DEVELOPMENTAL SHIFT OF TOURISM IN KASHMIR

Dr. Ravi Bhushan Kumar
Professor, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, India

Hafizullah Dar
Assistant Professor, Central University of Kashmir, India
Email: hafiz35kmr@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

As far as the tourism in Kashmir is concern, everything was going well till late nineteen eighties; when tourism in Kashmir was at its climax, but unfortunately, the dark days came in the history of Kashmir when the peace in Kashmir was dismantled by the terror groups during the early 90s. The tourism in the whole state was affected badly due the militancy in Kashmir, tourists stopped to visit Kashmir. All the tourism stakeholders were in loss and the unemployment increased swiftly in the state as a whole due to that turmoil in the Kashmir and created negative image of valley in the minds of tourists.

The darks days of Kashmir ended after the 90s and the tremendous flows of tourists have been recorded since 2003. The Govt, NGOs, locals and private parties have contributed a lot in this positive move of tourism in Kashmir. The tourism industry of Kashmir is looking now bright as it was during the 80s or pre militancy era.

The present paper is an attempt to analyse the key factors responsible for the development of tourism in Kashmir, again, since 2000. Furthermore, the paper also puts forth the suggestions and recommendations aimed at optimally exploiting the potentials of Kashmir tourism in the fast improving socio-political scenario.

Keywords: Terrorism; Tourism; Kashmir Valley; Tourism Growth

INTRODUCTION

The Jammu and Kashmir is the northern most state of India shares its borders with three neighbouring countries, viz, China in the north and east, by Afghanistan in the north-west and by Pakistan in the west. Furthermore, the J&K is sharing its borders with two Indian states, viz, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh in the south.

The Kashmir was very popular among the tourists due to its rich tourism resources and was the most popular state of India among the domestic as well as foreign tourists before 90s. The ongoing-armed conflict that erupted in early 1990s has hit hard the tourism sector causing the loss of tourist appetite for this particular destination. The entire work force in tourism was thrown out of jobs and the infrastructure, which was created over last 40 years, was destroyed and turned into pulp by the wave of flames. By 1991, there was a virtual shut down of tourism sector, which affected the economy of the entire state and percolated down to every household. Tourism, which was the main stay in the economy of J&K, was deeply affected by various circumstances created out of the unsettled environment.

Kashmir became a risky place for tourists; political unrest became synonymous to Kashmir valley. Several hotel and houseboat owners closed their business properties and changed their business, when the tourist stopped visiting to Kashmir, even the permanent residents of Kashmir were compelled to...
leaves Kashmir. Until 1998, it was worst time for the Kashmir tourism, but unfortunately, the Kargil war was another setback to the Kashmir tourism in 1999.

In fact, the period of 90s was the worst for the tourism industry in Kashmir valley, but after the year 2000, the bad political scenario and terrorism in the valley was curbed and the situation was improved which was the new beginning to the Kashmir tourism, it was rejuvenated. The number of tourist arrivals started to increase swiftly; everything is going well, now. The tourists are visiting to their favourite destination again and are getting the hospitality form the local people of Kashmir. The Govt. NGOs, private parties and locals have contributed a lot in the development of tourism in valley; the way of employment opportunities opened now, trade developed again in Kashmir and the most important thing that peace is restored there; that is the reason, why Kashmir received the one million tourists in 2011. Kashmir is not less than the magnet to iron for the tourists.

OBJECTIVES

1. To know the phenomena of tourism in Kashmir valley
2. To analyse the reasons for growth of tourism in Kashmir valley in new millennium
3. To give suggestions and recommendations for the exploitation of untapped tourism potentials of Kashmir valley.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on the secondary data. The secondary data was collected from various sources of publications such as Magazines, journals, Research articles, newspapers, Internet and published and unpublished records on J&K tourism. Besides this, researcher himself, as the resident of valley, has observed the insurgency and bright time in valley.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Kashmir valley contains everything to make life enjoyable, scenery for artist, flowers for botanist, ruins for archaeologist and thrill for adventurist (Lawrence, 1967); also Pt. Nehru said that Kashmir has been one of the biggest seats of Indian culture and learning through the history(Shafi, 1994); all this enhances the chances for people to develop mutual sympathy and understanding and to reduce their prejudices (IIPT, 2000). However, being a popular tourist destination, the militancy disturbed the tourism industry of Kashmir since early 90s, which caused the decrease of tourist arrivals in India’s most beautiful tourist destination (Chauhan & Khanna, 2005). The terrorism has also influence the choices regarding the mode of transport and in some cases, whether to travel at all or not (Hall, 2002); these issues are influencing the tourist decision making (Hall & Sullivan, 1994), further, the tourism is playing a vital role in creating the image of destination in the minds of others by the word of mouth (Fordness & Murry, 1997).

