-

<b>No.</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>State</b>
1.	Pochampalli	Nalgonda	Andhra Pradesh
2.	Hodka	Kachchh	Gujarat
3.	Sulibhanjan-Khultabad	Aurangabad	Maharashtra
4.	Aranmula	Pathanamthitta	Kerala
5.	Karaikudi	Sivaganga	Tamil Nadu
6.	Banavasi	Uttar Kannada	Karnataka
7.	Chitrakote	Bastar	Chhattisgarh
8.	Pranpur	Ashok Nagar	Madhya Pradesh
9.	Nepura	Nalanda	Bihar
10.	Raghurajpur	Puri	Orissa
11.	Kazhugumalai	Thoothukudi	Tamil Nadu
12.	Kumbalangi	Ernakulam	Kerala
13.	Nagar	Kullu	Himachal Pradesh
14.	Lachen	North District	Sikkim
15.	Sualkuchi	Kamrup	Assam
16.	Haldighati	Rajsamand	Rajasthan
17.	Jageshwar	Almora	Uttanchal
18.	Mana	Chamoli	Uttanchal
19.	Srikalahasti	Chittoor	Andhra Pradesh
20.	Durgapur	Golaghat	Assam
21.	Nagarnar	Bastar	Chhattisgarh
22.	Jyotisar	Kurukshetra	Haryana
23.	Chaugan	Mandla	Madhya Pradesh



24.	Pipli	Puri	Orissa
25.	Rajasansi	Amritsar	Punjab
26.	Neemrana	Alwar	Rajasthan
27.	Samode	Jaipur	Rajasthan
28.	Kamlasagar	West Tripura	Tripura
29.	Bhaguwala	Saharanpur	Uttar Pradesh
30.	Ballabhpur	Birbhum	West Bengal
31.	Mukutamipur	Bankura	West Bengal

### **Recommendations:**

Required for rural tourism are the following.

- Plan for sustainable growth of rural tourism
- Invest in new technology
- Business must balance economics with people, culture and environment.
- Develop rural tourism protecting natural resources, local heritage and lifestyles.
- Fill the narrow gaps between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'.
- Promote traditional tourism products.
- Improve quality, value of rural tourism.
- Give quality standards of services at all levels
- Transfer skills and best practice.
- Share information to make better business decisions.
- Communicate more effectively.
- Share the pursuit of long-term growth and prosperity.
- Set environmental policy goals.
- Develop and deploy skills effectively.
- Collaborate on information requirements.
- Develop confidence on all sides



## Conclusion

If a proper marketing plan is done Rural tourism, it could bring lots of benefit to our society. It could be a sustainable revenue generating project for rural development of our government. It can help inflow to resources from urban to the rural economy. It can prevent migration of rural people to urban. Both short-term and long-term planning, implementing and monitoring are vital in avoiding damage to rural areas. Environmental management, local involvement, sound legislation, sustainable marketing, and realistic planning are crucial for development of rural tourism.

Rural tourism will emerged as an important instrument for sustainable human development including poverty alleviation, employment generation, environmental regeneration and development of remote areas and advancement of women and other disadvantaged groups in the country apart from promoting social integration and international understanding. The government should promote rural tourism to ensure sustainable economic development and positive social change.

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