

## **Tourism and need for tourist's protection in India**

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**Abstract:** India being a land of diversity has always attracted tourists' right from Megasthenes to Fa-Hien and Hien Tsang. But with time and increased rate of crime against foreign tourists particularly women, India's image in the world has been maligned. This has also contributed to a major fallout in arrival of foreigners in India which in turn also affects India's GDP (Gross Domestic Product). Security has been one of the greatest concerns and thus the country needs to develop a proactive role to assume more responsibility in advocating protection of foreign tourist. Several measures should be generated so as to make India truly an incredible nation.

**Keywords:** GDP, Atithi Devo Bhava, FTA, DTV, UTs

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### **I. Introduction**

Atithi devo bhava. A guest is equivalent to God. Guests should also be worshipped as Gods. India had its long history in believing this saying and also had followed its words. It is considered as a sign of good gesture in India. Thus the main aim of the government of India in "Atithi Devo Bhava" campaign has always been to sensitize local people and as well as the tourism organizers in the tourism industry through a process of training & orientation.

Travel and tourism is one the largest service industry in India. It not only provides entertainment to tourists but also heritage, cultural and intermixing of nationals and foreign tourists. The sole motive of tourism is to develop and promote heritage and natural sites, maintain competitiveness of India as tourist destination and improve and expand existing tourism products to ensure employment generation and economic growth of the concerned nation.

Tourism in India has shown a phenomenal growth in the past decade. One of the reasons is that the Ministry of tourism, India has realized the immense potential of tourism in India during vacations. India travel tourism has grown rapidly with a great influx of tourists from all across the globe who have been irresistibly attracted to the rich culture, heritage, and incredible natural beauty of India.

Indian tourism with its foggy hill stations, captivating beaches, historical monuments, golden deserts, serene backwaters, pilgrimage sites, rich wildlife, and colourful fairs capture the heart of every tourist. In addition, a variety of festivals, lively markets, vibrant lifestyle, and traditional Indian hospitality, will make tourist's experience a truly unforgettable and fantastic one.

There has been a sharp increase of foreign tourists in 2014 of approximately 7.4% from 2013 which generates about 39.5 million jobs and a 6.6% growth in India's GDP. This shows that a vast section of people depend on the income generated through tourism only. Hence it is very important to let in the flow of foreign tourists increase at a geometric rate and thereby helping in the nation's development. So it has become an ardent concern of the Government to look after its foreign tourists in India.

### **II. Safety concerns**

Women's safety, poor infrastructure and sanitation are the top concerns of international tourists planning a trip to India. In a recent BBC World News India Travel Study, about 66 per cent respondents of the total 441 said that sanitation was a deterrent, while for half of them safety and security was the key concern. Around 33 percent were worried about the infrastructure of the country. In the wake of recent crimes against women in the country, female foreign travellers have been concerned about travelling to India. As a result the growth in inbound tourism has slowed.

Safety and Security of tourist should be of utmost concern to everyone in the country. All stake holders including Centre, State Governments and other agencies should be fully involved in this task. Few recent incidents during which foreign women tourists were sexually assaulted have generated widespread negative publicity for India. The safety of tourists, especially of women foreign women, is an area of concern.

In a new survey of 1,200 tour operations across India, the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India found that the number of inbound tourists has dropped 25% since December 2011. The influx of female travellers is down 35%, particularly from the USA, Canada, Australia and Britain, local businesses

told the group. Many operators said tourists had sent those emails wondering whether traveling in India was still safe, and those who are determined to visit India are taking extra precautions and avoiding affected areas.

Tourism industry has been worst hit in some particular places such as the national capital of Delhi, followed by states such as Goa, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Gradually foreign tourists are opting out for other Asian countries with better safety and security. Tourists from UK and USA have almost decreased up to 25 percent due to the increased rate of crime against women. The respective countries are also issuing advises to undertake necessary precaution while travelling to India.

