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Tourism Management in India: Challenges, Policies and Innovations.

Ms. Rutuja Tilekar¹, Dr. Rajendra Jarad², Dr. Mahendra Yadav³, Dr. Praveen Suryavanshi⁴, Prof. Dhanajay Bhavsar⁵, Prof. Nilambari Moholkar⁶

F.Y MBA, Ms. Rutuja Tilekar, PG student, Dr. D.Y. Patil Institute of Technology, Pimpri

ABSTRACT :

Tourism, as a complex industry, is playing a dynamic role in India's development process, cultural heritage management and employment generation.

Blessed with geographical diversity, historical grandeur, and cultural vibrancy, India is uniquely positioned as a global tourism hub.

The tourism sector contributes significantly to the Indian economy, accounting for 6.9% of the GDP and creating millions of jobs in hospitality, transport, and allied industries.

This paper examines India's tourism management strategies, focusing on the Ministry of Tourism initiatives, budgetary allocations, and the role of innovative tourism in driving growth.

It analyzes the more recent government initiative, such as Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD and announces initiatives in Union Budget 2023, showcasing their potentiality to transform domestic and International Tourism.

Through newspaper reports, such as The Hindu and Times of India, further insight comes into upcoming trends and currently prevailing challenges,

The document goes on to explain key challenges-infrastructure gaps, green environment-friendly sustainability, and tax complexities and so on, too.

It further explores new growth opportunities in areas such as medical tourism, ecotourism, and digital transformation.

The final section offers actionable recommendations for sustainable and inclusive tourism development, with collaboration between government agencies, private stakeholders, and local communities.

Keywords: India Tourism, Government Initiatives, Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD Scheme, Dekho Apna Desh, Eco-Tourism, Medical Tourism, Pilgrimage Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Tourism Infrastructure, Digital Tourism, Tourism Challenges, Tourism Policies, Tourism Growth, Private Tourism Companies, Budget 2023.

Introduction:

Many refer to India as the land of wonders, as there is much beauty to it; starting from snowcapped mountains in the north and all the way down to tranquil beaches in the south.

India has so many attractions for its visitors, including historic monuments, religious shrines, and cultural diversities.

This unique combination of attractions has made India a popular tourist destination in the global scenario.

With 37 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, spiritual landmarks, thriving metropolises, and diversified festivals, India's tourism industry is gradually gaining pace as a global tourism destination.

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India plays a significant role in managing, promoting, and developing the tourism ecosystem through policy interventions, fiscal incentives, and infrastructure support. Programmes like "Incredible India" have done well in changing India's image in the global tourism market.

Tourism holds much more value than any leisure activity to India's economy. World Travel and Tourism Council-WTTC states that the tourism industry contributes about 6.9% to the country's GDP and supplies more than 8% of India's total employment.

Through tourism, this sector gives rise to considerable job, poverty reduction opportunities, and improves rural development of all states in the union of territories across the country with economic growth.

The Government of India has identified the huge potential of tourism and has initiated initiatives under the Ministry of Tourism to modernize infrastructure and promote sustainable tourism.

Programmes initiated by the Ministry of Tourism such as Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD and Dekho Apna Desh have opened up prospects for enhancing domestic and international tourist traffic.

The Union Budget 2023 also promised to develop 50 tourism destinations as integrated hubs and to introduce Unity Malls to showcase indigenous products of the state, including handicrafts.

Despite these advancements, challenges like infrastructure inadequacy, taxation imbalance, and environmental sustainability persist in the sector. This paper discusses these issues in depth and identifies opportunities for innovative and sustainable tourism growth.

