

Assessment of Tourism Growth in Tal Chhapar Wildlife Sanctuary (Churu District)

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Abstract

Tourism has emerged as a dominant economic factor in India and in international horizon. With its economic and all other advantages, tourism can certainly play a determining role in the development of poorer economies which suffer from an adverse balance of payment situation, a high degree of social backwardness, besides the other environmental problems.

Located on the fringe of the Great Indian Thar Desert is nestled a unique refuge of the most elegant Antelope encountered in India "The Black buck". The Tal Chhapar sanctuary lies in the Sujangarh Tehsil of Churu District, situated in the north-eastern part of Rajasthan and is the only sanctuary in India which houses a good population of blackbucks in an almost tree-less, saline and flat-land of 719 ha.

The research paper aims at studying the dynamics of eco-tourism Tal Chhapar Black Buck Sanctuary. Tal Chhapar is a famous sanctuary that lies in the Sujangarh Tehsil of Churu District accessible from both Bikaner and Jaipur. It lies on Nokha-Sujangarh state Highway and is situated at a distance of 85 KM from Churu & about 132 KM from Bikaner.

The present paper is an attempt to identify and highlight the problem areas in the field of tourism development. It specially aims towards finding answers to problems and shortcomings in the field of infrastructure development, quantity and quality of transport, accommodation, entertainment and recreation, training, marketing and publicity etc.

Introduction

Tourism has emerged as a dominant economic factor in India and in international horizon. With its economic and all other advantages, tourism can certainly play a determining role in the development of poorer economies which suffer from an adverse balance of payment situation, a high degree of social backwardness, besides the other environmental problems. However, to achieve success in tourism, India needs to adopt planning and management approach on scientific lines. Fortunately, tourism planning and development is now increasingly attending the attention of researchers from different disciplines.

Since each state in the country represents its own geosocio-cultural identity, it therefore, demands specific tourism development plans and action though within umbrella of an overall tourism prospective for the country.

Tourism is globally recognized as one of the fastest growing industries. Ecotourism being a non-consumptive use of natural resources is one of the most effective ways to ensure development hand in hand with conservation. Ecotourism is evolving as a significant tool of "inclusive growth" benefitting the local people, tribal and forestdwelling community. Thus there is an urgent need to have a holistic national framework and funding support in an ongoing manner for developing ecotourism as a source for conservation and livelihood. Ecotourism ('ecology' and 'tourism'), draws upon natural, human-made and cultural environments. Ecotourism is travel to experience natural environments or settings.

Located on the fringe of the Great Indian Thar Desert is nestled a unique refuge of the most elegant Antelope encountered in India "The Black buck". The Tal Chhappar sanctuary lies in the Sujangarh Tehsil of Churu District, situated in the North-Eastern part of Rajasthan and is the only Sanctuary in India which houses a good population of blackbucks in an almost tree-less, saline and flat-land of 719 ha. The word "Tal" means plane land. The rain water flows through shallow low lying areas and collect in the small seasonal water ponds. The research paper aims at studying the dynamic of eco-tourism Tal Chhappar Black Buck Sanctuary. Tal Chhappar (coordinates 27°47'53"N 74°26'06"E) is a famous sanctuary that lies in the Sujangarh Tehsil of Churu District accessible from both Bikaner and Jaipur. It lies on Nokha-Sujangarh state Highway and is situated at a distance of 85 km. from Churu & about 132 km. from Bikaner.

Tal Chhappar wildlife sanctuary is a unique sanctuary having a good population of Black buck in a small area of 719 ha. It is a shelter for more than 1763 black bucks (black buck census 2006-07) and migratory birds and is the major attraction for wild life enthusiasts. This is a natural home of Blackbucks and one can easily encounter 500-700 animals in a single herd. It is the only sanctuary in India in which houses a good population of blackbucks in an almost tree-less, saline and flat-land. The sanctuary is governed by the Government of Rajasthan and has recently been included in the tourism map of Rajasthan Tourism. The sanctuary is named after Chhappar village which is located at 27.82° N 74.4° E with a population of 17,909 in the Churu district. The rain water flows through shallow low lying areas and collect in the small seasonal water ponds.

