

Marketing Strategies for Developing Rural Tourism in Bihar

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ABSTRACT :-The word tourism has been defined in various ways but may be thought of as the relationship and phenomena arising out of the journeys and temporary stay of people travelling privately for leisure and recreation purpose. Tourism is thus, a multifaceted activity and geographically complete one as different services are sought and supplied at different stages from the origin to the destination.

Bihar with the unparalleled range and diversity of natural geographic cultural and artistic resources has room for the growth of the Tourism industry. Rural tourism in Bihar has the potentiality to grow at a high rate and can stimulate other consequential development of infrastructure of the destination and can stimulate other sectors like horticulture, handicrafts, transport, construction etc through its cross sectoral synergies.

Key words:-Rural tourism, leisure and recreation, multifaceted activity, consequential development, horticulture, handicrafts, cross sectoral synergies.

I. INTRODUCTION :-

Bihar has good potential for the development of tourism in the state. Due to flood prone area and minimum opportunities for the industries, tourism could be the first way for economic growth and employment generation in the state.

The soul of Bihar lives in its villages. Bihar has 45,098 villages 8,463 Gram Panchayat and more than 70 percentage of state population lives in villages. It ranks 3rd in the country in terms of population. It has a 6.55 percent to forest areas out of total areas, that is 94,163 sq.km. The state has a humid subtropical monsoon climate and annual rainfall is 127mm. Best time to visit Bihar is Oct-March every year. The land locked state of Bihar is surrounded by Nepal, West Bengal, Orissa, M.P, and U.P and comprises tour cultural regions- Bhojpur, Mithila, Magadh and chhotanagapur. It has 38 Districts. The length of National Highway in Bihar is 3754km and length of railway track is more than 5400km. In this way

Bihar have great potentiality to develop as a tourist destination.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY :-

The objective of the study is to identify the revenues of employment in Rural Bihar via tourism sector and pinpointing the areas of concern which may be helpful in contributing the economic development of the rural people in Bihar. The study has been carried out with the following objective-

- To study the contribution of rural tourism in employment generation in rural Bihar.
- To identify rural tourism potential in Bihar.
- To analyse the various services provided by tourism industry in Bihar.
- To analyse how rural tourism can afford the promotion of economy of Bihar.
- To analyse the political, social, economic and religious background of Bihar and
- To make recommendations and suggestions towards the speedy growth of tourism industry especially rural tourism in Bihar.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY :-

Tourism is an economic activity of immense global importance today. Mobility of man for exploration of new land and resources, learn about customs and manners of people in other countries laid the foundation of awareness in tourism in the history of civilization. Tourism although a late corner on scene is now fast growing sector earning a substantial amount of foreign exchange for the state. In the changed economic scenario, the Government of Bihar has begun viewing the industry in mega forms by announcing huge investment plans. Bihar is full of natural scenic beauty centralises old temple and heritage pilgrimage place of different regions like Buddhism, Jainism, and Muslims. Bihar is full of forest, mountains, rivers and lakes. But, the flow of tourists is merely a trickle.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :-

Experience in rural tourism have suggested that even in the absence of any promotional activity, thousands of foreign tourists

visit rural areas in Rajasthan, Gujarat and south india every year. This itself is the proof of the viability of the concept or rural tourism. And once infrastructure reaches to villages and the concept is marketed well domestically and internationally, nothing can stop a mini-boom in tourism industry in India as well.

The present study has been carried out entirely on the basis of the secondary sources of data. The nature of the study is analytical. Data for the study has been taken mainly from different-

- Books
- Journal and magazines
- Economic surveys
- Government of Bihar economic survey
- Government of Bihar reference Annual
- Annual report of Department of tourism- Govt of Bihar
- Annual report of tourism-Govt of India
- Discussion papers/ working papers
- Dissertation and thesis
- Website
- Newspaper and economic dailes

With the help of collected data and information, analysis and interpretation were made.

MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING RURAL TOURISM IN BIHAR :-

Tourism has been rightly said as a major social phenomenon of the societies all along and india is no exception. It is an indispensable sector for the economic development of the country. It is a low capital labour intensive industry having an economic multiplier effect and all the potential to stimulate other economic sectors through its forward and backward linkage with sectors like agriculture, horticulture, poultry, handicrafts, transport, construction and many others. The direct employment multiplier in case of tourism is fairly High. It is estimated to be about 2.36 which means that direct employment of one person in tourism creates employment opportunities for 1.36 persons in other enterprises like agriculture, horticulture, handicrafts etc (Kumar,2015).

THRUST AREAS FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT :-

The perspective plan for Bihar has identified the following thrust Areas for the development of tourism.

1. Thrust Areas for domestic tourists
 - Religious cultural and historical Tourism
 - Wildlife Tourism
 - Adventure tourism
 - Leisure Tourism
2. Thrust Areas for foreign tourists

- Eco-tourism-waterfall, wild life observation, bird watching etc.
- Heritage Tourism guided tour to temples and forts Adventure tourism- para sailing, yatching.
- Health Tourism- Ayurvedic parlour/health resorts.
- Golfing Tourism
- Fairs and festivals
- Craft village

STRATEGY FOR TOURISM PROMOTION :-

Keeping in view the above thrust Areas, four fold strategy for tourism development has been envisaged so as to maximize the economic benefits.

- Diversify the marketing mix
- Increase tourist spending by developing and upgrading tourists facilities;
- Increase the emphasis on cultural; natural and other tourists attraction; and
- Create a positive image of Bihar

It has been well recognised that it is the high- end tourists which should be focused and all out efforts are required to bring high-end tourists in more numbers. Therefore, the high-end tourists, both domestic and foreign, should be targeted and marketing strategies should be adopted accordingly.