Methodology:

The strategy applied in coming up with this term paper is based on the investigation of secondary information in finding out and assessing India's tourism administration, problems facing it, its strategies and changes. This strategy will ascertain a proper investigation of main government activities, industry input, and emerging trends. The study employs a crisp research plan to explore Indian tourism procedures, intervention programs and problems based on secondary sources. It integrates both the subjective and quantitative information to provide critical pieces of knowledge into the sector's implementation, opportunities and areas that need improvement. The study relied solely on the secondary data collected from credible sources ensuring accuracy and authenticity. Among the key sources include, government reports such as the service of tourism's yearly reports for the period 2018–2024 and the union budget declarations for the period of 2018–2024, as well as reports from the Swadesh Darshan and PRASHAD schemes. Worldwide reports from the World Tourism Organization, (UNWTO), and the World Travel & Tourism Committee, (WTTC) provide a global point of view on tourism patterns. Media reports and understandings from reliable daily news, such as just like The Hindu and The Times of India, were used to identify further developments, emerging trends, and overall inferences. Besides, industry insights from tourism companies such as MakeMyTrip, Yatra, OYO Rooms, and Thomas Cook India were added. The information analysis analyzes government schemes such as Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD, and Dekho Apna Desh, examining the impact of Union Budget allocations on infrastructure, development, and sustainability.

Inclination analysis includes the contribution of the tourism sector to India's GDP and changes in domestic and international tourism patterns post-pandemic. A subjective review distinguishes emergent openings, including specialty tourism divisions such as restorative, eco, and experience tourism, as well as computerized change within the industry. Case ponders, for example, Kerala's eco-tourism activities and Himachal Pradesh's common preservation endeavors, outline effective tourism programs. After all, a few constraints are identified, which include the necessity of up-to-date tourism development, lack of crucial data gathering using surveys or interviews, and differences in the quality of data from various sources and institutions. Moral considerations are observed in the most careful way possible to ensure that all data sources are appropriately referenced and that only accurate, justifiable data is used to avoid manipulation or misleading explanations.

Objective:

1. 1.To analyze the share of tourism in India's financial development and work era.
2. 2.To consider the key government activities, counting Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD, and Dekho Apna Desh, pointed at advancing tourism in India.
3. 3.To look at the commitments of the Union Budget 2023 and other approach measures in driving tourism improvement.
4. Identify the most critical issues the Indian tourism industry faces, including infrastructural gaps, natural supportability, tax assessment issues, and security.
5. Identify the role of private-sector innovations, including digital platforms, ecotourism journeys, and hospitality packages, in transforming the tourism management sector.
6. Identify emerging opportunities in niche sub-sectors like medical tourism, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, and smart tourism.
7. 7.To propose significant proposals for accomplishing economical and comprehensive tourism development through collaboration among government, private partners, and neighborhood communities.

Literature Review :

Daily paper reports highlight critical advancements and patterns in India's tourism division.

The Hindu (February 1, 2023) examined the government's center on tourism within the Union Budget 2023, which presented a mission mode approach with key activities to upgrade the tourism encounter. These include creating 50 visitor objectives with advanced foundation and etiquette, launching a mobile application for real-time traveler information, developing Solidarity Shopping malls to promote local crafts and GI products, and implementing the Dynamic Towns Program to enhance tourism in border regions. While these steps indicate strides for tourism and neighborhood artisans, there were apprehensions from the tourism pioneers regarding the unchanged budgetary assignment of Rs. 2,400 Crore and the requirement for GST changes, which is basic to enhance worldwide competitiveness. The Times of India has mentioned a few variables that are driving Indian tourism, including the country's varied climate and geology, providing year-round destination opportunities, and its wealthy historical and cultural heritage that attracts millions of tourists due to sites such as the Taj Mahal and social celebrations, such as Kumbh Mela. Moreover, pious and otherworldly tourism continues to thrive with adventure destinations like Kedarnath, Tirupati, and Kashi Vishwanath attracting international enthusiasts. The report highlighted that tourism's financial multiplier effect may create jobs, reduce unemployment, and strengthen local economies. Academic Contributions Research studies have always highlighted the crucial role of tourism in promoting economic growth, promoting social exchange, and encouraging sustainability.

A few thinks about have contributed important bits of knowledge into the complexities and potential of the tourism division in India.