Tal Chhappar nestles a unique refuge of the most elegant Antelope encountered in India, "the Black buck". The blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*) is an antelope species native to the Indian Subcontinent that has been classified as endangered (Near Threatened version 3.1) by IUCN since 2003, as the blackbuck range has decreased sharply during the 20th century. Tal Chhappar sanctuary, with almost flat tract and interspersed shallow low lying areas, has open grassland with scattered Acacia and Prosopis trees which give it an appearance of a typical Savanna. It is a small sanctuary that earlier used to be the private hunting reserve of the Maharaja of Bikaner. He introduced the Black Buck to this reserve and now it is also known as Black Buck Park. Black bucks are the most elegant antelopes found in India and are also revered as a sacred animal by the Bishnoi community.

The geology of the zone is obscured by the wind blown over-burden. Some small hillocks and exposed rocks of slate and quartzite are found in the western side of the sanctuary. Area between hillocks and the sanctuary constitutes the watershed area of the sanctuary.

The Tal Chhappar sanctuary can be visited from September to March. It lies on the way of the passage of many migratory birds such as harriers. During September, the Tal Chhappar wild life sanctuary comes alive with the chirping of various migratory birds. Birds commonly seen in the sanctuary are harriers, Eastern Imperial Eagle, Tawny Eagle, Short-toed Eagle, sparrow, and Little Green Beeeaters, Black Ibis and demoiselle cranes, which stay there till March. On the other hand, skylark, crested lark, Ring Dove brown dove and blue jay are seen throughout the year. Desert fox and desert cat can also be spotted along with typical avifauna such as partridge and sand grouse. In the Tal Chhappar Sanctuary, a special type of grass is found. This grass is called Mothiya locally.

The word "Mothiya" comes from the word "Moti" or from the English word for Pearl. The shape of the seed of this grass is like very fine round shaped pearls. Mothiya has a very sweet taste. People enjoy eating it, but it is found in very small Evaluation of Halophilic Naura of Soil and Water from Tal Chhappar Black Buck Sanctuary. Production is only a few kilograms every season.

During monsoon (July to September), the zone has a dry climate with large variation in temperature wind blows South-West during summer. In May and June winds become very hot and that is called "Loo" Maximum temperature reaches up to 48^o C in June & Minimum temperature falls up to 10^o C in month of December-January. The Tal Chhappar Zone comes under the principal arid zone of the country. Rainfall in this region is highly erratic. There is large variation in mean annual rainfall in this region. Normal rainfall in this region is about 300 mm. In the sanctuary there are Kacha tracks which are used for inspection, patrolling & viewing the fauna of the sanctuary.

Hypothesis

1. The tourism potential of this site is not fully harnessed.
2. There is ample scope of diversified tourism i.e. natural, socio-cultural, historical and religious.
3. Lack of infrastructure and interlinkages with other near by sites are the basic challenges in its development as tourism site.

Importance of this paper

The present paper is an attempt to identify and highlight the problem areas in the field of tourism development. It specially aims towards finding answers to problems and shortcomings in the field of infrastructure development, quantity and quality of transport, accommodation, entertainment and recreation, training, marketing and publicity etc.

Conclusion

With the better connectivity & the concept of ecotourism, sustainable Tourism by involving local inhabitants so that overall economic development can take place, better accommodation facilities, awareness of local people, better training facilities by Govt. of Rajasthan & better policies Tal- Chhappar is one of the milestones in Tourism Development of Rajasthan.

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Reference

Batra (1990) in his study on "Tourism in Rajasthan-Problems, Potential and Future Prospects" points out the various snags, impediments and obstacles in the promotion of tourism in the state of Rajasthan in particular and India in general, some of which are in-built in nature. He strongly recommends that, tourism activity in Rajasthan must be taken as a dynamic tool in uplifting the social status of the society. For this he recommends frequent get together of local people with the foreign tourists. According to him such meetings will help to break some of the age-old rotten social barriers and orthodox systems prevalent in the state. Sudheer's (1992) study on 'Tourism in Kerala-Problems and Prospects' highlighted the importance of tourism in Kerala and various problems confronting the tourism sector. Tony Parr (1994) conducted a case study about Sirubari Village Tourism Project and says that partnership between the local community and a commercial promotion and marketing agency has successfully established Sirubari as the model for future development.

Bijender Punia (1999) in his study on 'Problems and Prospects of Tourism in Haryana' has highlighted the importance of elements like climate, seasonality, accessibility, attitude of host population, availability of man-power resources and the planning expertise in tourism development in any area, region, state or country.