### **III. India and its dependency on foreign tourists**

India is greatly depended on foreign nationals for its income from tourism thus it is very important to have a continuous flow of foreign tourists in India. Not only India's GDP but tourism also contributes to a large extent to the income earnings and employment opportunities for the native people.

**Table 1: Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India (1997-2014)**

Year	FTA from tourism in India (in millions)	Percentage change over from previous year
1997	2.37	3.8
1998	2.36	-0.7
1999	2.48	5.2
2000	2.65	6.7
2001	2.54	-4.2
2002	2.38	-6.0
2003	2.73	14.3
2004	3.46	26.8
2005	3.92	13.3
2006	4.45	13.5
2007	5.08	14.3
2008	5.28	4.0
2009	5.17	-2.2
2010	5.78	11.8
2011	6.31	9.2
2012	6.58	4.3
2013	6.97	5.9
Jan-June 2014	3.54	5.2

The FTAs for consecutive years has been shown in which the maximum fall of foreign tourist has been in the year 2001 followed by 2001 and 2009. Maximum growth has been observed in the year 2004 (26.8) followed by 2003 and 2007 (14.3) as shown in Table 1.

**Table 2: Percentage of foreign tourist arrival in India, 2011**

Foreign tourist arrival contribution (country)	Percentage (%)
U.S.A	15.54
U.K	12.65
Bangladesh	7.35
Sri Lanka	4.85
Canada	4.11
Germany	3.81
France	3.67
Malaysia	3.30
Japan	3.07
Australia	3.05
Russian Federation	2.29
China	2.25
Nepal	1.89
Singapore	1.89
Republic of Korea	1.72
Share of top 10 countries	61.39
Share of top 15 countries	71.43

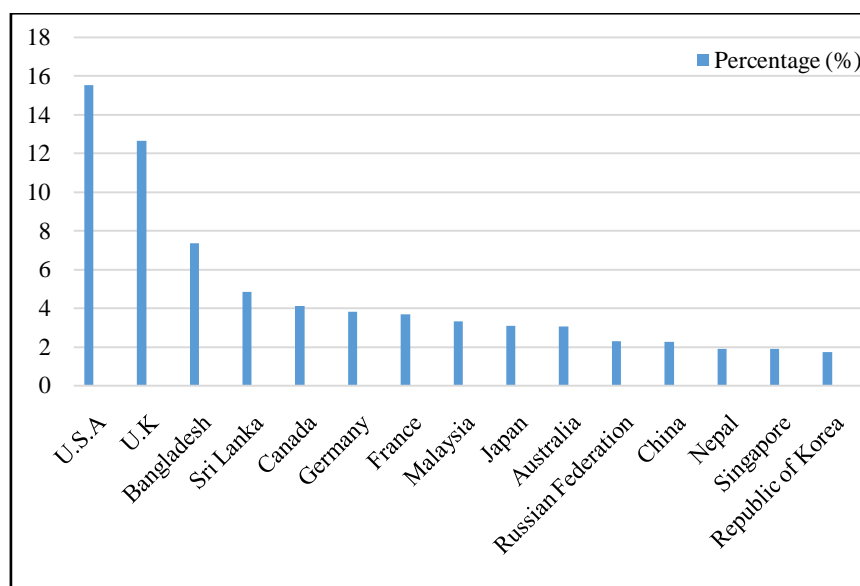


Figure 1: Share of FTAs in India (%) for top 15 countries, 2011

FTAs in India from different regions have been increasing such as North America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, South Asia, South East Asia, East Asia and Australia except Central and South America as shown in Table 2. Thus India has maximum number foreign tourists coming from U.S.A followed by U.K, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Canada, Germany, France and Malaysia as shown in Fig 1. Also during the same time sex-wise distribution of FTAs comprises of 59.4% males and 40.6% females. In 2011, the highest FTAs in India (21.2%) were from the age group 35-44 years, followed by 45-54 years (19.7%) and 25-34 years (16.6%). The lowest number of FTAs occurred in the age group of 15-24 years (7.9%).