Anandanatarajan & Antonyraj (2017) investigated the socio-economic effect of tourism on the Indian economy, recognizing key challenges such as territorial lopsided characteristics, a need of present day framework, and a deficiency of gifted labour. They underlined the need for feasible tourist approaches to natural concerns for the assurance of adjusted improvement on both well-known and unknown destinations. Venkatesh & Mukesh, 2015 focused specifically on specialty tourism divisions and include ecotourism therapeutic tourism, experience tourism, as well as film tourism - with a trend being set toward experiential tourism. The trend points out the shift among traveler preferences with most looking toward immersive, socially enriching experiences. The inquiry focused on the developing section of innovation for the growth of computerized tourism, allowing it to become more accessible and interactive in front of a large crowd of viewers. Even World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has further considered India's progression as an upcoming leader in health and spiritual tourism. Be that as it may, their report noted that framework improvements, enhanced security measures, and administrative changes are crucial in facilitating growth and enhancing the quality of the tourism experience, ensuring that India remains a competitive and attractive destination on the global tourism map. Together, these commitments highlight the importance of the opportunities and challenges that tourism offers for India, underlining the need for strategic planning, sustainability, and modernization to unlock its full potential. Research Gap Even though the extant literature is very informative in terms of tourism trends and policies, very little attention has been paid to the role of PPPs and innovative strategies by private companies in modernizing tourism.

This paper tries to bridge this gap through an analysis of the contemporary government initiatives, budgetary provision, and the role that new tourism ventures contribute towards it.

Role of Ministry of Tourism :

The Service of Tourism is the single central specialist capable for the promotion, development, and management of tourism over India.

With the aim of positioning India as a prime global destination, the Service pursues a set of well-designed plans, fiscal incentives, and pivotal campaigns aimed at enhancing the country's tourism sector.

Through these efforts, the Service aims to promote India's visibility on the world stage while also fostering the growth of domestic tourism. Underlying this Ministry's efforts is the Swadesh Darshan Plot, launched in 2014. The lead program aims to design topical courses for tourism that provide an extend of interface, including heritage tourism, ecotourism, and coastal tourism. By focusing on these niche courses, the Swadesh Darshan Conspire not only hints at the development of tourism in the lesser-explored ranges but also strives to take strides in making the local foundation, produce business opportunities, and supports the conservation of India's rich social heritage. Another major program is the PRASHAD (Pioneer Restoration and Otherworldly Development) Program, which focuses on developing tourist destinations across the country. This activity is targeted at enhancing the demand of pious and spiritual tourism in India by advancing the comforts, framework, and network at major journey locales. It aims to meet the residential and international tourists who are attracted to India for its spiritual significance and social richness. In addition, as a response to the challenges posed by the widespread, the Service launched the Dekho Apna Desh Campaign. This activity was especially designed to promote domestic tourism and energize Indians to explore their claim nation. The campaign is designed to make travel more accessible and affordable for Indian citizens, while at the same time strengthening neighborhood economies, through a combination of computerized promoting, uncommon travel bundles, and collaborations with state governments. These various activities together reflect the Service of Tourism's commitment to reenergizing the tourism sector, upgrading the overall travel experience, and positioning India as a top destination for both international and domestic travelers.

Budget Allocation

The Indian government's growing interest in tourism is evident in its annual budgetary allocations:

Year	Budget Allocation (₹ crore)	Key Focus Areas
2018-19	2,150	Infrastructure, heritage conservation
2019-20	2,189	Domestic tourism, rural circuits
2023-24	2,400	Pilgrimage development, digital promotion

There is a marked increase in the 2023-24 budget, where Rs 2.4 lakh crore has been allocated for improving tourism infrastructure, national campaigns, and sustainable tourism practices. The Government of India acknowledges the role that tourism plays in economic development and employment generation and tourism has always been a consistent focus of the Union Budget.

