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Tourism in Maharashtra



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Abstract

Tourism emerged as the largest global industry of the twenty first century. In the new millennium, global economy will be governed by technology, telecommunication and tourism. It has potential to create the maximum number of jobs will be created by the tourism industry in the next twenty-five year. There has been rate race among the developed and developing countries to expand tourism indiscriminately, which has resulted into severe cultural and ecological damages to the host country. Development does not mean increase in GNP and GDP alone but it must add to prosperity and happiness. An important feature of the tourism industry is its contribution to the national integration and creation of harmonious social and cultural environment. It also encourages respect for and preservation of monuments and heritage properties. WTO and UNEP are spearheading on efforts to create such a happy scenario. By 2020, tourism is poised to be the single most important influence on global trade and commerce.

Keywords : tourism, global trade and commerce, development, global economy

Research Paper

Technical Definition of Tourism :

Technical definitions of tourism are commonly used by organisations seeking to define the population to be measured, and there are three principle features, which normally have to define:

1. Purpose of travel (business, holiday-markers, visits to friends, relatives and other reasons).
2. The time dimension involves in the tourism visit, which requires a minimum and a maximum period of time spent away from the home area and the time spent at the destination. In most cases, this would involve a minimum stay of more than twenty four hours away from home and less than as maximum.
3. Those situation where tourists may or may not be included as tourists, such as cruise passengers, those tourists in transit at particular point of embarkation/departure and excursionists who stay less than twenty four hours at a destination.

Tourism in India:

Today India is a home tops for all kinds of people from different religion. It is having its own unique culture and tradition. Due to its richness, India was of strategic and economic importance to many Empires. The traditional India rulers like the Marathas, Marvars, Peshwas, Rajput and many other shaped the places like Gwalior, Udapur, Jaipur, Pune, Mysore and many more. These places have priceless monuments and forts like Shaniwar Wada, Raigad fort and world famous palace. Indian was invaded first by the Mughals in the fourteenth and fifteenth. They ruled for almost four centuries and are significant part of Indian History. The Taj Mahal, Qutub Minar, Red fort and many other monuments reflect Mughal architecture. These have influenced Indian culture and are seen even today in modern India.

Maharashtra State:

The Maharashtra implies largeness, 'Maha' means big and 'Rashtra' means state implying that it is one of the largest states in India. The picturesque state in Western India, with a 720 km coastline is dotted by rugged forts standing as mute witnesses down the ages to the march of warrior kings, foreign trading vessels and invaders from across the seas. A large area of the state rests on high plateau, historically the main center of the Maratha Empire, which successfully defied the might of the Mughals under the fearless rule of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Many of the inland and coastal forts of Maharashtra are a legacy of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj rule. Running parallel to the coast are the Western Ghats, which harbor some of the most scenic and

inviting hill stations particularly Matheran and Mahabaleshwar. The Ghats divide the Deccan from the Konkan coast, with its unspoiled beeches, today being developed as modern resorts like Ganpatipule and Sindhudurg, Mumbai, the booming capital of the state and the economic powerhouse of India, is the most affluent and industrialized city in the country today.

Maharashtra has been a lot in its history right from the ideal rule of the great Maratha ruler 'Raje Shivaji' till the paradoxical ending of Chhatrapatis, the period of instability, the loyalty of the Peshwas, their reign to the supreme power, to their total disasters and eventually the fall to the British, the further rise of leaders like Lokmanya Tilak, Agarkar, Savarkar their varying ideologies but their same significant aim of achieving independence for their country and the people, birth of the Ganesh Chaturthi Festival and much more the state and its monuments still echo the glory of its history. One must not miss a state like Maharashtra that has progressed in every sphere be it art and culture or economy. The state has everything for a visitor right from pristine beaches, impressive forts and monuments, cool hill station retreats, pilgrimage, sanctuaries and lastly but not to forget its cities like Mumbai, Pune, Nasik, Aurangabad, Kolhapur of which Mumbai is the economic capital of our country that give a tourist a fulfilling experience.

Tourism in Maharashtra:

Karle is 3km north of the town of Karle Caves junction, 11 km from Lonavala. It is a Buddhist cave. It is largest and the best preserved. In the porch of cave, dividing the three doorways, are panels of figures in six couples, presumed to have been the wealthy patrons of the hall. Two rows of octagonal columns with pot-shaped bases divide the interior into three, forming a wide central aisle and on the outside, a hall that allowed devotees to circumambulate the monolithic stupa at the back. Above each pillar's fluted capital kneels a finely carved elephant mounted by two riders, one with arms draped over the other's shoulders. Amazingly, perishable remnants survive from the time when the hall was in use, teak ribs on the vaulted ceiling show that the stone was carved to resemble a wooden structural model. Surmounting the stupa are the remains of a carved wooden umbrella.

Some important tourist spot in Maharashtra are as follows :

Ajanta Caves:

Deep in the semi-arid hills of the Decca, lie the rock-cut caves of Ajanta. It was only in the nineteenth century, that the Ajanta group of caves, lying deep within the Sahyadri hills, buried

deep under a blanket of creepers and jungle, cut into the curved mountain side, above the Waghora River, were discovered. Many of the caves house panels depicting stories from the Jatakas, a rich mine of the several incarnations of the Buddha. Images of nymphs and princesses amongst others are also elaborately portrayed. The twenty nine caves were built as secluded retreats of the Buddhist monks, who taught and performed rituals in the Chaityas and Viharas. Using simple tools like hammer and chisel, the monks carved out the impressive figures adorning the walls of these structures. Exquisite wall painting and sculptures speak volumes of the India of yore. Cave 1 houses some of the most well-preserved wall paintings which include two great Bodhisattvas, Padmapani and Avalokiteshvara. Caves 2, 16, and 17 also contain amazing paintings, while caves 1, 4, 17, 19, 24, and 26 boast of some of the most divine sculptures. The flying 'apsara' of cave 17, and the images of Buddha preaching in cave 17, are a couple of unforgettable works of art. The Ajanta caves and the treasures they house are a landmark in the overall development of Buddhism as such.