About 26% of FTAs in India during 2011 were for the purpose of leisure, holidays and recreation followed by visiting friends and relatives (24.9%) and business and professional (22.5%).

India is thus greatly dependent on income generated from tourism and particularly from foreign tourism. It has thus become an important issue for the government to deal with the upcoming harassment of foreigners in India which is seemingly becoming a potential threat to India GDP. Apart from GDP, tourism also contributes in employment generation, growth of exports and also favours India's recognition across the world.

#### IV. Incidences of attacks on foreign tourists

**4.1 Incidences in the year of 2015:** There has been several attacks on foreign tourists particularly on women. In February 2015, a complaint has been lodged against a man by a Chinese woman, who allegedly raped her at a night spot in South Delhi. In March, 2015, a Swiss woman was gang raped by six men in Madhya Pradesh. Again in March a British woman had to jump from the balcony of a hotel in Agra after attempted sexual harassment by the hotel manager. An American woman was gang raped by three men near Manali town, Himachal Pradesh. These are facts of the year 2015. Many more similar incidences took place in the previous years.

**4.2 Incidences in the year of 2014:** The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Ministry of Home Affairs has started collecting data on crime against foreign tourists since 2014. During the year 2014, as per the information regarding states/UTs, there are 129 cases under the category "Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty" including cases registered, cases charge sheeted, cases convicted, persons arrested, persons charge sheeted and persons convicted under crime against foreign tourists.

Similarly 86 cases were reported under the category "Rape" including cases registered, cases charge sheeted, cases convicted, persons arrested, persons charge sheeted and persons convicted. Finally, 8 cases were registered under the category "Insult to the modesty of women" including cases registered, cases charge sheeted, cases convicted, persons arrested, persons charge sheeted and persons convicted under crimes against foreign tourists during the year 2014.

The major countries from where the arrival of foreign women tourists was on decline during the year 2014 are Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Ukraine, Nigeria, South Africa, Turkey, Afghanistan, Japan and Republic of Korea.

In 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2014 a case was filed against five men for gang raping a 51 years Danish tourist in New Delhi. Another case was filed in which an 18 year old German charity worker was assaulted on a train in Southern India by a fellow passenger.

In March, 2014, a Swiss woman was reported to be gang-raped in Central India as she and her husband was out for bicycling in a forest.

It is also not very impressing to note that after such attacks on women in India, U.K has now issued a travel advisory for women which requests them to be cautious when travelling in India alone, to respect local dress code and customs and to avoid isolated places. Similar caution advises are also given to travellers from other countries as well.

## V. Results and discussions

Today tourism is the largest service industry in India, with a contribution of 6.23% to the national GDP and providing 8.78% of the total employment. India witnesses' more than 5 million annual foreign tourist arrivals and 562 million domestic tourism visits. The tourism industry in India generated about US\$100 billion in 2008 and that is expected to increase to US\$275.5 billion by 2018 at a 9.4% annual growth rate. The Ministry of Tourism is the nodal agency for the development and promotion of tourism in India and maintains the "Incredible India" campaign.