The travel and tourism is considered as a global peace industry (Amman Declaration – first Global Summit on Peace, Nov. 2000) it can undermine international boundaries by bringing people together through understanding of different cultures, heritages, beliefs and to reduce their prejudices (International Institute for Peace through Tourism, 2000; Minho, 2006). Thus, once peace secured, it would lead towards the positive economic benefits (WTO, 2000); therefore, sympathy and mutual understanding can bring peace and reduce tension in world (UNEP, 2007).

Tourism Resources of Kashmir

Kashmir valley is filled and blessed with rich tourism resources having the majestic beauty, bestowed by the God, moreover, the human art and talent have further designed, beautified and crafted this valley. The tourism resources of Kashmir can be categorised as follows:
Natural tourism resources of Kashmir

Truly, the nature is a volume in Kashmir of which God (Allah) is the author who decorated this valley by singing rivers, snow caped and lush green mountains, evergreen forests, attractive lakes, smiling flowers, meadows, blue skies, verdant valleys and so on. Broadly, following are the main nature based tourism resources of Kashmir valley:

River: The main reveres of Kashmir valley are Jhelum (originates from verinag), Sind River (at Nilgrar Sonamarg) and Lahwal River (throuh Lolab Valley), moreover, the Lidder River flows through Pahalgam of Anantnag district of Kashmir region.

Valleys: The Kashmir valley has several sub-beautiful valleys, which are Tawi Valley, Chenab Valley, Lolab Valley, Sind Valley, Bungus valley, Gurez valley, and Betaab/ Liddar valley. The tourists are not familiar with all these valleys.

Hill stations for leisure:- The most vibrant and attractive hill stations of Kashmir are Aru, Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonamarg, Srinagar, Manasbal and Yusmarg which are most popular among the tourists.

Mountains for adventure: Kashmir valley has sky touching mountain peaks for adventure lovers. The main peaks are Mount Haramukh (5,142 metres), Kolhoi Peak (5,425 metres), Machoi Peak (5,458 metres), Sirbal Peak (5,236 metres), Amarnath Peak (5,186 metres), Sunset Peak (4,746 metres), Tatakooti Peak (4,725 metres) etc., these mountain peaks provides thrilling experience to the adventure lovers in Kashmir valley.

Lakes: The valley has several lakes having religious and leisure tourism importance. The Dal Lake, Gadsar Lake, Gangabal Lake, Krishansar Lake, Manasbal Lake, Nundkol Lake, Satsar Lake, Sheshnag Lake, Tarsar Lake, Vishansar Lake, Wular Lake etc are some important lakes of Kashmir.

Cultural Resources of Kashmir

The Kashmir valley has rich cultural history since the ancient times. The fabulous designed handicrafts, world famous dishes, attractive costumes, beautiful art & architecture, and the several pious religious attractions are making the cultural tourism resources of Kashmir valley more important. The following are the cultural tourism resources of Kashmir valley:

Religious resources: The Kashmir valley remained the main attraction to the religious tourists, especially to Hindus, since before the Islam in Kashmir valley. There are various religious attractions of Hindus, Islamic and Sikhism, as in Table-I:

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Shiva temple (Awantipora), Sun temple (Mattand), Khrirbhawani Tulmulla, Shri Amarnath Cave, Baaltal (Sonamarg), Chakreshwri temple at Hari Parbat and Shankracharya Temple</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>Chrar-e – Sherief (Badgam), Jama Masjid (Sgr), Imambara Hassanabad (Sgr), Hazratbal Masjid, Baba Rishi (Gulmarg), Shrine of Makhdooom Shah Hamza and Shah Hamdan (Sgr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhism</td>
<td>Chatti Padshahi (Srinagar)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Monuments: Kashmir valley has a good share of Indian historical and archaeological legacy. There are several monuments in valley covering all faiths and ruling dynasties of Kashmir, which includes Martand temple, Ardnwan Monastery at Harwan, Shankaracharya temple, Sharika Bhagwati-temple, & ancient ruins at Avantipora, Pattan, Baramulla, Parihaspur, Handwara and Indarkote. In addition, Pari Mahal, Kabutar Khana, and Hariparbat are other famous monuments in Srinagar.