The tourism resource allocation is marked by a greater strategic focus on infrastructure and local development:

Year	Budget Allocation (₹ crore)	Key Focus Areas
2022-23	2,400	Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD, domestic promotion
2023-24	2,400	50 new destinations, Unity Malls, Vibrant Villages

Even though the budgetary allocation for 2023-24 is the same at Rs 2,400 crore, the focus has changed to a 'mission mode' approach. The government has devised an arrangement of crucial activities pointed at boosting tourism and moving forward offices across the nation.

The primary activities would involve developing 50 coordinates tourism centers at selected objectives that can provide international class comfort amenities targeted at both residential and international visitors.

These centers shall become tourism centers that shall be offering a range of services that enhance the general traveling experience and make these objectives more accessible and attractive. Another significant initiative is the foundation of the Solidarity Shopping centres, which could be expedited to further the One Locale One Item (ODOP) action. These shopping centers would energize local business developments, support local artisans and provide a platform to showcase State-specific handlooms, aid in strengthening territorial economies as well as contribute to projecting India's social diversity. The Dynamic Towns Program further aims at upgrading tourism in border areas by developing the framework and by making unused tourism openings available in more remote places. This program is mainly directed at the creation of tourism in border towns, which often remain underdeveloped even though they hold so much promise. Whereas these key declarations are a step in the right direction, industry leaders are demanding even more to ensure that these are successful undertakings. Specifically, the justification for GST is sought, while more forceful tourism infrastructure and foreign market promotion incentives for attracting tourists are required. These are considered crucial steps in making India a more competitive and attractive destination on the international tourism map.

Thriving and Innovative Tourism Companies in India

The private sector has played an innovative role in redefining tourism management in India through the incorporation of innovation, sustainability, and customer-centric strategies.

MakeMyTrip and Yatra have transformed the online journey booking experience by offering AI-driven personalized itineraries, dynamic pricing, and real-time services for flights, hotels, and package holidays.

These platforms have enabled greater access to affordable and tailored travel for the rapidly expanding online audience. OYO Rooms has similarly transformed budget-friendly convenience by partnering with small lodging owners and offering technology-based solutions for bookings, check-ins, and client interaction in order to make traveling relatively affordable for middle-class families. Under the ambit of affordable tourism, organizations like Spiti Ecosphere and Green Individuals focus on developing ecotourism and strengthening communities, promoting responsible travel experiences that benefit local economies while preserving natural resources. Long-established companies such as Thomas Cook India and SOTC Travel proceed to cater to the request for high-quality, curated travel encounters, counting extravagance and social visits, both locally and globally. Airbnb has too contributed to the tourism scene by supporting social drenching and micro-entrepreneurship, empowering travellers to remain in special, locally-owned lodging in both provincial and urban ranges. Such privations-related sub-actions have collectively enhanced the distinction and openness of India's tourisms.

Challenges in Tourism Management

Despite the growth India's tourism sector faces heavy challenges, such as inadequate framework remains a critical one for India's tourism. Mature transport frameworks, restricted settlement options, and low-grade amenities in popular destinations are examples. As good activities like Swadesh Darshan took places several areas continue to suffer from insulations and services for visitors.

The tourism sector is not left behind as the complexities of tax assessment mainly by the Products and Administrations Charge, commonly known as GST, are overwhelming most businesses including neighborliness, travel operators, and visit administrators.

High charges are keeping out global visitors and are also killing small and medium-sized businesses within the sector. Besides, the development of tourism is placing a burden on India's common assets and social landmarks, which demand feasible hones to address issues like squander transfer, water administration, and the carbon impression. Security concerns, especially for ladies, have too been a repeating issue, with wrongdoing, normal catastrophes, and insufficient crisis reactions debilitating a few voyagers from going to certain parts of India. At long last, the tourism and neighbourliness industry is hooking with a deficiency of talented work, and to address this crevice, there's a require for extended proceeding instruction programs.

