



## Tourism Planning In India - Assessment

Amit Kumar Srivastava

Nai Bazar, Buxar (Bihar), India

Received- 21.07.2020, Revised- 24.07.2020, Accepted - 26.07.2020 Email : amitsonal83@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *If planning is forecasting a country's ambition in a particular field and achieving objectives in a given period with the resources available, India's efforts at planning are not impressive. Planning is also concerned with future implications of current decisions. In all eight five- year plane, the targets set were too high and the resources available were too little. Now, the Ninth plan is ahead on.*

**Key Words:** planning, forecasting, ambition, particular, resources, available, impressive, resources.

Not that India had any dearth in talent in successful tourism planning. India's first Director General Tourism is the late S.N. Chib was invited by the United Nations to plan Sri Lanka tourism, which he did extremely well. Later, he was hired by the Bahamas to do that country's tourist planning and promotion. A few of India's tourist planning and promotion officers have been deputed to other countries to advise them on how to plan their tourism.

India's concept in tourism planning has never been deficient. At times, the country got foreign experts to help as political masters tended to listen to foreign experts more than the homegrown experts. But, political will and understanding were missing. Every two years, the Minister-in- charge of Tourism and Civil Aviation changed-changing also the focus on development of tourism. For the Minister, the focus became the state from which he came and his state became the center of attention irrespective of the fact whether that states and tourist resources and attractions. An unfortunate fact was that senior bureaucrats who are expected to take objective decisions bent head over heels to ministerial whims. New tourism circuits were discovered in his state where none existed and Indian Airlines' new flights were introduced to his state with scant regard to the viability of operations. It is doubtful if the ministers over read the current or old five- year plan for continuity. New ideas were incorporated at will, often forgetting the old plans.

The resources were thinly distributed over a number of projects that resulted in delays and cost escalations.

Apart from the political pressure from the central minister for his state, each state minister felt that his state was the victim of central discrimination. Each one was convinced that his state needed central attention the most. In order to please all states, the center attempt to satisfy them by giving a Tourist Bungalow here and a Forest Lodge there and a Youth Hostel in the third place, even though the state had no saleable tourist attractions. The decision to locate a Travelers' Lodge or Youth Hostel was taken on considerations other than merit. Out of fifteen travelers' lodges built during the three plans, only four were profitable. The Department of Tourism is still subsidizing India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) for the losses incurred in these lodges.

No tourist place in India has been developed which can be cited as a good example of successful planning. All projects have been victims of delays with little monitoring of their actual progress.

The building of youth hostels all over the country was a good decision. But the selection of sites was not based objectives surveys. Most of these hostels are located far away from the downtown area. The management pattern evolved dual control- both of the state and the Central Government. The occupancy ration was low and all Youth Hostels are



incurring losses in spite of increasing popularity of travel. Their existence can be justified only on the basis of social justice. The forest lodges constructed in the central sector are also economically not viable and have still to be subsidized.

The two destination projects- Kovalam and Gulmarg - though laudable in their conception, are far from being profitable. The accommodation built at Kovalam in the public sector has an annual average occupancy of less than fifty percent.

The Gulmarg winter sports project was ambitiously conceived, but resources could not be found to put up a good 100 - room hotel and a two thousand meter long aerial ropeway with ancillary facilities to make this project economically viable. On hindsight, the delays were providential.

As a result of the limited resources being spread over vast areas, the national objectives in tourism development were seldom achieved. A plethora of demands are received by the Central Government from the states for the mounting sound and light spectacles, floodlighting of monuments, resort development, construction of aerodromes, air-linking of centers, etc. As a result, the available resources are spread thinly - preferring quantity to quality. The scarce funds were spent in providing air-links and extending tourist facilities in the constituencies of ministers.

The Sixth plan (1980-85) proposed the development of 61 travel circuits with 441 tourist centers, with little money to achieve results. The arrivals target were set at 3.5 million - up from 800,000 - another impossibility considering the available international and domestic air capacity. No attempt was made to liberalize the entry of more international airlines to increase the capacity for the required growth in arrivals. The domestic air capacity was not adequate even to meet the demand at the 1980 levels. No expansion of Indian Airlines was on the cards to meet the target of 3.5 million arrivals. As the government changed, the circuits were forgotten.

India crossed 2 million marks in arrivals

only in 1995. A sad commentary on Indian planning. Had India concentrated on ten circuits instead of 41 during the plan period, some visible development would have been on the ground in five years.

Training is another area where planning was not very effective. There was expansion in Hotel Management institutes but the quality of training suffered due to poorly trained teachers. Trainers and instructors were seldom sent on Refresher Courses. The hotel Industry has undergone complete transformation with the introduction of high - tech information and reservation systems. But, Indian institutes have not been able to catch up with the new systems. There are no systems of re-training the teachers in foreign institutes or in the training institutes of leading hotel chains.

The Indian institute of Travel and Tourism Management (IITTM) has also changed course depending on the state to which the minister-in-charge belonged. A foreign expert recommended its location in Bangalore as the then minister was from Karnataka. After the minister quit, it was located in Delhi, but it was relocated at Gwalior as the incumbent minister was from Madhya Pradesh. Some senior faculty members' opted out leaving the institute in the lurch.

The best part of the Indian planning has been the loans disbursement to the hotel sector followed by other government incentives thrown in. The hotel industry has received tremendous boost with the availability of loans and incentives. Presently, India appears to have an adequate supply of rooms to meet the current demand except in metro cities and more rooms are in the pipeline to meet the increased demand in future.

In principle, one cannot find flaws in India's planning for tourism development. It has been good conceptually. The flaw was in setting high goals to achieve objectives - to gather political mileage. The required coordination with the states was missing and in some cases absent altogether. At best Indian planning can be rated as good but its results were uneven due to tardy implementation.



**In Summery we can say that** -Tourism is an activity that affects both the host and guest communities. It affects all the sectors of the economy, the society in general and also the environment. When there are conflicting interests and objectives between various agencies, problems arise. Unregulated tourism growth may at times destroy the very resour4ces on which tourism is built. Because of these factors tourism development cannot be left to the market forces alone. A carefully formulated policy is therefore necessary, taking into account the total and harmonious relationships in the society and the economic factors. In this context the lack of environmental focus of our tourism policy does stand out.

#### REFERENCES

1. Tourism Education, Principles, Theories

2. H. Lajipathi Rai, Printwell Publishers, Jaipur, 1993.
3. Shashi Prabha Sharma, Op. Cit.
4. Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012), Volume-III, Planning Commission, Government of India, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2008.
5. H. Lajipathi, Rai, Op. Cit.
6. India 2012 (A Reference Annual) Upkar Prakashan, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India, 56th Edition, 2012.
7. Eleventh Five Year Plan, Op. Cit.
8. A.J. Burkart and S. Medilk, Heinemann, London, 1974, p. 311.

\*\*\*\*\*