Costumes of Kashmir: Costumes of Kashmir valley are famous for their intricate designs and embroidery, which are the icons of valley’s culture and landscape and reflects its richness. The design of costume is made in order to counter the cold climate of the region. In Kashmir valley, most of the
Garments are made of silk, wool and cotton, which are composed of articles like Pheran, Poot (both are Gowns used by men women), Tarang (used by women over the head), Burgha, Kasaba and abaya (for Muslim women) and Khan-dress (Pathani Suit used by Muslims). The Gujjar women in Kashmir, are wearing the similar dress (lose salwars) used by the Turkish women.

**Handicraft:** The handicrafts of Kashmir valley are famous throughout the world for their grandeur and artistic work, which are symbolising the cultural significance of Kashmir. These handmade crafts are including Carpets, Shawls, Paper Mache, Copper Ware, wood Carving and Saffron. Moreover, Embroidery, basket making, Crewel, Chain Stitch, Gabba, Willow and Copperware are the common crafts in valley which are contributing a lot in generating the total income of state, employment and gives imputes to the tourism industry of the Kashmir.

**Types of Tourism in Kashmir valley**

The Kashmir valley has rich, multipurpose, and multidimensional resources of tourism, which are satisfying the quest of every tourist here. The types of tourism in Kashmir valley are mainly based up on its tourism resources. Following are the types of tourism in Kashmir valley:

**Religious Tourism:** - Religious tourism refers to visiting the holy places and religious centres out of pilgrim’s permanent domicile. This type of tourism is based on the faith and belief. The millions of Hindu devotees per year visits Kashmir and paying the visits to the holy Amarnath Cave, Baltal, Martand, Khirebhawani etc and Sikhs are visiting to Chatti Padshahi Gurdawara in Srinagar.

**Business Tourism:** - The business tourism refers the tourism in which the business professionals are travelling for meetings, conferences or seminars which is purpose is mainly to extend the business and to take advantage of the economic deprivation of an area. Kashmir valley is well known for the business of world famous handicrafts and fruits.

**Adventure Tourism:** - The adventure tourism refers to travelling to exotic, remote, possibly holistic areas and for exploration. This is a thrill-based tourism, which involves the physicals risks. Kashmir valley has great potentials of adventure tourism whether it is land based, water based or air based. Sind, Lider, Dal lake etc are used for water sports; Gulmarg and pahalgam for snow skiing; Mount Haramukh, Kolhoo Peak, Amarnath Peak, Sunset Peak, Khilanmarg are famous for mountaineering and in addition, Pahalgam to Amarnath cave, Ferrozpour Nala to Danwas, Teijan to Saimada, Gulmarg to Khilanmarg etc are famous trekking; moreover, the hot air ballooning is famous in Srinagar.

**Leisure Tourism:**- The leisure tourism refers visiting to the tourist destinations for the purpose of enjoyment, recreation, pleasure, relaxation and getting rid from the routine life, neighbours, and coming out from day to day stress. Kashmir has treasure of beauty and great potentials to satisfy the leisure tourists by its lush green valleys, singing waters of rivers, lakes and fountains. The best leisure tourist spots of Kashmir are Mughal gardens, Sonamarg, Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Dal lake etc.

**Tourist arrival Trends in Kashmir**

As the most beautiful tourist destination in India, Kashmir is famous among the domestic as well as the foreign tourists. However, the insurgency during 90s in valley demotivates tourists to visit the Kashmir. Therefore, fluctuation remained the main aspect of tourist arrivals in Kashmir since late 80s, as shown in table:

**Table 2.** Year wise tourist arrivals in Kashmir Since 1985 to 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>465599</td>
<td>38015</td>
<td>503614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>536598</td>
<td>53118</td>
<td>589716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>662097</td>
<td>59938</td>
<td>722035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>490212</td>
<td>67762</td>
<td>557977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>6095</td>
<td>4627</td>
<td>10722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Year wise tourist arrivals in Kashmir Since 1985 to 2013 (Contd….)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>4887</td>
<td>6287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>1175</td>
<td>9149</td>
<td>10324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>8026</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>9314</td>
<td>9814</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>8198</td>
<td>9967</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>9592</td>
<td>9967</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>7027</td>
<td>9111</td>
<td>16131</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>99636</td>
<td>10247</td>
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<td>1999</td>
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<td>2000</td>
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<td>2001</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>24670</td>
<td>2686</td>
<td>27356</td>
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<td>2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
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<td>2007</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>577348</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>710504</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1282360</td>
<td>32110</td>
<td>1314470</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1274674</td>
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<td>1311840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1142865</td>
<td>29143</td>
<td>1172008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Department of tourism, Govt of Jammu & Kashmir.

