

Tourism as a Fragile Industry- A Case Study of Threatened Orissa

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Orissa “the soul of India” is famous throughout the world for attracting tourist for her rich cultural, natural and architectural heritage. It is the land of plenty opportunities and one of the developing states of the country and highly rich in mineral resources like iron ore, manganese ore, bauxite, coal, chrome ore. Orissa is also one of the richest states of oldest tribal society. There are 62 tribal communities residing in the state of which 13 are still in very primitive stage. In spite of its richness in mineral resources, long coastline of 480 kms, abundant water resources, and the poor socio-economic status of Orissa portrays a paradoxical picture of poverty¹. The state is taking some major initiatives to transform itself into an environmentally sustainable industrialized state. To cater to such large scale development, the state is also gearing up its infrastructural requirements with substantial stress upon roadways, railways, waterways and ports. Orissa has been the tourists’ paradise right from the hoary past. In the ancient times, religious preachers and social reformers had come to Orissa to countenance the cult of Jagannath. Saints and savants had visited the land to strengthen their religious convictions. Now-a-days, tourists come to Orissa not merely for visiting places of pilgrimage, but also to see the art and architecture and sculpture of the temples, *pattachitra* paintings, textile, art and craft, silver filigree, applique work, metal craft, music and dance etc. Orissa otherwise known as ‘Utkal’ stands for excellence in the field

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of art and architecture. Its glorious past is best explained in Kapilmuni's description that reads:

“Vershanam Bharata Srestho, Deshanam Utkala srutah,
Utkalasya Samodesha Nasti Nasti Mahi Tale”

Nowadays tourism has developed into a global phenomenon, which has become a basic need that involves hundreds of people, involving agents in tourism activity, either the Governmental society, tourism industry or public society. Almost all of the modern countries either the advanced countries or developing countries in the world in this 21st century has established tourism as a sector in their economical, social, and cultural development. It is fact that, the tourism industry being today the main driver for collecting foreign revenue and reduced poverty.

But, it is a most sensitive industry well known as a “Fragile” industry. It is highly susceptible to external shocks, outbreaks of deadly contagious diseases, incidents of terrorism, natural calamities and negative acts of human beings etc. The whole world is facing a big task i.e. Terrorism and Climate Change, which is affected every nook and corner of earth. The princely Orissa is also experiencing distinctive changes in the climatic pattern as well terrorist attacks. The atmospheric temperature is going up in the state making the summer seasons almost unbearable. Low pressure is becoming a regular phenomenon causing an unpredictable rain pattern across the state. The hot summer days (for eg. In 1998 approx 100 of people has died due to sun stroke); the unexpected cyclone (for eg. super cyclone of 1999- that took thousands of lives in its wave, is still a nightmare to the people living in coastal villages); frequent floods and droughts in the following years crushed the economic strength of coastal Orissa. Apart from this the terrorist acts in different parts (the hilly and forest area), is one the big problem of the state. The fast changing climatic conditions are adversely

affecting the atmosphere and hydrosphere and in turn affecting our archaeological heritage. The increase in air pollution with pollutants like H_2SO_4 (Sulphuric Acid) and HNO_3 (Nitric Acid), CO_2 (Carbon Dioxide) are highly affected atmosphere and hydrosphere both. This climate change confirms that sea level rise is already affecting coastal ecosystems, melting of glaciers, affecting coral reefs, mangroves and salt-marshes etc. The Bhitarkanika National Park of the state is nominated as a second largest mangroves forest in the world. Out of 72 mangroves species 63 species of mangroves has been reported all over the world in Bhitarkanika mangrove forest². The mangroves act as a cleansing system, recycling nutrients and organic matter brought down by rivers and streams; provide feeding and breeding grounds for many fish and crustaceans. They are a feeding, breeding and roosting habitat for a number of important bird species; stabilize the land and help to prevent coastal erosion; provide fodder for domestic animals; They are sources of firewood³ but due to rapid change of climate it is getting harmed day to day. The golden triangle of Orissa (Bhubaneswar-Puri-Konark) is the backbone of state tourism industry which is geographically located in Eastern coast of Orissa. The coastal area of the state is very in every aspect in view point of tourism. The Bhubaneswar, an ancient city about 2600 year old has preserved its rich past and glory of art and architecture with its about 500 temples. The sun Temple at Konark is better known as "Black-Pagoda" its architectural beauty ranks with best in country. The Puri is one of the sacred *Dham* of Hindus and reputed for its finest beach all over the world, which attract tourists without any magnetism and a huge turnover of tourists has received by them. But, the salt formation and salt weathering is also one of the major problems for damage of monuments in coastal ecosystem—the monuments of coastal Orissa are also may be damaged.

The security of tourist sites is one of the most challenging tasks

that tourist industry faces. Today all the tourist sites appear to be on the target of the terrorists. In other words, terrorism is affecting tourism most no one would prefer to set out for tour at the cost of his life. Recently, the terrorist act in Mumbai 26/11, gripped the country with unspeakable horror! Orissa is also facing such problem very badly. For example, the Simlipal National Park, is a most fascinating tourist destination for the nature lovers a highly concentration of tourists visits in simlipal every year. But due to terrorist acts and for the safety and security of the habitants "the Orissa wants to CRPF battalion to guard Similipal Tiger Researve" not enough that a appraisal report of forest department of Similipal in August 1999, put up a threatened line much of the buildings has been destroyed by the bomb-blast in core area of Similpal⁴. The Chattishgarh is a highly sensitive state due to terrorist activities and it is came to knowledge by the source of print and electronic media the terrorists depart from the Chattishgarh to forests of Orissa (in borderline). Means the state is converting into as a terrorist's hamlet from princely and peaceful state of India.

