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## **ROLE OF FESTIVALS & EVENTS IN DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AT GUJARAT**

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# Role of Festivals & Events in Development of Tourism at Gujarat

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**Abstract – A tourism best practice is an innovative policy, strategy, programme, process or practice that is shown to produce superior results. Documented best practices are useful in formulation of tourism strategies to improve the tourism performance through increased competitiveness. The sharing of Best Practices allows State**

**Governments to consider how to adapt the experiences of other states in planning, marketing, maintenance and implementation of the tourism development plan for their states.**

**The Department of Tourism in the states has responsibility for implementation of tourism projects funded by the Department of Tourism, Government of India and the projects identified by them under their respective state tourism policy.**

**The tourism industry of India is economically important and grows rapidly. The World Travel & Tourism Council calculated that tourism generated INR6.4 trillion or 6.6% of the nation's GDP in 2012. It supported 39.5 million jobs, 7.7% of its total employment. The sector is predicted to grow at an average annual rate of 7.9% from 2013 to 2023. This gives India the third rank among countries with the fastest growing tourism industries over the next decade. India has a large medical tourism sector which is expected to grow at an estimated rate of 30% annually to reach about 95 billion by 2015. This paper discusses how India is emerging as a popular tourist destination in the world, driven by the focus on innovation and creating value for tourists. It aimed change the attitude and behavior toward foreign tourists by stressing on the aspect that a guest has been held in high esteem in India since ancient times. It also examines the impact of India's economic growth on tourism, Contributors to economic growth, Role of Tourism industry in India's GDP, Foreign versus Domestic Tourists. The paper also explores that there has been a tremendous growth in tourism in India because of the policies of the government and support from all levels. Tourism is considered to be an economic bonanza. It is a multi-segment industry. While gauging the positive economic effects of tourism, we study its contribution to the generation of national income, expansion of employment opportunities, rising of tax revenue, generation of foreign exchange and transformation of regional economy. Travel & Tourism is an important economic activity in most countries around the world. As well as its direct economic impact, the industry has significant indirect and induced impacts. Indian Tourism offers a potpourri of different cultures, traditions, festivals, and places of interest. There are a lot of options for the tourists. India is a country with rich cultural and traditional diversity. This aspect is even reflected in its tourism. The different parts of the country offer wide variety of interesting places to visit.**

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## INTRODUCTION

Tourism in India is on boom platform in this time. India has great potential in tourism industry to be important tourist destination; India is also using these opportunities to hit at a door step. India has growth in tourism due to higher disposable income to spend. Moreover, India is having top destination in world in I.T field so many tourists visit India for the purpose of business. "Incredible India" campaign of Indian tourism department played a significant role to make hot and happening place in world. Tourism in India has strong relevance with employment generation as well as

economic development. It is also noted that it helps to have equitable distribution of income and wealth. Moreover, it brings people of diversity together that makes better understanding of their political, cultural, educational differences. Fortunately India is blessed with worthy tourism attractions which attract tourists from all boundaries of world. India is enjoyed peculiarities of unmatched class which put India at a better stand. Ancient architectural monuments, Ancient temples, Islamic mosques, sand stone built houses in Jodhpur, cultural differences of 1652 spoken languages add colors to cultural India. India has diversity from deserts of Rajasthan to 'God's own

country' Kerala, from landscapes and hills of Gujarat to valley of Kashmir, from beaches of Goa to mountains of Himachal. Thus, all these things support India to enjoy unique position among world's renowned tourist destinations. Apart from economic benefits tourism works as an instrument to promote cultural exchange as well as international cooperation. Tourism has been a major source of invisible revenue for current account of balance of payment. However, India faced set back in the year 1996 to 1998. Government too made serious efforts to accelerate the growth of tourism in India as tourism works as a force to economic growth. India had organized system even before Independence foreign tourists in large number were attracted to the valley of Kashmir, it laid innovative foundation in the field of tourism. In Kashmir tourist got facilities like house boats in Dal Lake and tented accommodation at Pahalgam. The period since independence force public as well as private facilitation for tourists with reference to accommodation and transport. However, tourist expansion was not much developed or expanded to attract tourists at a globe as compared to other Asian countries like Malaysia, Thailand and China. In early year specific destinations succeed to attract customers like Delhi, Agra, Jaipur etc. Most importantly Thomas Cook was only better known travel agency.

