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REVIEW OF RESEARCH

A STUDY ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN TAMIL NADU: GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

Tourism promotes national integration, international understanding, peace and goodwill. It encourages preservation of monuments, heritage properties, eco-sanctuaries and also helps in enduring the traditional art forms, crafts and culture. It has achieved rapid strides as its competence to earn foreign exchange, generate employment opportunities and inculcate a sense of fraternity in the minds of the people is higher. The multiplier effect of tourism whereby every unit of money spent on tourism circulates in the economy and brings about an increased area of benefit to the people concerned. The decisive use of tourism is to boost economy, requires a positive attitude towards the tapping of tourist's potential through current promotion technique. It calls for the establishment of a programme of all needs induced by mass tourism inflows while at the same time eliminating bottlenecks. Planning for tourism development is a complete process which should involve a considerable of diverse, economic, environmental and social structures.[1]

KEYWORDS: *Tourism Development , Government Policies And Strategies , heritage properties.*

INTRODUCTION :-

Therefore tourism planning develops infrastructure facility to attract the tourist whether they are foreign or domestic and yielding earnings to the Government for future promotion. India promotes tourism in the country by its effective planning and strategy through its policies and programmers since1980's. And, the Government of Tamil Nadu has implemented its first policy for tourism in the year 1992 for its promotion and infrastructure development in the state. With this background, this paper provides an overview of Tamil Nadu tourism, it also evaluates the tourism scenario in Tamil Nadu and the strategies of the Government of Tamil Nadu for tourism infrastructure development in the state.

TOURISM IN TAMIL NADU - AN OVERVIEW:

Tourism broadly defined comprises activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for leisure, business and other purposes for not more than one year for a stretch. Increase in prosperity along with modes of faster travel and other infrastructural developments has contributed to growth

of tourism at a fast rate and more number of people are having access to paid holidays.[2] Tourism is the world's largest export industry and Tourism employs 260 million people and generates 10.7 per cent of world's GDP.

According to United Nations World Tourism Organisation, international tourist arrivals have increased from 278 million in 1980, 527 million in 1995, and it has increased to 1133 million in 2014 and earned the foreign exchange of US$ 1245 billion. UNWTO has stated that, international tourist arrivals in the world are expected to increase by 3.3 per cent a year between 2010 and 2030 and it would reach 1.8 billion by 2030. Tourism thus is a major contributor to foreign exchange earnings of several developing and even developed countries.[3]

Tamil Nadu is a leading state in the country which is well known for its wonderful tourism scenic. It is a multi-destination state and it is situated at the southern peninsular India. It has excellent hill stations like Ooty, Kodaikanal, Yercaud, Elagiri, Javvaddhu hills, Kolli hills, Sirumalai hills, Valparai and Topslip. It has silvery cascades in Courtallam, Hogenakkal, Thirparappu, Monkey falls, Thirumurthi falls, Akasa Gangai and Papanasam. It has excellent National Parks like Guindy National Park and Anamalai national park and also wildlife sanctuaries in Mudumalai, Kodaikarai, Kalakkad, Mundanthurai and Berijam. It has excellent botanical gardens in Ooty, Kodaikanal and Coimbatore.[4]

In the world tourism market Tamil Nadu has been the pioneer in one for its infrastructure development to attract foreign tourists to state. The main reason behind is that UNESCO selected and offered world recognition to five places in the state namely Mamallapuram, Thanjavur, Darasuram, Gangaikonda cholapuram and Nilgiri Mountain Railway. Among the world heritage sites of Tamil Nadu, the domestic and foreign tourists vehemently attracted and it reached up to global level.5 In attracting the foreign tourists to Tamil Nadu, the Government has declared "Special Tourism Areas", in the year 1992 to three places in Tamil Nadu.

The "Special Tourism Areas" is considered as Kanchipuram, Mamallapuram and Tranquebar. The year 1992 is the notable one for the state that the first tourism policy was formulated to promote tourism in various aspects. This also shows the recognition in the contributions of tourism industry to overall growth in economy and allocating it priority, attention and importance, needed to reach its ultimate potential. From the platform of 1992, "Special Tourism Areas" in every year the Government implements policies and various schemes to promote and develop tourism in the state.[5] Tamil Nadu is ranked first both in Domestic and Foreign tourist arrivals in India in the year 2014, is a noteworthy. The state has emerged as a "Medical Tourism Hub" due to the availability of world-class medical facilities and expertise at affordable costs. In the current scenario, many steps are being taken to further enhance the tourist arrival and to maintain the top position in both Domestic and Foreign tourist arrivals.[6]

TOURISTS TRANSIT IN TAMIL NADU

In Tamil Nadu tourists flows is increasing from year to year. According to Department of Tourism, Government of Tamil Nadu, domestic tourists visit was 136.75(million) in the year 2011, 244.23(million) in 2013 and in 2015 is increased to 333.45(million). Foreign tourist's arrivals was 3.30(million) in 2011, 3.99(million) in 2013, then it rose to 4.68(million) in the year 2015 which shows the increase in the tourists arrivals to the state from 2011 to 2015[7].

