

CHAPTER-I
INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

HUMAN BEING has always had the urge to explore new grounds and travel to new and challenging destinations. The modern world has a lot to offer by way of fun and adventure in new and exciting locales, even for travelers constrained by time and money. India has immense scope for adventure related tourism activities in its high Himalayan ranges, glacial masses, cascading rivers, lakes, deserts, sea coasts and tropical forests. What it lacks, however, is due exposure in the international travel trade circles.

During my joint expeditions and various adventure trips to countries like New Zealand, Switzerland, United States, South Africa, Kenya, and many other countries of South East Asia, I was disappointed to find that foreign tourists were not aware that India offered adventure related tourism activities like trekking, mountaineering, rock climbing, Mountaineering Foundation. Skiing, river rafting, canoeing, caving, desert safaris, jungle safaries, aero sports, parasailing, para gliding, ballooning etc. They knew much more about Nepal Himalays where only trekking and mountaineering can be done.

India has so far been marketed mainly as a cultural and religious tourism destination. Only a few destinations like Ladakh and Sikkim Himalyas are getting some attention as adventure tour destinations. Despite there being an immense scope for adventure tourism in the country there is hardly any infrastructure facility available. The main reasons for this could be attributed to the lack of professionals, trained persons in the travel trade like mountain guides, ski-instructors, river guides, etc. There is an almost complete absence of professionally qualified adventure tour operators, local entrepreneurs like trekking companies, agents, etc. who can offer practical, ground based knowledge and provide technical support base for efficient and safe conduct of adventure based tourist activities in the field. There is also a lack of basic infrastructure for adventure tourism like equipment, clothing, tents, detailed maps etc. and an absence of proper understanding of the essential requirements of the foreign tourists who are keen to enjoy these activities. In one of my adventure trips a few years back, I remember that some of my foreign friends wanted to encash the dollars traveler's cheques in Indian currency at S. B. I. Uttarkashi but this facility of exchanging for foreign currency was not available there, and we had to travel all the way to Rishikesh just to encash a traveler cheque.

Similarly there is complete ignorance about the extension of the inner line restrictions and open area for foreigners. There is hardly any information agency to provide trekking maps which can exactly indicate the location of the inner line or trekking routes and facilities available in the area. Foreigners become victims of the bureaucratic delays and get confused and lose interest.

Fun and adventure tourism like mountaineering, trekking, rock climbing, tramping, skiing, river rafting, canoeing, hot air ballooning and hang gliding etc ,do not require heavy investments and are labour intensive activities providing large scale employment for unskilled or semi skilled workers.

There are large numbers of virgin peaks and glaciers which can attract mountaineers and skiers. Similarly there are spectacular flower laden meadows or bugyals which can be paradise for trekkers. Important among these trek routes are the Her ke Doon Trek, Her ke Doon – Yamunotri, Yamunotri – Saptrishi– Kund, Hanuman Chatti – Dayara- Harsil Trek , Gangotri – Gaumukh Trek, Gangotri – Kalandhi Khal – Badrinath Trek etc. Similarly there are innumerable high altitude treks in Himachal, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim and Arunachal, which are in the inner line areas and need special entry permits. For soft trekkers the Western Ghats, coastal mountain ranges in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, Meghalaya, Mizoram etc; have a lot of potential. Even our domestic adventure tourists only know about a few such tourist destinations.

The Himalayan Mountains are still awaiting the challenge of rock climbing to be explored. There are innumerable virgin routes and attractive rock faces where many new records can be established but these places need to be provided with at least the basic amenities for trampers. River rafting and canoeing have similar potential, along with fishing and angling.

Skiing also needs to be popularized, as it has large scope for development in Himalayan Alpine areas. In fact almost all the bugyals or high altitude meadows get snow bound during winter making cross country skiing possible.

Luckily, a good road network has recently been developed in the interior areas and these remote and inaccessible places have now become approachable for the interested tourists. There is a good scope for developing Heli-Skiing, a new adventure sport, as is being done in foreign countries. Skiing can also be combined with climbing trips. Some of the places where skiing can easily be organized in winters are Herki doon ugyals, Dayara bugyals, Kush kalian bugyals etc.

There are large numbers of sulphur and hot springs in the Himalayan region. These can be improved with basic amenities of bath rooms etc. on commercial patterns as is done in Himanchal Pradesh at Bashist (Manali).

The entire area of Uttarakhand is famous for its religious shrines which have been attracting pilgrims since times immemorial. Most of these places had some old trekking infrastructure available. For example, there used to be "on foot" pilgrimage in Uttarakhand, starting right from Haridwar, with well developed trekking routes with convenient chattiest (halting places) available at every 9 to 10 Km. of distance where basic amenities of smelter and food, dharmshalas, rest houses and local tea shops were available. These old infrastructure have been destroyed with the building of new roads, and unfortunately, no modern substitute has come in to fill the gap. Very little facilities are not available now to the "do it yourself trekkers and back packers".

With government efforts, adventure tourism is now catching up among the Indian youths, students and club members and attracting them gradually towards outdoor pursuits. We need to give more attention to Market India as an adventure tourism destination to take advantage of the resources we have been endowed with. But apart from selling, we need to develop the infrastructure required for these outdoor pursuits, and train the local people to provide the valuable manpower inputs. This could also help develop these areas economically.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study about Adventure Tourism in india
- To make an awareness about tourism industry
- To develop infrastructure facilities for the promotion of tourism.
- To Conduct / facilitate packaged tours for the foreign visitors as well as domestic visitors.
- To promote cultural heritage of the state.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Adventure tourism Branding, Tourism Branding tourism, Adventure tourism, Adventure tourism in India, Adventure tourism in West Bengal

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Current study aims to stud the different aspect of adventure tourism destination branding and also to identify where India stands in general and West Bengal in particular stand in the world tourism market with adventure tourism brand. It also attempts to how well-planned branding of adventure tourism can indeed be a big opportunity in the days to cone.

Other aim of the study is to find how clear differentiated marketing and positioning strategies can be developed to promote sustainable adventure tourism in India in general and West Bengal in particular with the intention of attracting foreign as well as domestic tourist on a sustainable basis. This paper is mostly based on case studies as well as review of the national international tourism literature.

SECONDARY DATA:

The secondary data for this study were collected from different sources like books, magazines, journals, newspapers & web sites.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The report conducted in time bound
- Ideas getting too delayed