India focused on providing basic amenities like health, education, infrastructure facilities and so on then it could allocate for the development of tourist destinations, even promotion and marketing of tourist destinations were less worked out. But now "huge leap forward" has been taken with innovative and imaginative steps for marketing of different tourist destinations. All these generate air of optimism for tourism development.

India has taken step to market "Incredible India" in exhibitions and fairs in New York, Singapore, and China. We have better connectivity and most of the major airports would be ready by 2009 and about 11 green field airports are in project pipeline. Government plans to repeat tourists rather one time tourist and to have continues flow of foreign earning.

Tourism has been recognized as an important economic driver because it is largest service industry occupies 6.23% in national GDP and 8.78% in total employment in the country. Tourism industry of India generated about US\$100 billion by in 2008 and that is expected to increase by US\$ 275.5 billion by 2018 at annual average growth rate of 9.14%. The ministry of Tourism of India is the nodal agency for the development and promotion of tourism sector in India and responsible to effectively promote "Incredible India" campaign.

World Travel and Tourism Council states that India will be tourism hotspot from 200-18 having the highest 10 year growth potential. India is ranked 6th in terms of price competitiveness and 39th in terms of safety by the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2007.

Despite short and medium term difficulties, tourism revenues are expected to rush forward by 42% from 2007 to 2017.

## TOURISM IN GUJARAT

Tourism is today the world's largest industry. It provides a robust gross output approaching \$304 trillion, employing more than 200 million people, and is attracting the attention of academicians worldwide. With 11 per cent of consumer spending, 11 per cent of all capital investment and 7 per cent of all government spending, this industry is considered to be one of the most crucial sectors of the world economy. It is also the backbone for allied sectors like hospitality, civil aviation and transport.

The immense growth opportunities in this sector, the increasing consumer expenditure on travelling and the government's increasing investments in the tourism industry make this a topic worth studying. In the light of these developments, it is worth looking more closely at the aggressive marketing campaign taken up by the Gujarat tourism ministry.

The most reliable superstar of the Indian film industry donning the cowboy look and getting face to face with Asiatic lions at Gir has forced television viewers to see Gujarat in a completely new light. Going ahead, let's look at the following:

1. The position of India and Gujarat in the context of world tourism
2. Gujarat's offering as a tourist destination
3. Initiatives taken up by the state government to develop Gujarat as a tourism destination
4. Marketing campaigns of the Gujarat tourism ministry

Typically, Gujarat is perceived as the land of the Mahatma, people with extraordinary business acumen, rich culture, handicrafts and so on. Gujarat is well known for its industrial and agricultural growth, and has been making headlines by accounting for 16 per cent of India's manufacturing output and 12.7 per cent of India's investments. But Gujarat had rarely made a mark as a tourist destination. Gujarat was nowhere on the tourist map of India— let alone the world map! Here is a quick look at some facts:

1. Compared to all the states and union territories in India, Gujarat ranks 10th in domestic tourist visits and 15th in foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs). Whereas states like Kerala recorded earnings of Rs 173.4 billion from tourism in 2010.
2. Gujarat could not carve for itself a distinct identity as a tourist getaway, the way its rivals like Rajasthan, Kerala or Goa could.

3. In spite of Gujarat being rated among the ten most unsung places of the world (by Lonely Planet), the share of tourism in its GDP is merely about 3.5 per cent.
4. The people of Gujarat are known for their love of travelling. If estimates of travel agency owners are to be believed, of every 100 Indians travelling abroad, more than 50 are from Gujarat. However, most people of Gujarat preferred travelling to other states or countries for leisure and entertainment.
5. There is a lack of quality accommodation and transport facilities across all major tourist destinations of Gujarat.
6. A series of calamities—natural and man-made—in the recent past also put tourism on the back foot.
7. Language is a major barrier; especially when a foreign tourist travels alone or to places away from Ahmedabad.