The graph is clearly showing the huge vicissitudes of the tourist arrivals in Kashmir since the late 80s until 2000. In 1988, more than 7 lacks tourists have visited to Kashmir, highest in the valley before
that, but due to the militancy in Kashmir, it came down to 5.57 lacs in 1989, from 1990 to 1997 the average tourist arrivals in Kashmir was 0.10 lacs, while as, there was zero per cent of domestic tourism in 1993 in the Kashmir. In addition, a number of terrorist attacks happened over the tourists and at tourist spots directly during this period. This era, in Kashmir history, is called as the ‘Dark Age’.

In spite of the insurgency in Kashmir, the tourist arrivals crossed the one lac and two lacs in 1998 and 1999 respectively. Again, the Kargil war gave back blow to the tourist arrivals in Kashmir and decreased it about 72 and 27 thousands tourist arrivals in 2001 and 2002 respectively. However, because of the improvement in the overall situation in the valley and the keen interest shown by the government for tourism development, Kashmir has been able to maintain a continuous flow of tourists. Since 2003, there came revolution in the tourist arrivals to Kashmir, as in 2003-it shows 698.8% increase in the tourist arrivals to the valley as compared to 2002. Although tourists started trickling in Kashmir valley but because of unfortunate incidents three consecutive summers 2008, 2009, 2010 were not peaceful. Nevertheless, the flow of tourist arrivals remained constant in Kashmir and touched the mark of one million tourists’ arrivals in 2011 and 1.2 million in 2012.

**Growth of Tourism in Kashmir**

Though long heralded for its natural beauty, including snowy mountain ranges and the world-famous Dal Lake, the area lost its appeal during years of violent insurgency. However, with militancy petering out and stability returning, Kashmir is again becoming a magnet to the tourists. Many efforts were made for this development since 2000. All the tourism stakeholders in valley had contributed enthusiastically in rejuvenation of its tourism. The role of government and other stakeholders in promoting the tourism of Kashmir can be described as following:

**Government Policies:** In order to boost the tourism in Kashmir valley, the J&K government has formulated a special package for the revival of tourism in the Valley. It has initiated many schemes for the revival and development of tourism. Soft loans are provided for reactivating tourism units in the private sector such as houseboats and outright investment subsidy for setting up popular units at lesser-known areas of the State. Another tourism-related policy envisages organizing familiarization tours of officers of the Department, travel agents, journalists and tour operators besides encouraging popular TV channels for shooting their episodes in Kashmir.

Department of Tourism, Govt of Jammu and Kashmir is in direct touch with the Government of India Tourist Offices in different countries for sending them latest tourist literature and for arranging visits of travel agents and travel writers to the State. The Governments of Australia, Austria, France and Italy have relaxed travel restrictions to Kashmir. The State Government sponsored several local travel agents and houseboat owners to different fairs, exhibitions and marts to attract foreign tourists to Kashmir. Tourism Department of Jammu and Kashmir created a Website on Internet for disseminating every possible information about Kashmir.

Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India has also launched a special program called “HUNAR SE ROZGAR” which offers short but quality training courses related to hotel and travel business for creation of employable skills among youth who are in the age group of 18 to 28 years, which enabled the hoteliers and tour operators to serve more effectively to the tourists in Kashmir.

The State Government has urged the Ministry of External Affairs to direct all Indian missions abroad to disseminate information regarding the changed situation in Kashmir. In turn, they are to contact foreign offices in various countries to advise their citizens to include Kashmir in their itinerary as well while visiting India. The Department of Tourism, Government of India, has also started orientation programmes for its regional directors of Tourism posted abroad. Ten of them have visited Kashmir before taking up their assignments abroad.