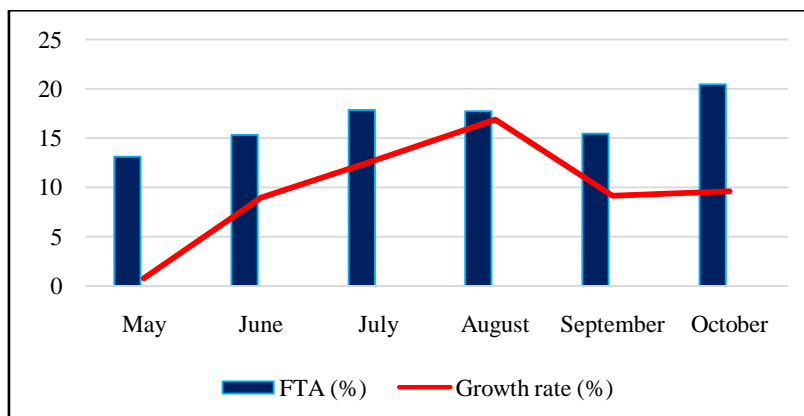
- Promotion of tourism should be increased in India. Though it has increased a little in the recent years, still promotion of Indian Tourism should be increased all over the country even in other countries also which will attract tourists from foreign countries. It can be done by many ways such as television, radio, newspaper, internet and others. But this should not only emphasize on tourist places promotion but should also include making people believe that India is still a place safe to be visited.
- In many parts of India, there is a lack of security. This creates many crimes to women foreign tourists like sexual harassment, rape, theft and others. Thus, the security system should be more efficient as many which ultimately leads to crimes and other problem which is a shame for our country. Local people should also contribute to a major level in sorting out these issues.
- To make safety measures for foreign tourists, especially women foreign tourists. For examples, they should not visit remote villages or tribal areas alone, late at night they should not hire taxis or auto instead they may use local transport or prepaid taxis.
- The tourist guides in India should be more aware of needs of foreigners as many of them cannot speak English fluently which is the only language to communicate with the foreign nationals.
- It is the utmost duty of the Government of India to make people aware that India welcomes and respects guests through centuries and thus we must still continue to do so in order to make a mark as a safe nation to travel.
- Making people's participation in protection of foreign tourists and also recognizing their contribution might help in making the country a safer place.
- Role of local police stations and security officers should be very strict and vigilant in particularly places of foreign national visits. Continuous surveillance of roads and local areas should be done and monitored.

## VI. Conclusion

India appears to have overcome the issue of women's safety and growth to draw 10% more tourists than last year. Significantly the increase in tourists came during non-peak season between May and October 2014. Over 32 lakh foreign tourists visited India between May and October this year as compared to last year, according to tourism minister Mahesh Sharma (Table 3).

**Table 3:** Foreign Tourist Arrivals and Growth Rate (May - October 2014)

Month	FTA (%)	Growth rate (%)
May	13.14	0.8
June	15.35	9
July	17.85	12.9
August	17.75	16.9
September	15.44	9.2
October	20.47	9.6
Total	32.05 (Lakh)	10%



**Figure 2:** FTA and Growth Rate (in %) May- Oct, 2014.

August saw the sharpest increase of foreign tourists visiting India, registering an increase of 16.9% as compared to last year while May saw a marginal hike of 0.8% as compared to the same month last year (Fig 2). However there has been progressive increase in the number of foreign tourist arrivals which has increased almost steadily till October with only an exception in the month of September (FTA has fallen slightly).

The objective of the Ministry of Tourism is to increase India's share in world tourist arrivals to 1% from the present 0.6% by the end of the 12th Five Year Plan. This target would mean 11.37 million FTA (Foreign Tourist Arrivals) by 2016. The Ministry is also targeting 1495.82 million DTV(Domestic Tourism Visits) by 2016. It is estimated that this growth would lead to additional employment generation of 2.5 crore jobs. For achieving this objective, the Ministry has stepped up its promotional activities in important as well as potential source markets overseas and is taking several initiatives for overall growth of the sector.

The Ministry of Tourism in India has introduced a voluntary scheme for Approval of Adventure Tour Operators, which is open to all adventure tour operators. The Tourism Minister informed the members that Central Financial Assistance is extended to various State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for development of tourism Infrastructure in Adventure Tourism destinations. The assistance covers facilities for trekking, rock climbing, mountaineering, aero-sports, winter/water related sports, trekker huts, wildlife viewing facilities, etc. Financial assistance for purchase of water sports equipment consisting of kayaks, canoes, paddle boats, fibre glass boats, hovercrafts, water scooters, etc. is also provided to State Governments upto 25% of the cost of the equipment.

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