Opportunities for Growth :

India has noteworthy potential to rise as a worldwide pioneer in tourism, driven by the usage of different focused on techniques pointed at capitalizing on its different attractions. One such zone is therapeutic and wellness tourism, where India is getting to be increasingly well known due to its reasonable medications, world-class healthcare framework, and the wealthy convention of mending hones like Ayurveda and Yoga. With the development of restorative visa deals and the launch of critical special campaigns, this area is poised for significant growth, attracting both international medical tourists in search of high-quality but cost-effective care and wellness seekers looking for all-rounded experiences.

Devout tourism is another sector with tremendous potential, as India is home to some of the world's most revered pilgrimage sites, including Varanasi, Tirupati, and Kedarnath.

These goals draw millions of aficionados from both within the nation and over the globe. With the proper speculations in transport foundation, superior settlement choices, and upgraded sanitation offices, devout tourism can thrive indeed encourage, making India an indeed more alluring goal for otherworldly ventures and social drenching. Eco and rustic tourism too holds noteworthy potential for India, as more travellers look for bona fide,

feasible encounters. It may bring various benefits for local people by providing business opportunities and enhancing nearby economies without compromising India's safety environment, in an effort to create new chances for growth around tourist destination areas. Instead, a shift toward ecological exercises and responsible travel could better India at reducing negative effects on over-tourism destinations. The rise of computerized tourism is another region that can revolutionize the way visitors' involvement India. Leveraging cutting-edge innovations such as AI-powered stages, virtual visits, and versatile apps can make traveller encounters more personalized and open. This will attract not only more youthful, tech-savvy travelers but also enhance the by and large visitor involvement, allowing guests to explore destinations in a more intelligently and locks in way, from the comfort of their homes or through consistent travel apps during their adventures. Film and experience tourism too display undiscovered potential.

The broad spread of the scenic marvels in India-from its beaches to its mountainous landscapes and then to deserts-may present energizing possibilities for film tourism in attracting global film productions to make in pleasant Indian locales. Also, adventure tourism, comprising activities such as trekking, white-water rafting, and paragliding, can ask for adventurous visitors. The ability of a better focus on enhancing less-visible goals could aid the distribution of tourism more justifiably around the country, lightening the load on overcrowded mainstream attractions. There is immense, undiscovered potential in places such as Northeast India, Odisha, and Uttarakhand that could be developed to give tourists an array of one-of-a-kind experiences. By advancing these covered up pearls, India can diminish packing at well-known traveller hotspots and give guests with more differing and improving choices, upgrading the generally request of the nation as a worldwide tourism centre.

Results :

Tourism plays a basic part in India's economy, contributing around 6.9% of the nation's GDP and making over 8% of add up to business. This speaks to the industry's importance not only in economic development but also in job generation, poverty alleviation, and more significant social empowerment. The government has played a significant role in tourism development through various initiatives, including Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD, and Dekho Apna Desh.

These initiatives have contributed, on a practical level, to building tourism framework, developed journey circuits, and boosted local tourism, especially in the wake of the pandemic.

The Union Budget 2023 was a mission-mode approach to promote improve the division, counting the advancement of 50 coordinates traveler centres, Solidarity Shopping centers, and the Dynamic Towns Program.

These activities point to boost nearby economies and move forward the generally traveler encounter by advertising superior foundation and exhibiting territorial culture. The private division has moreover played an urgent part in changing the tourism scene. Driving companies like MakeMyTrip, OYO Rooms, and Airbnb have transformed the industry by utilizing computerized stages to offer reasonable convenience, encouraging community-driven eco-tourism, and growing availability for travelers. Together, these endeavors from both the government and private division are forming a more maintainable and comprehensive tourism industry in India.

Developing Openings:

India is fast emerging as a global hub for curative and wellness tourism, offering affordable healthcare and traditional medicines like Yoga and Ayurveda. The growing sector is attracting global visitors seeking holistic well-being and healing practices. Besides, eco and rural tourism is gaining momentum, as sustainable tourism activities not only engage the local communities but also assist in preserving the environment. These activities focus on sustainable tourism that supports the local economy and the environment. The computerized tourism is also revolutionizing the industry, where technology-based devices such as AI-driven stages and virtual visits increase accessibility and personalize experiences for travelers.