To enable operations of direct-chartered flights to Kashmir, the Srinagar Airport has been upgraded to receive all types of aircraft. Moreover, to protect the interest of tourists, the state government has enacted a special legislation - J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act. This vests various officers of the
state tourism department with magisterial powers, including the powers of compounding, in case of cheating, over-charging, harassment, pestering, etc of tourists. In addition, J&K Tourism department had also organised some events like Mughal Road Rally, Rafting championship, golf championship and trekking expeditions to boost the Kashmir tourism

**Kashmir Tourism Festivals to boost tourism:** The department of tourism, Govt of J&K organises the different tourism related festivals since a few years in which locals, tourists, students, tour operators, media, hoteliers, artists, speakers, several other authorities and departments of Govt. participates at various venues like all tourist attractions, art and trade centres and all other lesser know tourist attractions of the Kashmir. The main aim of these fests is to rejuvenate the Kashmir tourism, to display the culture and majestic natural beauty of valley in a peaceful environment, and to attract the tourists from near and far. The main tourism festivals of Kashmir tourism are snow festival, spring festival, water sports festival etc. the tourists are getting huge discounts during the festive times on accommodation and transportation in valley.

**Government Packages for infrastructural development:** Jammu and Kashmir Government has approved an action plan of Rs 5.25 crore for Kokernag, Kishwar and Aharbal Development Authorities for the financial year 2012-13 for execution of development projects aimed at enhancing the tourism infrastructure in these areas. While as, Rs 3 crore has been sanctioned for Kokernag Development Authority, Rs 1.25 crore for Kishwar Development Authority and Rs 1 crore for Aharbal Development Authority. The historical Mughal road brought under the eco-tourism site map by allotting Rs 1.5 crores in 2012. With the objective of acquiring land, developing tourist related facilities, raising its means of finances, etc. a component viz. shoreline activity etc, state Govt has spend Rs. 22.04 crore on Dal Lake in 2010-11. In 2011-12, Rs 3814.56 laks were released for the development of Naagar Nagar Circuit (Watlab via Hazratbal, Tulmullah, Mansbal and Wullar Lake), Srinagar. Central Govt has provided Rs 298 crores for the conservation of Dal Lake in 2011; in the same year under the Prime Minister’s reconstruction plan for J&K, in which Rs. 271 crore was envisioned for improving the state’s tourist infrastructure. Kashmir received more than one million tourists in 2011, keeping the record tourist arrivals, in Kashmir; in view, the Home ministry has sanctioned over Rs. 40 crore for developing tourists spots in the state before next summer.

In 2004, Planning Commission of India has set 50 tourist villages across the State with the allocation of amount Rs.35.00 crore and in 2005, under the Rural Tourism Scheme of the Union Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, 5 projects were selected for development of Rural Tourism infrastructure at Drung (Budgam), Surinsar (Jammu), Gagangir and Sonamar (Ganderbal), Pahalgam (Anantnag) and Jheri (Jammu) received from State Government of J&K has been sanctioned for Rs.50.00 lakh each.

**Role of Media in promoting of tourism in Kashmir:** Print media as well as the electronic media has played a vital role in promoting the Kashmir as a tourist destination. The TLF (Trip the Life Fantastic) magazine, based in India and United Arab Emirates, has offered to promote Kashmir in Dubai. The Conde Nast Traveler (Tourism Magazine) and the Outdoor Journal (India’s first outdoor lifestyle, fitness and adventure magazine) are also contributing towards the development of Kashmir tourism by highlighting the potentials of tourism in Kashmir.

The bollywood has revolutionised the tourism industry of Kashmir since the 50s. The films like Silsila, Kashmir Ki Kali, Khabi Khabi etc. were shot in golden era for Kashmir before the late 80s. However, the bollywood has not forgotten the majestic beauty of Kashmir for shooting the movies here. So many movies were shoted in Kashmir after the violence in the valley, the movies like Mission Kashmir, Agnipankh, Lamha, Yeh Jawaani Hey Diwani, Jab Tak Mein Jaan. High way, All is well, Harud (Autumn), Tahaan, Rockstar, Lamha, Haider etc films were shoted in Kashmir. Government has decided to exempt the filmmakers from taxes charged for filming their movies in Kashmir. The benefit also extends to filming of teli-films, documentaries, serials (sops) and advertisements in Kashmir (Kashmir images, June 2011). The famous Serials Gul Gulshan Gulfaam,
Yeh Zindagi Hai Gulshan etc were also shot in Kashmir. Hence, all these movies, serials, advertisements and documentaries motivate tourists to visit the valley.