In Gujarat, Government took initiative to establish separate Tourism Department in the year of 1973. Even government established Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Limited in the year 1978 entrusted with the task of developing tourism related commercial activities. At present Corporation is working on the task like developing lodging boarding, transportation, way side catering, arranging cultural festivals and exhibitions. Corporation has worked for set up accommodation facilities at Chorvad, Mandavi, Veralval, Tithal, Somnath, Dwarka, Pavagadh as well as Dakor and Palitana. Recently, Corporation has introduced The Royal Orient Train in collaboration with Indian Railways.

Even it should be noted that in spite of having all range of tourism attractions, state has not received much appreciation and expected results in comparison of other states. Even government introduced tourism in 1991, but it did not obtain abundant response from private sectors because of having handful of benefits but legal and administrative constraints. However, this was a time when government of India announced tourism as a separate industry, this effort offered various bonus, incentives and reliefs to industry.

In line with the effort of Indian government, Gujarat government failed to expand its tourism potential at the fullest in comparison of other states, it was due to different factors like lack of effective policies, marketing and even basic or decent facilities to be provided to tourists to attract them to Gujarat.

Gujarat tourism policy was introduced with different objectives like generation of employment policy,

identifying tourist destinations in state, development of pilgrimage centers at tourist destinations, creating basic facilities like infrastructure as a tourist spot. Government also took initiative for securing active involvement of private sectors in the development of tourism in state like...

- By giving tourism a separate industry, state enabled tourism to avail benefits which are received by industry.
- Government announces various special packages for encouraging new tourism projects and even to expand existing units.
- Strengthen infrastructural facilities in Special Tourism Areas which will be notified latter on.
- Special care will be taken to have coordination between Central government, State government and local bodies.
- Government will too try to set up effective linkages between national and international tour operators, reputed travel agents, hotel chains and global institutions such as WTO.

Government is planning to offer tax holidays for 5 to 10 years in respect of Sales tax, Purchase tax, Electricity tax, Luxury tax, Entertainment tax up to 100% of capital investment to various tourism projects located in Special Tourism Areas whether declared by state government or central government on designated National and State highways. Even necessary administrative efforts will be made at the State and District Level to operate the incentive schemes. With the purpose to market tourism products, to secure wide publicity government will undertake publicity of facilities being offered by the travel agents and tourism operators.

The State's Tourism Policy (2003-2010) under "Gujarat Infrastructure Agenda- Vision 2010" prepared by Gujarat Infrastructure Development Board (GIDB) highlights diversifications of tourism products in order to attract more tourists through a varied consumer choice. Comprehensive development of pilgrimage centers, event based tourism, creating adequate facilities for budget tourist, strengthening of infrastructure, particularly in Special Tourism Areas are the other aspects of tourism policy. Government would also encourage building effective linkages with the relevant economic agents and agencies such as the national and international tour operators and travel agents of reputed, hotel chains and global institutions connected with tourism such as WTO.



## TOURISM INDUSTRY IN INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the world, tourism brings money to cities and countries. Tourism also provides jobs for the local residents, further benefiting the destination. India has realized the profits available from this sector. Thanks to its growing economy and promoting itself as a culturally rich and diverse nation, India's tourism industry now brings billions of dollars into the economy each year. The growth in the tourism industry is due to the rise in the arrival of more and more foreign tourists and the increase in the number of domestic tourists.

