Perception of Cuisines and Hypocrisy in Tourism Policy 2019 of Himachal Pradesh, India

Ojasvi Taank[1], Prof. Suman Sharma[2]

[1]Research Scholar, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Dharamshala 176215 HP

[2]Department of Tourism, Travel & Hospitality, Central University of Himachal Pradesh Dharamshala 176215 HP

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the perceptions of Himachal Pradesh tourism policy 2019 and the actual implementation facts. This paper comes up with new ideas; methodologies for squaring up the root causes, and propound several strategies for socio-cultural development, economic & environmental sustainability, and tourist inflow. The paper emphasized the promotion of cuisines of cultural acceptance.

Objective: The study aims to visualize the cuisines perception of the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Policy 2019 in framing the programs, events, and other activities for the promotion of the cuisines of Himachal Pradesh.

Methodology: The study was conducted by analyzing the secondary data retrieved from various sources through qualitative methods.

Results: The results of the study revealed that HP Tourism Policy 2019 has been devised to explore tourism activities based on the natural resources of the mountains (topography), snow, environment, flora & fauna, natural beauty, rivers and valleys, art, and culture as major focus areas for tourism development, but least preference has been given to the rural areas, local communities, their cuisines, their native products, and services, while these carry great potential and can contribute a lot to the promotion of tourism in Himachal Pradesh.

Conclusion: The Tourism Department of Himachal Pradesh does not approach ground-level realities. Deliberations about tourism are confined to district-level tourism development councils only, and there is no active public participation. The state tourism department needs to look into the various types of distinct locally produced goods and services with the thematic promotion of cuisines/food integrating sustainably with diverse forms of tourism. For the mass tourism inflow in the state, ensure public participation in adopting the bottom-up/ pyramidal planning, decision-making, implementation, reporting, maintenance, monitoring, and evaluation.

Keywords: – Himachal Pradesh, Tourism, Tourism Policy, Perceptions, Cuisines, Implementation, Hypocrisy.

INTRODUCTION

Himachal Pradesh situated in the western Himalayas between 32° 22'40" to 33° 12' 40" North

latitude and 75º 47' 55" to 79º 04' 22" East Longitude, constitutes three geographical zones from its North to South viz Greater Himalayas or the Alpine zone or the snowbound zone with altitude ranging between 3661 m to 6710 m, Mid Himalayas or the inner zone with altitude ranging between 1221 m to 3660 m and Shiwalik range or the outer Himalayan zone with altitude ranging between 610 m to 1220 m. Five rivers flow in this state. This wide range of altitudes provides a variety of climatic conditions and hence these give rise to varied art, culture, and hospitality.

All the inbound, domestic and regional tourists fed up with hustle and bustle, smoke, chemicals, poisonous gases emitting from industries, sewerages, noise pollution, traffic hazards, want to enjoy a natural beauty, snow-clad mountains, rivers, valleys, pollution-free environment, good climate, rich flora and fauna, rich culture, and natural & organic food and fill themselves with energy, peace, and harmony.

The tourism industry contributes 7.0% of the state's GDP and 14.42% of all jobs in Himachal are either direct or indirect jobs. According to figures issued by the Indian Ministry of Tourism in 2022, The State of Himachal Pradesh does not find any rank among the top 10 positions of states attracting domestic and international tourists *(HP Economic Survey 2022-23)*.

The Sectoral Group of Secretaries, the UNWTO, the NITI Aayog of India, as well as other nations' policies and plans, have all made significant proposals for the new, draft National Tourism Policy 2022 of India. It serves as a foundation for responsible tourism to flourish sustainability throughout the nation. The majority of the policy's requirements call for simultaneous and coordinated action by the central (federal), state, and local governments working in collaboration with tourism industry stakeholders.

(The draft of National Tourism Policy 2022, p. 9)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Policies are choices made in relation to setting objectives and choosing the best means of achieving those objectives. Policies are developed in all types of organisations, but when we talk about "tourism policy," we typically imply some kind of "public policy" that explicitly refers to decisions made by governments at all levels, from local to international. *(*Joppe, M. 2018).

A policy is generally considered a course of action or a set of guidelines to achieve the outcomes of the decisions taken with the principle of action adopted or proposed by an organisation, individual, or governance body.

Governments turn to individual communities for commitment, attempting to achieve sustainable tourism and benefits from the industry. All of the policies are planned carefully, and they consider the human and environmental impacts of tourism. (Lin, 2006; Theobald, 2004).