Besides this, People visit various archaeological sites and biodiversities to get relaxation from their busy life. Because of their visit, various kinds of human made impacts are found on that particular site which may be categorized into two types *i.e.* negative and positive. During their visit they spent a few time at these place and knowingly or unknowingly they throw some polythene bags, food items and some unused materials on or close to the archaeological sites. Sometimes they also write/engrave their names on the monuments which create very bad impression and destroy the archaeological sites as well as biodiversities. In coastal areas, Orissa tourism is mainly concerned with its majestic bounty of heritage and picturesque beauty. But during the peak season, this coastal area is highly affected by the tourists. Besides, the important hydrosphere heritage is also polluted and degraded by an increased presence of tourists' boats and other vehicles.

During their visit, they left their waste products as well as other pollutants inside the sea. During the visit of Orissa in April, 2006, I found an engraving in Khandagiri cave on Paleography/inscription. The tourists throw rappers of Kurkure, Biscuits and Namkeen etc. on the surface of water during the boating (on the way of Chilka to Rajhans Island). In very remote areas much of historic sites have been destroyed by the local people due to lack of awareness. In the other hand, because of this tourism, an archaeological site or biodiversity is approached / connected by good road and communication facilities. If more and more tourists visit to a particular place then both government and non-government organizations came forward to make various developmental works in and around the tourist spots. Attention should also be given for the conservation and preservation of those archaeological sites from human vandalism.

If we just study the last few year data of the state we found in the total share of Orissa tourism to India is stilled on only million 0.3 to 0.4 million and percentage change is recorded (year 1997 to 2006) from 2.0% to 13.0% only⁵. The natural disaster is the prime cause responsible for decreasing the percentage of tourism in Orissa. For example as a case study- a large number of destruction has been made in 1999 because of the super cyclone. Following to it, there was another cyclone in 2002. Both these cyclones have swept away the coastal areas of Orissa. On the basis of this statistical data, it has been noted that in these two years the percentage of tourist is less than the other years.

The global problems of terrorism are may be the unemployment, lack of economy, educational obstacle. The local peoples are one of the main causes of these types of activities for the economy. The human being especially the youth people is only the obstacle for all negative activities i.e. Terrorism, Climate change as well any other negativities. The tourism is the way of life and it is a great driver of

multidimensional knowledge. It may relate with every subject. It has social and economic importance for the development of any region.

The development and maintenance of any tourist site is possible only by a collective effort of Governments, private agencies, NGO's, and individuals are working for the betterment of tourism, but there still are loopholes at individual level due to lack of awareness.

To reduce the effect of climate change the soft nature based tourism shall be promoted, the tourists from different parts of the country, even from abroad will visit to the state to see the eco-tourism place and shall be aware about the nature tourism, it will help to balancing the fast changing climate and weather as well as help the state, nation or union territory from with the consult service of genuine qualified and expert engineer. The old and ruined building should be conserved and constructed into green building project etc. We could reduce the rate of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere burning less coal, oils and natural gas. We should adopt changing patterns of agriculture and activities etc.

The youth or local peoples are one of the core problems of negative activity due to unemployment and lack of moral education. The participation of youths in any activity brings a historical change in both the act and result produced. The state tourism department as well India/global tourism should be involved youth for the promotion and development, conservation and preservation of heritage and tourism. In this way it can be argued that the participation of use in tourism will give it a new direction and satisfactorily fulfill the interest of the tourist and tourism industry.

The cyclone is a big task of coastal people along with a majestic tool for attracting tourists. An effort to make safe and enjoyable tour for tourist, certain animals like Dogs and Monkeys should be trained so as to defend and entertain both tourists and tourist sites particularly

in coastal areas. Along with this civil defenses should also be promoted for the safeguard of tourists and tourism. On the other hand, both government and non-government organizations came forward to make various developmental works in and around the tourist spots. Attention should also be given for the conservation and preservation of those archaeological sites from human vandalism

Consequently, Tourism should be made a vehicle to enhance compassion, friendship, harmony in human civilization that has lived many thousand years despite calamities and wars. It should be evolved to bring PEACE-the item that the human society needs to restore most urgently and more profoundly at this hour than ever before.

Following the similar procedure the other states will also try to develop and maintain their tourism centers and then the countries of the rest parts of the world will follow India ,which will help to protect the earth from the Global-Warming and other challenges and should be appeal "Save Planet- Help Tourism".

Reference:

1. Orissa Review 2004, p.1
2. Patnaik, S.K. (2006): *Majesty of Bhitarkanika- Natures Paradise*, in Tiwari A. N. (ed.) Reference Orissa, Bhubaneswar,p.587.
3. www.greenpeace.org.india/orissa (Climate Change: A Case Study of Orissa), p.1.
4. The Economic Times, dated 28 May 2009.
5. Statistical Bulletin, Government of Orissa, Deptt. of Tourism and Culture, Bhubaneswar, Year 2005-06 and 2007-08).