Words are few to explain the beauty of India. India is a country with diversified culture and traditions. The natural beauty of India, festivals, dresses, heritage sites of India are very popular among tourists. These things fascinate travelers to come here. India has so many scenic blessed places like Kerala, Darjeeling, Goa, Kashmir, Shimla (I am just having few names) and Manali. These places are very popular. These places are prime attraction of travelers from across the world. There are also so many other places worth visiting, like Delhi Kutub Minar /Agra Tajmahal/Hyderabad Charminar and Salarjung museum /Chennai a city of fine arts / Bangalore., Known as the Garden City for its lush landscape, lakes and temperate climate, it aptly represents India's marriage of past and present, / Kerala known as God's own country/ Kolkata was arguably second only to London in administrative importance in the British Empire. Home of luminaries like Rabindranath Tagore, Amartya Sen, Mother Teresa, and Satyajit Ray, the city is often referred to as the "cultural capital of India" etc. The Government of India has established the Ministry of Tourism in order to boost Tourism in India. The Ministry of Tourism has undertaken many projects to showcase India as a perfect Tourist destination and create a visitor-friendly image of the country. The major steps taken by the Government were the Atithi Devo Bhavah Campaign which gave a widespread message of "honour your Guest as he is always equivalent to God" and the Incredible India Campaign which was incredibly successful in creating a colorful and a gorgeous image of our country as a perfect holiday destination. Dr. K. Chiranjeevi, Hon'ble Minister for State for Tourism (IC) launched the Ministry of Tourism's Incredible India 2013 Calendar. The attractive Calendar is based on the theme "Find What You Seek" as part of Phase II of the Incredible India campaign, which was launched during World.

India is a country known for its lavish treatment to all visitors, no matter where they come from. Its visitor-friendly traditions, varied life styles and cultural heritage and colorful fairs and festivals held abiding attractions for the tourists. The other attractions include beautiful beaches, forests and wild life and landscapes for eco-tourism; snow, river and mountain peaks for adventure tourism; technological parks and science museums for science tourism; centers of pilgrimage for spiritual tourism; heritage, trains and

hotels for heritage tourism. Yoga, Ayurveda and natural health resorts and hill stations also attract tourists.

The Indian handicrafts particularly, jewelry, carpets, leather goods, ivory and brass work are the main shopping items of foreign tourists. It is estimated through survey that nearly forty per cent of the tourist expenditure on shopping is spent on such items. Despite the economic slowdown, *medical tourism* in India is the fastest growing segment of tourism industry, according to the market research report "Booming Medical Tourism in India".

The report adds that India offers a great potential in the medical tourism industry. Factors such as low cost, scale and range of treatments provided in the country add to its attractiveness as a medical tourism destination.

Tourism is not only a growth engine but also an employment generator. According to the Economic Survey 2011-12, the sector has the capacity to create large scale employment both direct and indirect, for diverse sections in society, from the most specialized to unskilled workforce. It provides 6-7 per cent of the world's total jobs directly and millions more indirectly through the multiplier effect as per the UN's World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Completely skipping India because of so many incidents of rape and molestation that came to light last year," he said. The travel companies were hoping that because of the rupee depreciation, inbound tourism would get a major boost in 2013. However, as challenges persist, most are now pinning their hopes on 2014. "In the last one year, inbound tourism has not grown to our expectations due to sluggish economic climate in source markets. We believe this will change and Indian tour operators will reap the benefits of this revival. Another factor that will help India is the depreciation of the rupee by 12 per cent, which will boost inbound tourism in the 2014-15 seasons," said Arup Sen, director (special projects), Cox & Kings. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism in 2013 grew 2.2 per cent to \$18.1 billion, compared to a growth of seven percent in the previous years.

## GUJARAT—A TOURIST DESTINATION IN THE MAKING

Gujarat, located on the westernmost part of India, has one-third of India's coastline (1600 km). The state is bestowed with beautiful beaches, mountains, vast sand deserts, a thick forest cover and rich wildlife. Historically, the state of Gujarat has been one of the main centres of the Indus Valley civilisation.

It has innumerable monuments of architectural and archaeological importance, as well as temples and shrines of great religious significance.

**Spiritual tourism.** Gujarat has important religious spots that attract

both domestic as well as international travellers. Pilgrim spots like the Somnath Temple and Dwarkadhish Temple are visited by Hindus from all over the world at least once in their lifetime. Other major attractions are Ambaji, Pavagadh, Narayansarovar, Dakor, etc. It also has Jain temples like Sankheshwar, Taranga and Palitana.