Ellora Caves:

The Ellora caves lie 30 km northwest of Aurangabad. In all thirty four Buddhist Jain and Hindu caves in number have an amazing wealth of sculpture. These are carved into the sides of a basaltic hill. The finest specimens of cave temple architecture, they house elaborates facades and exquisitely adorned interiors. These structures representing the three faiths of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, were carved during the 350AD to 700 AD period. The twelve caves to the south are Buddhist, the seventeen in the centre dedicated to Hinduism, and the five caves to the north are Jain. The sculpture in the Buddhist caves accurately conveys the nobility, grace and serenity inherent in the Buddha. Most of the caves are Viharas or Monastery halls used by the monks for study, solitary meditation and worship. The Kailasa temple in cave sixteen, an architectural wonder is Ellora's masterpiece. The entire structure having been carved out of a monolith, the process taking over a century to finish. This mountain abode of Lord Shiva is an all probability, the world's largest monolith, the gateway, pavilion, assembly hall, sanctum and tower, all hewn out of a single rock. Gigantic, thought it is, it remains one of the most delicate and intricate ancient works of art. The Dumar Lena cave resembles the famous cave-temple at Elephanta and dedicated to Lord Shiva.

The Jain caves are about a mile away from the Dailasa temple, amongst which caves thirty two, houses a beautiful shrine adorned with fine carvings of a lotus flower on the roof, and a 'yakshi'

on a lion under a mango tree, while caves thirty two and thirty four contain grand statues of Parasnath. The other Jain caves sport the image of Tirthankaras and one of them has a seated figure of Mahavira, so deeply immersed in meditation that creepers have grown over his body.

Lonavala and Khandala:

Lonavala and Khandala are two charming hill station on the western slopes of the Sahyadris, five km apart, that straddle the Mumbai-Pune highway at an altitude of 625m the name 'Lonavala' is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Lanavli' which means a city surrounded by many caves, caves like Karla caves, caves near Ekvira temple are famous, where the 'Pandavas' lived. Khandala is smaller and the cooler of the two and much closer to nature.

Mahabaleshwar:

Mahabaleshwar is the highest point in the Western Ghats, situated at an altitude of 1372 meters. It is the most visited hill station in Maharashtra. The table land, a mountain top completely flat spread over 2.5sq. Km. area is famous due to its rear nature. Also para-gliding can be enjoyed at Mahabaleshwar. In the heart of the town is a beautiful lake where tourists enjoy the scenic beauty while rowing and sizzling through the cold water. The orchid at Mahabaleshwar offers the freshest strawberries. All most of the farmhouses you can actually pluck your choice of strawberries and many other fruits.

Panchagani:

If you visit Mahabaleshwar you have visit to Panchagani and vice versa. Panchagani is a well known hill station of Maharashtra. Its name came from the hills around it. At an altitude of 1334 mts, it is just 38 mts below Mahabaleshwar. The distances between the two hill stations measures about eighteen kms while the fall in altitude is just 38 mts.

Matheran:

Matheran is an undulating hilltop cloaked in shady trees that sprawls languidly at an altitude of 800m the journey involves an adventurous two hours ascent in a toy train, its eight sq kms cover a hilltop in the Sahyadris, or Western Ghats and is the closet hill station of Mumbai. It is unique in that no motor transport is allowed within its area. Matheran's cliffs with incredibly steep drops to the plains below create stunning viewing points. These panoramic vistas, by day and night, leave one feeling light-headed.

Shirdi:

Shirdi is 302 km away from the Mumbai, a small village in Ahmednagar district, Shirdi has become famous all over India on account of its association with the renowned Saint Sai Baba. Pilgrims belonging to all faiths, through here all the year around. The renewed temple is huge and the facilities are very good. Through whole week the temple is crowded with devotees, but Thursday, being Saibaba a day it is very much crowded. Devotees offer prayers from morning to evening. The nearest railway station is Manmad and than Nasik. From both the places, you will get buses as well as taxies, jeeps and tourist buses to Shirdi. It is sixty km from Manmad and 123 kms from Nasik. The nearest airport is Aurangabad; it is 145 km away from Saibaba temple, which is connected by Indian airlines and private airlines with other cities. The road distance from Pune to Shirdi is 204 km and from Aurangabad is 144 km. Lodges and ashrams are available near the temple. Mostly people from outstation come at night and early morning they offer the prayer to Sri Sai Baba.

Conclusion:

In short, sociologically and economically tourist spot is very important for each and every country. India needs to improve their tourist destination and attract foreign tourist from various country because tourism is the main source of income. For foreign tourist there are unfavorable factors like filth, unhealthy conditions, red-tape, atmospheric and water pollution. Indian tourism needs a new approach and expansion to rural areas as pad at the diversification. In Maharashtra Ajanta caves is an international tourist spot as well as Sai Baba temple is very famous in India. Mahabaleshwar and Matheran are very famous tourist spots. However, there is need to improve and provide basic facilities for tourists.

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