In addition, otherworldly and social tourism are gaining more momentum, and more tourists visit India's spiritual destinations and heritage sites.

This rising emphasis on spiritual and social tourism is attracting domestic and international visitors alike who are seeking to engage with the country's deeply rooted customs and authentic attractions. Altogether, these various forms of tourism are transforming India into a mosaic destination that can cater to the broadest spectrum of global interconnection.

Key Challenges Distinguished:

Despite the fact that the tourism sector of India has a great potential, there are still some challenges that continue to hinder its full development and growth. The most important issue is infrastructural inadequacies, which include inadequate transportation systems, poor sanitation facilities, and limited accommodation options, especially in remote and inaccessible areas. These deficiencies mar the smooth flow of visitors to such areas and significantly reduce the overall tourism experience. The impact of over-tourism also critically hurts the heritage and culture places of India, resulting in natural degradation and loss of social attention. The destinations that carry global recognition and are used to be rich in traditional, historical sites and common deposits suffer the most and need stern implementation of regulations to supervise and control such excessive tourist influences. The other challenge worth mentioning is the tall and complex tax collection framework, especially the Merchandise and Administrations Assess (GST), which makes India less competitive compared to other worldwide tourism hotspots.

The charge burden on tourism-related administrations such as neighbourliness, transportation, and travel offices drives up costs and hinders worldwide visitors.

In addition, security issues, especially as far as the safety of visitors is concerned, and the lack of talented labor within the tourism and neighbourliness sectors are limiting the growth capacity of the industry. The requirement of adequate prepared faculty support spoils the capability of the division to

fulfill global standards, affecting the general quality of the tourism involvement. All of these indicate a call for a better coordinate approach between the governmental units and other private division players with their neighbourhood communities towards economic honing in tourism. For this, cooperation among stakeholders is essential, not just for managing and mitigating but also for ensuring that financial profits from tourism activities reach out to the communities at grassroots and establish feasible sustainable development in the country for years. This collective effort can provide help build a more flexible and competitive tourism sector that helps all partners involved.

Conclusion :

With unmatched diversity and cultural wealth, the Indian tourism industry has a huge potential to fuel the growth of inclusive and sustainable economic development. Government's mission mode initiatives with the innovative impetus of the private sector aim to turn India into a world tourism hub. Government initiatives like Swadesh Darshan and Prashad along with private sector innovation have provided a strong foundation for sustainable tourism management. However, the challenges of infrastructure, taxation, and environmental sustainability need to be addressed. Medical tourism, ecotourism, and digital innovation can attract a diverse audience from around the world while creating jobs and protecting heritage. Emphasis on sustainable practices, technology utilization, and public-private partnerships will be the key to long-term success. Addressing the current challenges and grabbing new opportunities, India can consolidate its position as one of the world's most popular travel destinations.

Results :

The paper presents a few key findings that emphasize the basic part of tourism in India's improvement. First, it emphasizes tourism as a notable driver of financial development, work creation, and nearby strengthening, with the division contributing considerably to the nation's GDP and work. The discoveries emphasize the significance of key collaboration between government offices, the private division, and nearby communities to guarantee the victory and maintainability of the tourism industry. Compelling associations over these bunches are basic to carry out compelling tourism activities and managing the issues of this sector. In addition to this, the record underscores the need for economical tourism hones, which plays a vital role in protecting India's rich social and common heritage. Without such hones, the country's famous points of interest, authentic destinations, and diverse environments will be left facing irreversible destruction. At last, the book underscores how high-tech innovations, including AI- powered stages, virtual visits, and automated advertising, will change the tourism landscape.

These advancements not only refine the tourism experience in general but also expand the coverage of the stage, thereby allowing more people to travel in greater detail on a personalized manner.

Together, these findings sketch the importance of a balanced approach to tourism development, which balances development, sustainability, and progress.

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