India's first national policy was announced in 1982 for economic growth, social integration, and to improve the country's image after extensive debate in the Indian Parliament and subsequent conferences, seminars, and meetings at various levels. However, in 1988, the National Committee on Tourism prepared a plan for sustainable growth in tourism. The national action plan was laid forth in May 1992 in terms of generating income, jobs, or foreign exchange gains. National Tourism Policy (NTP) was created in 2002 keeping in view the interconnected global breakthroughs and developments.

In 1991, Himachal Pradesh (HP) introduced its first tourist policy. The HP Tourism Policy of 2005 recognized tourism as the primary driver of economic growth, established HP as a premier travel destination, and encouraged private sector involvement in the development of infrastructure.

The primary goals of the HP Tourism Policy 2019 are to encourage theme-based development, protect the state's tourism destinations through sustainable interventions, ensure that sustainable tourism primarily benefits host communities, and build capacity and develop quality human resource for the tourism industry. The strategy would establish a favourable environment for investments in sustainable tourism while offering everyone safe, secure, and distinctive travel experiences.

Any nation, state, or province's tourism policy takes into account a variety of activities, a management structure, people participation according to their abilities, skills, talents, or experiences, and the sustainable use of resources.

Governments, commercial businesses, and non-governmental organizations collaborate to coordinate tourism products and tourism destination management at various levels as part of a tourism governance project. (Bock, *et* al, 2021).

There are many walks of life and fields that contribute planning and policy research to tourism. This includes politics, policy studies, public administration, organizational studies, anthropology, economics, geography, history, law, and psychiatry (Dredge, Jenkins, & Whitford, 2011).

Tourism can provide harmony and peace by alleviating poverty and enhancing socio-economic status. (Upadhayaya, Müller- Böker & Sharma, 2011).

Professional policy analysts play important roles in resolving the complex and multidimensional government decision-making systems and implementation as well (Howlett & Wellstead, 2011).

If poor people are inspired and given the opportunity to work in the mainstream tourist industry, evidence from Latin America reveals they are far more likely to gain from the tourism industry. Initiatives to promote community-based tourism are pointless and even harmful if they serve to prevent this. (Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008).

Alternative, group-based, community-based management systems are often too complicated to function well (ibid.). Also, they frequently violate local norms of organisation and leadership. Both of these elements contribute to complexity, inefficiency, and make-believe. In every case, they lead to a hazy link between responsibility and taking risks (spending money, time, and energy) on the one hand, and the outcomes and earnings from these inputs on the other. (Baken, Robert Jan and Bhagavatula, Suresh 2010).

Singh, S. has regrettably, revealed that, in the context of official statistics, there is absolutely no system of data collecting, tabulation, or computation (Singh, 2001:142). In fact, the statistics were obtained from already-existing sources of information (such as immigration and hotel employment). This clearly saves money, but it also explains the absence of a systematic approach and the poor caliber of the statistics.

Objectives Of Study: –

1. To study human resources and several skilled professionals in tourism and hospitality job roles.
2. To study the planning, development, and effective management of Cuisine-specific destinations with community involvement.
3. To study the private investment in the tourism sector, especially for cuisines.
4. To study the awareness and publicity plans for the promotion of cuisine or food tourism in HP.

METHODOLOGY

The secondary data of Himachal Pradesh tourism retrieved from the various sources has been analyzed through qualitative methods.

Skilled Workforce in Himachal Pradesh Tourism Industry – In Himachal Pradesh, young people are currently receiving training in hotel management, adventure tourism, and tour guide professions. The Hotel Management Institute in Kufri (Shimla), HP, and Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam has been offering free skill training in kitchen operations, food and beverage management, and lodging management to a predetermined number of 640 youths of the state in 2018–19 and 2019–20. (hr.economictimes.indiantimes.com)

Table 1: Data Showing the Government and Private Training Providers in Respect of Hotel Management / Cuisine In Himachal Pradesh

VOCATIONAL INSTITUTES PROVIDING TRAININGS RELATING TO CUISINE / HOTEL MANAGEMENT IN HP						
DISTRICT	GOVT &/OR SPONSORED INSTITUTES	PRIVATE REGD TRAINING PROVIDERS	TOTAL	GOVT INSTITUTES PROVIDING CUISINE/ HOTEL MANAGEMENT RELATED TRAININGS	PRIVATE REGD INSTITUTES PROVIDING CUISINE/ HOTEL MANAGEMENT RELATED TRAININGS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF INSTITUTES PROVIDING TRAINING RELATING TO HOTEL MANAGEMENT
Bilaspur	12	11	23	0	0	0	0.00
Chamba	27	49	76	0	0	0	0.00
Hamirpur	27	49	76	0	1	1	1.32
Kangra	35	118	153	1	0	1	0.65
Kinnaur	5	1	6	0	0	0	0.00
Kullu	14	7	21	1	0	1	4.76
Lahaul-spiti	5	4	9	0	0	0	0.00
Mandi	50	32	82	1	0	1	1.22
Shimla	35	115	150	1	0	1	0.67
Sirmaur	27	79	106	0	0	0	0.00
Solan	33	31	64	0	2	2	3.13
Una	40	37	77	0	0	0	0.00
Total	**310**	**533**	**843**	**4**	**3**	**7**	**0.83**