MARKETING STRATEGY -

To implement the strategy for tourism development mentioned above the following marketing strategy is set forth-

1. Develop the perception of Bihar in the major source Market areas of India and abroad as a destination offering quality attraction, facilities and experiences.
2. Design and execute marketing activities which build on Bihar- distinctive features and advantages.
3. Attract additional high spending tourists, taking account of various ways in which spending can be enhanced.
4. Create destination awareness by the state government, which facilitates the private sector in its own marketing efforts.
5. Conducting marketing and promotional activities targeted at market segments identified by ongoing market research.
6. Expand penetration in the Asian markets, particularly Japan, south korea, Bangladesh, and sri-lanka and European markets viz...U.K, Germany, U.S.A, Australia etc.

The marketing strategy should also include the need to portray a favourable but realistic image of the state, image building is especially important

because of the publicities that have taken place about the natural calamities as well as ethnic development.

PROMOTION PROGRAMME

The promotion programme may be based on four considerations:

The marketing strategy, knowledge of marketing distribution channels, the promotion techniques available and the amount of the budget. This programme has been drawn for a period of twenty years covering three years of immediate phase and entire period of five years of short term phase and twelve years of long term focussing on overseas promotion, production of literature, public relations and special campaign. A sum of Rs15 lakh each year has been provided. The proposed strategy for promoting tourism is set forth as follows-

Formulate and promote 'Discover Bihar' campaigns

1. Promote one week or weekend- inclusive package.
2. Promote holiday taking through seminars and exhibits at various places during 'carnival' and other fairs and festivals.
3. Publicize Tourism through newspaper holiday supplements and editorial coverage, audiovisual material- slide, Film and video shows for use in travel seminars, world TVs.
4. Launching a Monthly magazine on Bihar tourism by the state tourism department.
5. Enlist the cooperation of the industry, trade unions and service organisations, to develop and promote domestic tourism.
6. Encourage the extensive use of internet/ world wide web as a promotional tool for Tourism development.
7. Prepare printed material such as brochures, posters, maps, postcards and travel agent manuals, and distributing these to travel agents, tour operators and the tourist consumer.
8. Participate in travel Trade fairs, exhibitions etc.
9. Undertake special promotional trips to the market countries in order to contact travel agents and tour operators.
10. Invite and host visits by tour operators and travel writers and photographers.

TOURISTS INFORMATION SERVICES-

An important function of marketing and promotion is providing information to tourists before and after they arrive at their destinations. Various types of information should be made available- general geographical, historical, and

cultural background of the area, the attractions, facilities and services (and their costs) those are available; transportation schedules; location of shopping, medical and postal facilities, consulates embassies and religious institutions; and other specific information. It is also very important to inform tourists about local customs, dress and behavioural codes, tipping policy, and any security problems they should be aware of.

The absence of an up-to-date information systems with quick retrieval facilities leads to poor tourists facilitation. The technological developments in the field of communication and computers, should therefore, be profitably utilised for establishing a tourist information network.

COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR:-

The respective roles of the government and private sector should be clearly defined, with their promotional activities closely co-ordinated. It is proposed to establish a joint promotion board for coordinating and carrying out promotional activities. The role of panchayats in developing Rural Tourism in the state has to be given a special importance.

A rural tourism experience can be created through the natural, cultural, human or capital resources indigenous to the rural areas would have to be attractive to tourists (Redefining Tourism, UNDP 2008).

The process of creating that differentiated experience involves a No. of components attached to a rural destination. The components are attractions (which should be unadulterated and authentic), accessibility (has to be quickly reachable from cities or any other primary tourists destination with an excitement for a rustic feel ahead), pricing (often perceived as value for money) and quality of service supported by basic infrastructure (also enabling for an extended stay). Competitive advantage of a place depends on how these components are managed individually and as well as combined. Travel industry largely relies on marketing experiences. It's because, experiences are at the core of the entire industry and everything else revolves around experiences. Those experiences could be of visual appreciation, cultural immersion and spiritual elevation. By and large tourists pay for experiences.

MARKETING INITIATIVES BY MINISTRY OF TOURISM, GOI

1. Rural tourism site committees were encouraged to launch their own websites as part of decentralised marketing strategy
 2. Sub- brand explore rural was given ample space alongside the globally recognised brand incredible india was late decommissioned in 2010)
 3. 15 Rural Tourism sites were choosen and listed as ecoholiday sites for foreign tourists during visit India 2009.
 4. Wide media coverage through promotions at world Tourism Mart (WTM), Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) and international Tourism Borse (ITB) and similar trade fairs and shows.
 5. Structural involvement of site artisans in Dilli Haat, Mega craft melas in different cities across the country.
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II. CONCLUSION:-

Many of the practices, rituals and the nature may be the integral part of villagers day to day life.They may appear to be so routine.They may not be aware of the value of all these resources, leave alone exploiting them for economic good. Therefore , Development agencies need to educate the rural folks about the value and strength of what they possess video clippings, documentaries, short films, exhibitions,etc come in handy in portraying how rural tourism is beneficial and possible.

People in general and villagers in particular are not aware about the concept, process and benefits of the village tourism.

There are a number of villages where village tourism may be developed with the collaboration of panchayats.

Hence, there is a need to make panchayats functionaries aware particularly the chairpersons of all tiers of the panchayats about the concept and benefits of the village tourism.In this context, state institute of Rural Development and panchayati Raj with the collaboration of the tourism department of the state governments may organize workshop of selected personnel of panchayats.such workshops may be organised at district level.

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