Role of Hoteliers and tour operators in promoting the tourism in Kashmir: - The efforts of tour operators and hoteliers in Kashmir valley are highly appreciable; they have their key role in development of Kashmir tourism who has participated timely in different travel exhibitions and fairs in India and in different countries. These private players have adopted the attractive marketing strategies for presenting the Kashmir a tourists’ destination and successfully targeted a huge number of tourists from far and near.

Tourism Authorities: - The state Govt has created and developed 20 tourism authorities in the J&K in order to develop and maintain the tourist infrastructure throughout the state in better way and to facilitate the tourists at every tourist spot. Every authority is taking care of its respective tourist attractions and provides information to tourists.

New Tourism Attractions: - The Kashmir has a number of beautiful tourist attractions, but in spite of that the govt tries to beautify the valley more and more, for this purpose, several new tourist attractions have been inaugurated in Kashmir which added the value and charm of valley. The attractions are Asia’s largest tulip garden (in Srinagar, 2008), North India’s first 7d theatre (at Zabarwan Park, 2013). In addition, in June 2012, government has installed the Aero Balloon in Srinagar, which is becoming one of the most popular adventure tourist attractions of valley; furthermore. Moreover, in Gulmarg, 90 seated Chairlift was started in 2011.

This positive shift of tourism in the valley is also the outcome of peace in the Kashmir valley. The political relationship developed between India and Pakistan since 2000, and there remained no war type situation in the state. The peace dialogs over the Kashmir enhanced the overall position of tourism industry in Kashmir.

SUGGESTIONS

In order to spoil the untapped tourism resources of Kashmir for the benefits, every stakeholder has to take some positive steps for it. Following are some suggestions for tourism stakeholders in order to exploit the tourism potentials of Kashmir valley:

- Bangus, parts of Lolab, Gurez, Tulail and so on; should be politically accessible to the tourists.
- Improvement in present hotel accommodation is required in view of existing as well as increasing tourist demand.
- The tour operators should offer to the tourists’ potential areas of tourism in Kashmir, such as Manasbal, Khirbhhawani, Aharbal, Walur Lake, Parihaspora ruins etc.
- Emphasis must be placed on the security of the entire tourism network, making tourists feel secure and safe before and after vacations is essential to the international competitiveness of destination.
- The work force should be developed and trained in order to handle the tourism related functions, whether it is hotel job, tour operator, tour escort, tour guide etc.
- There is need of marketing strategies to promote Kashmir at national and international level.
- The easiest traditional route of Jhelum Valley Road is closed for tourism, this and other routes should be re-opened in order to permit the tourists to visit Kashmir via Pakistan as well.
- The private players should take part in exploiting the tourism resources of Kashmir by developing optimal infrastructural facilities of tourism.
- There should be entertainment to the tourists in Kashmir like cinemas, fun parks, showbiz, tattoo etc.
• The adventure tourism products should be advertised among the college students in different colleges of India.
• The allotted funds should be properly used for the infrastructure development within the due date.
• The local people should be educated about the tourism benefits and local products should be offered to tourists.
• Master plan must be developed in order to develop a tourist attraction.
• The Walur Lake must be included in tour packages.
• Paying Guest Facilities concept should be commenced in valley after educating locals its benefits.
• All attractions must be interconnected by road.
• Valley should connect directly with the middle east and Far east by air.

CONCLUSION

In fact, the tourism industry of Kashmir was affected by the political insurgency in the valley during the late 80s to 90s. However, with the passage of time, situation became favourable in the Kashmir and its tourism industry got its lost. The state and central governments have played a vital role in developing the tourism industry of Kashmir, new projects were sanctioned, tourist circuits were created, different schemes, strategies, campaigns were launched; the focus was on to promote Kashmir as a safe tourist destination and has potential to satisfy the religious, leisure, business, and adventure tourists. The existing and some potential tourist spots were maintained and developed; special consideration was given to the tourist infrastructure, the direct and indirect incentives were given to the private stakeholders by the government in order to stand their own business units, media was invited to write and show about the Kashmir tourism. However, nothing was possible without the peace and tranquillity in Kashmir; the peace in valley and support from local people rejuvenated the tourism in Kashmir again.

REFERENCE


