



Outbound Travel and Tourism - An Opportunity Untapped

For Prelims: Tourism in India, Schemes Related to tourism.

For Mains: Significance and Challenges related to Tourism in India.

Why in News?

Recently a report was released titled 'Outbound Travel and Tourism - An Opportunity Untapped', which shows India's outbound tourism will surpass USD 42 billion by 2024.

- Outbound tourism is the **act of travelling 'out' of the home country** for the purposes of tourism.

What are the Findings of the Report?

- The Indian outbound travel market is **among the fastest growing markets globally with approximately 80 million passport levels of purchasing power**, especially among the middle class.
- With a growing economy, young population, and growing middle class, **India is ideally positioned to become one of the most lucrative outbound tourism markets** in the world.
- Europe sees 20% of the travellers from India's outbound traffic. 10 % travel to Australia and New Zealand, while the rest of the traffic is towards Southeast Asia.
- **In 2021, Indians spent approximately USD 12.6 billion in outbound trips**, compared to USD 22.9 billion in 2019. While the reason for decrease in spending could be due to the pandemic, these figures point out the huge value that can be captured from Indian outbound travellers.

What are the Recommendations?

- Government can look at steps like **increasing direct connections to popular and upcoming destinations**, allowing foreign cruise vessels to operate on Indian waters, besides taking concerted and **coordinated efforts on multiple fronts** to propel the outbound tourism market.
- **Allowing foreign cruise vessels to include Indian destinations** as a stop would encourage **both inbound and outbound tourism** as well as increase revenue for Indian ports.
- With the positive response of foreign delegations and their policies, India can establish **bilateral relations with tourist-friendly countries** for both inbound and outbound tourists.

What is the Scenario of Tourism in India?

- **About:**
 - India attracted a lot of travellers in the past due to its fabled wealth. Visit of [Hieun-tsang](#), **a devout Chinese Buddhist is an example of this.**
 - Pilgrim Travel got a boost when **Emperors like Ashoka and Harsha started building rest houses** for pilgrims.
 - Arthashastra' pointing out the **importance of the travel infrastructure for the state,**

which played an important role in the past.

- Post-Independence, Tourism continuously remained part of the **Five Year Plans (FYP)**.
 - Different forms of Tourism like Business Tourism, Health Tourism, and Wildlife Tourism etc. were introduced in India after seventh FYP.

▪ **Status:**

- India's Tourism is ranked at 10th position in terms of its contribution to World **GDP (Gross Domestic Product)** in the World Travel and Tourism Council's report in 2019.
 - During 2019, contribution of travel & tourism to GDP was 6.8% of the total economy, Rs. 13,68,100 crore (USD 194.30 billion).
- India as of now in 2021 has 40 sites listed under '**World Heritage List**', **6th highest (32 cultural, 7 natural and 1 mixed site) in the world.**
 - **Dholavira and Ramappa Temple (Telangana)** are the latest ones.
- In FY20, the tourism sector in India accounted for 39 million jobs, which was 8.0 % of the total employment in the country. By 2029, it is expected to account for about 53 million jobs.

▪ **Significance:**

- **Service Sector:**
 - It gives a push to the service sector. A large number of businesses engaged in the service sector such as airlines, hotel, surface transportation, etc. grows with the growth of the tourism industry.
- **Foreign Exchange:**
 - Foreign Travellers help India in getting **Foreign Exchange.**
 - The foreign exchange earnings from 2016 to 2019 grew at a CAGR of 7% but dipped in 2020 due to the **Covid-19 pandemic.**
- **Preservation of National Heritage:**
 - Tourism helps in preservation of National Heritage and Environment by bringing in focus the importance of sites and the need to preserve them.
- **Renewal of Cultural Pride:**
 - Tourist spots being appreciated globally instills a sense of pride among Indian residents.
- **Infrastructural Development:**
 - Now-a-days, it is ensured that Travelers do not face any problem; multiple use infrastructures are getting developed at several tourist places.
- **Recognition:**
 - It helps in bringing India on the global map of tourism, earning appreciation, recognition and initiates cultural exchange.
- **Promotes Cultural Diplomacy:**
 - Tourism as a form of soft power, helps in promoting cultural diplomacy, people to people connect and thereby promotes friendship and cooperation between India and other countries.

▪ **Challenges:**

- **Lacking in Infrastructure:**
 - Tourists in India still face many infrastructure related problems like inadequate roads, water, sewer, hotels and telecommunications etc.
- **Safety and Security:**
 - Safety and security of tourists, especially of the foreign tourists, is a major hurdle to tourism development. Attacks on foreign nationals raise questions about India's ability to welcome tourists from far away countries.
- **Lack of Skilled Manpower:**
 - Lack of skilled manpower is another challenge to the Tourism Industry in India.
- **Absence of basic Amenities:**
 - Absence of basic amenities like drinking water, well maintained toilets, first aid, cafeteria etc. at tourist places.
- **Seasonality:**
 - Seasonality in Tourism, with the busy season being limited to six months from October to March and heavy rush in November and December.

What are the Initiatives Related to Tourism?

- [Swadesh Darshan Scheme](#)
- [National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive](#)
- [Iconic Tourist Sites](#)
- [Buddhist Conclave](#)
- [Dekho Apna Desh Initiative](#)

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