STRATEGIES OF TOURISM PLANNING IN TAMIL NADU

The number of tourism plans and strategies which had been prepared in the last three to four decades reflects the importance and recognizes its value of planning for tourism and infrastructure development. The World Tourism organization established an inventory of over 1,600 assorted tourism plans in 1980. Different scales of tourism planning were identified by the WTO are intraregional, national, regional, local and sectoral towards the development of tourism infrastructure to attract tourists vehemently in the tourist spots. Moreover, each scale is differs in types if plans have been formulated. At the state level these may include:

- General state plan – a state development plan including tourism.
- State infrastructure plan – a plan establishing guidelines for the development of infrastructure at the state level, including tourism.
- State tourism development plan – a specific plan for the development of tourism at the state level.

• Tourism infrastructure plan – a plan establishing guidelines for the development of tourism infrastructure at the state level.
• State promotion and marketing plan – a plan or programme of promotion and marketing of tourist products at the state level.[8]

The chart given below shows the tourism strategies and its development, it classifies the policies formed and it implements in to action programme with five suitable cycle methods.

Basic Stages in Tourism Planning

Source: P.C. Sinha 1996

TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE IN TAMIL NADU

Tamil Nadu enjoys the best infrastructure facilities that any entrepreneur could dream of. The district is facilitated with a major Sea-port with single window clearance, Domestic and International Airport, National and State high ways, broad gauge and meter gauge Railways, excellent communication facilities, power, banking facilities, Industrial Estates, Industrial Complexes and Industrial Parks etc. Tourist spots in Tamil Nadu, says about significance of tourists spots and seasonal arrivals of tourists in Tamil Nadu. Tourist spots in Tamil Nadu has been classified into six themes as Pligrimage Destinations, Heritage locations and Historic Monuments, Destinations of Scenic Beauty, Forests and Sanctuaries, Tourist Festival Locations, Adventure Destinations, and Leisure Destinations. Infrastructure and facility in tourism is very important for the tourists, also for the state government in the promotion of long-term tourist activity that depends on preservation of culture and promotion of national and international tourists.[9]

Tourism Department is sanctioning funds for the development of basic facilities at tourist destinations for the benefit of tourists visiting Tamil Nadu. The major components namely rest sheds, toilets, approach roads, dress changing rooms, parking lots, drinking water, lighting, signage etc., are provided in the tourist centers under Tamil Nadu State Funded Schemes. Tamil Nadu Government had sanctioned a sum of Rs.7667.20 lakhs during 2011-2015, for infrastructure development schemes in all districts of Tamil Nadu. For the year 2015-16, the State Government had sanctioned a total sum of Rs.1733.33 lakhs towards provision of infrastructure facilities and development of road connectivity at important tourist centers in Tamil Nadu.[10]

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN TAMIL NADU

To realize the objectives of "Vision Tamil Nadu-2023" the following development strategies are being adopted.[11]

- Positioning Tamil Nadu as a "All Seasons- All Budget Tourist Destination"
- Highlighting the Tourist Security and Tourist Friendliness in the State
- Promoting Tamil Nadu Tourism brand "Enchanting Tamil Nadu - Experience Yourself". A special marketing campaign 'Destination Tamil Nadu 2015-16' will be conducted in all potential regions in India and abroad through print, electronic and other forms of publicity
- Communicating the Tourist Infrastructure like best road, rail and air connectivity and the facilities available for tourists
- Identifying and developing lesser known tourist centres to decongest the popular destinations
- Creating employment opportunities through tourism growth
- Participating in Fairs, Festivals and Travel Marts
- Connectivity Improvement and Signages
- Continuous research and planning to evolve new tourism products

To promote tourism in Tamil Nadu through the means of transport, hotels and fairs the government formed Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation Limited (TTDC) under the companies Act, 1956, from 1st July 1971. Initially it started five tourist bungalows at Madurai, Ooty, Tiruchirappalli, Kanniyakumari and Tiruchendur. The corporation is also acquiring luxury coaches for arranging conducted tours.[12] The Corporation owned chains of hotel in India namely "Hotel Tamil Nadu" and Boat houses in the state to promote tourism and attract tourists.

The corporation made a modest beginning by taking over five tourist bungalows and two coaches. At present, it has 54 Hotels and a fleet of 17 coaches and also established Youth Hostels at Hill Resorts in Ooty, Kodaikanal and Yercaud. TTDC operating Boat houses at Muttukadu, Mudaliarkuppam, Pitchavaram, Yercaud, Kodaikanal, Courtallam, Uthagamandalam and Pykara. Two banana boats were purchased during the year 2014-2015 and put into operation at boat house of Mudaliarkuppam. Every year the corporation conductes tourist fair during the season of Pongal and recently it was conducted with the theme of "Tourism and Community Development".[13]

CONCLUSION

To conclude the multifarious tourist attractions and rich cultural heritage attract a large number of foreign tourists to Tamil Nadu. The tourist attractions have to be publicized worldwide in a big way as done by other States. To keep pace with others, Tamil Nadu Tourism proposes to do aggressive marketing in all potential regions in India and abroad through wide publicity and participation in Exhibitions and Travel Marts.

Tourism in the state of Tamil Nadu has been blooming for the last two to three decades which remains as one of the most noteworthy in the tourism market. It is also occupying the first position in the country and pioneering in the medical tourism. Tourist arrivals in Tamil Nadu have been increasing for the last few years to keep the state in a high position in the global scenario. The first tourism policy of 1992 by the government implements infrastructure development in the state to attract tourists vehemently. The policies of the Government which are implemented year by year provide various strategies and plans for potential tourism in the state.

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