**Nature tourism.** Gujarat has four national parks and 21 sanctuaries. It is home to the Asiatic Lion (Gir forest), the wild ass (in the Rann of Kutchh), whale sharks off the coast of Gujarat, and the Great Indian bustards. It is also home to the four-horned antelope and black buck, bears, Nilgai, the paradise flycatcher, chinkara and dolphins.

Migratory birds like flamingos, pelican and storks make Gujarat a birdwatcher's ideal travel destination. The Gulf of Kutchh is India's first Marine National Park.

**Heritage tourism.** Gujarat is rich in archaeological sites (more than 400) including the world heritage sites of Champaner, Indus Valley Civilisation sites like Lothal and Dholavera, ancient Buddhist sites, etc.

Ahmedabad's Heritage Walk is the only daily walking tour in India. The presence of many erstwhile princely states in Gujarat has resulted in the state having more than 20 heritage hotels including converted forts and palaces.

**Medical tourism.** According to Jaynarayan Vyas, state minister for health and tourism, last year 450,000 tourists visited the state for medical care. With the kind of capacity building lined up for the health care sector in the coming days, it is expected that Gujarat will soon surpass Singapore in medical tourism.

The total health care market in India was estimated to be about Rs 3200 billion in 2012, and on a conservative estimate, even if Gujarat gets 10 per cent share of this booming market, it will throw open huge opportunities.

Treatments related to advanced radiology, nuclear medicine applications, orthopaedics (especially joint replacements), cancer care, renal transplants, cardiac and GI surgeries, urology, IVF, cosmetic surgery, obesity treatment, neurology, and the advanced diagnostic capabilities of modern labs in Gujarat have proved to be a big attraction.

Another major reason behind the increase in the number of medical tourists to the state is the low cost of cardiac surgery, angiography, joint replacements, dentistry and other medical services, which is one-tenth the cost incurred abroad.

## SERVICES PROVIDED BY GUJARAT

The services and facilities in the tourist destination must be sufficient to meet the needs of the visitors. There must exist or be developed adequate food, lodging and transportation facilities, auxiliary facilities such as recreational, entertainment & shopping complexes and support services such as fire, police and medical care.

**Handicraft facilities** are well recognized in most of the tourist centre & in main cities of Gujarat. The Kutch, Jamnagar and Patan districts are the main centers of Handicraft products. Shops that sell and display handicraft products are found in almost all districts of Gujarat but most preferably in Kutch, Patan, Jamnagar and Surendranagar. This traditional industry depends mainly on local available raw materials such as wood, grasses, copper, cotton and wool. However there is a tough competition between imported items and handicrafts but still local hand-made beautiful craft has international demands.

The imported items and synthetic products are taking over market consumption of traditional items. The locals do not have better pricing facilities and well organized market places for their products. Most of the Kutch handicrafts are found in villages, which is beyond the reach of foreign and national tourists due to low transport infrastructure facilities which could make them accessible. The things to buy in these handicraft shops (Villages) are Patan-no-patola, Jamnagar ni Bandhni, Kachhi Bharatkam (embroidery), Sankheda ni Kashthakala, Stonework etc. Heer Bharat, Kanjri, Patchwork Quilts, Brocades, Mashru, Ajrakh printing (Handblock Prints), Bandhani or tie & dye, Beadwork, Wood crafts, Silverware, Metal, Patola (Queen of textiles) and Leather work are most favourable hand-made artifacts & textiles found in the state. "Gujarat handicrafts industry recently received a fresh lease of life when students of NIFT trained craftsmen in Vadodara, Rajkot, Khambhat, Ambaji, Patan and Kutch in beadwork, agate stone craft, stone carvings, terracotta art, embossed sheet enamellings and copper coating handmade bells. The intent was to improve the social-economic status of the local craftsmen by creating superior products which can fetch higher prices in the national as well as international markets".<sup>7</sup>

Another and most important service to cater tourist is **Restaurants and Rest Houses**. All developed tourist places of Gujarat are rich with restaurants and rest houses. The private sectors has bloomed at almost all important tourist locations with high class accommodation, transport and food services. Other than private sector the hotel Toran is also serving tourist by providing better accommodation and food services. But there is still a need for touristic

restaurants that can offer distinguished services and typical oriental food. At present the restaurant services provided by public sector do not satisfy the various tastes of tourists, nor do they reflect Gujarat cultural heritage. Huge variation found in pricing & quality of food served by both sectors which always become unhealthy for tourists. The quality of beds, sanitation, toilets and bathrooms are also not up to the mark. A Good restaurant offers visitors Asian, European, American and other international cuisines. There are many international and local fast food restaurants offering fast food in Gujarat such as, McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) and Domino's Pizza, Pizza hut, Burger King. Gujarat offers variety of cuisine, influenced by variations in climate and soil across the state and the cultural differences between the communities. Most of Gujarati's have their meals at inexpensive restaurants, commonly called Dhabas, setting up a scheme through incentives to improve hygiene, sanitation and storage systems in them should be considered. The Gujarati typical vegetarian *Thali* composed of range of preparations. Gujarat is known for its variety of farsan and nashta in breakfast items such as Khaman, Dhokla, Thepla, Khakhra, Handva, Fafda etc which are mostly made up of Flour of rice, gram & black gram. Kathiawad is known for its extra spice in its cuisine. In South Gujarat a regional food Undhiyu is most popular winter dish. Most of the city restaurants also serve Non-veg. food items. But it has its limitation because of religious constraints of most of the communities. The restaurants and rest houses should upgrade their services to suits to tourists: needs and demands. The Uneven distribution of entertainment facilities like cinemas, theatres and restaurants make unequal concentration of tourist & types.

The Gujarat Tourism Corporation has one of the biggest problem is the availability of well-educated guides who accompanies tourists & making the trip very interesting and lively. In Most of the guides are young locals who earn money by guiding tourists but they are not well trained in terms of language proficiency. Most of the time the tourist and guides do not have cordial relation due to the communication gap. All the way they confuse and the tourists do not get as per their wants at the destination. Sometimes they are not able to provide accurate and adequate information about the touristic sites they visit. Many of the incapable people have intruded into the job in the wake of the surge in tourism activities. Some of the guides exploit the tourists through illegal deals with restaurants, rest houses and hotels. Due to these circumstances sometimes hefty charges pinched from the tourists who are coming from outside of State/Nation. In addition, the guide should be flexible as to the schedule of the trip and the group's proposals and demands.

## CONCLUSION

India could be a country with varied culture and traditions. The natural fantastic thing about India,

festivals, dresses, heritage sites of India area unit extremely popular among tourists. Kerala, Darjeeling, Goa, Kashmir, Shimla (I am simply having few names) and Manali area unit best scenic places in India. Commercial enterprise business in India has large potential for generating employment and earning great amount of interchange besides giving a positive stimulus to the country's overall economic and social development. Promotion of touristy ought to be done in order that commercial enterprise in India helps in protective and sustaining the variety of the India's natural and cultural environments. Commercial enterprise in India ought to be developed in such means how some way the way the simplest way} that it accommodates and entertains guests in an exceedingly way that's minimally intrusive or harmful to the setting and sustains & supports the native cultures within the locations it's operational in. commercial enterprise could be a multi-dimensional activity, and essentially an industry. All wings of the Central and State governments, non-public sector and voluntary organizations ought to become active partners within the endeavour to realize property growth in commercial enterprise if India is to become a world player within the commercial enterprise business.

In Gujarat, Government took initiative to establish separate Tourism Department in the year of 1973. Even government established Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Limited in the year 1978 entrusted with the task of developing tourism related commercial activities. At present Corporation is working on the task like developing lodging boarding, transportation, way side catering, arranging cultural festivals and exhibitions. Corporation has worked for set up accommodation facilities at Chorvad, Mandavi, Veralval, Tithal, Somnath, Dwarka, Pavagadh as well as Dakor and Palitana. Recently, Corporation has introduced The Royal Orient Train in collaboration with Indian Railways.

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