ABSTRACT

PERCENTAGE OF GOVT INSTITUTES PROVIDING TRAINING	1.29
PERCENTAGE OF PRIVATE REGD INSTITUTES PROVIDING TRAINING	0.56

(District wise list of training institutes, himachal.nic.in)

From the analysis of the above data, it is found that out of a total of 843 vocational and training institutions, there are 310 government institutions and 533 private registered institutes. Only seven vocational and training institutes (4 government and three private) are providing training in hotel management, cooks, front office assistants, housekeeping assistants, stewards, food and beverages, food production, etc., which is only 0.83%, i.e., quite a negligible contribution.

Table 2 : List Of Districtswise Institutions Providing Trainings:

SR. NO	DISTRICT	NAME OF THE INSTITUTE PROVIDING TRAINING IN HP	GOVT/ PRIVATE	FIELDS IN WHICH TRAINING IS GIVEN
1	HAMIRPUR	Krishna Food & Craft Institute, Hamirpur HP	Private	Hotel Management, Cook, Waiter, Housekeeping
2	KANGRA	Food & Craft Institute Khaniara Tehsil Dharamshala (Kangra) HP	Govt	Food Production (Cooking)
3	KULLU	Government Industrial Training Institute Kullu HP	Govt	Stewards, Housekeeping
4	MANDI	Government Industrial Training Institute Mandi HP	Govt	Stewards, Food & Beverages, Front Office, Craftsmen, Food Production (Gen)
5	SHIMLA	Institute of Hotel Management (IHMS) Kufri (Shimla)	Govt	Hotel Management
6	SOLAN	National Finishing & Cooking Institute, Sahni Complex, Rajgarh Road, Solan HP	Private	Hotel Management
7	SOLAN	SDSJ Private Industrial Institute, Barog Solan HP	Private	Food Production (Gen)

Out of total 12 districts of the HP state, only six districts are providing partial trainings in the field of Hotel Management operations.

Hunar Se Rojgar Tak:

From other data retrieved from the centrally sponsored scheme, Government of India *"Hunar Se Rojgar Tak"* in respect of Himachal Pradesh, it is gathered that only 465 people have been trained out of the target fixed 640 during the year 2018-19 and 2019-20. This represents that tourism potential state is not providing adequate skills trainings to the aspirants while there is a large number of the aspirants want trainings in different walks of life. The following is the detail of trained people in the fields of Food Production, Food & Beverages, Multi-cuisine Cook, Housekeeping:

Table: 3 Detail of trained participants and the institutes providing trainings

Detail Of Trained Participants And The Institutes Providing Trainings					
Under Hunar Se Rojgar Tak Scheme — Skill Development					
	TRAINING PROVIDED				
NAME OF INSTITUTE	FOOD PRODUCTION	FOOD & BEVERAGES	MULTI-CUISINE COOK	HOUSE KEEPING	TOTAL
Tourism Hotel Kunjum Manali	70	28	17	0	115
Hotel Holiday Home Shimla	50	0	20	0	70
Tourism Hotel Rampur Complex	24	0	0	19	43
Hotel Jwalaji	0	0	0	27	27
Hotel Tea Bud Palampur Complex	0	0	0	86	86
Tourism Hotel Chamba	0	0	0	26	26
Tourism Hotel Kullu	0	0	0	24	24
Tourism Hotel Palace Chail	0	32	0	0	32
Tourism Hotel Peterhoff	42	0	0	0	42
TOTAL	186	60	37	182	465

(Source: Himachal Pradesh Tourism Department website)

The record reveals that efforts made to develop the skilled workforce for quality excellent tourism are quite meager and sincere efforts along with adequate funds are needed to the yield good results for professional tourism and the prosperity of the stake holders.

The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation is, however, doing good efforts to provide the basic amenities and comforts to the tourists but it is of primary stage, the professional touch is lacking. The tourism Hotels have been constructed at some specific destinations only. Government rest houses of various departments do not meet with the total requirement of the tourists which will further increase in coming years. Despite some registered private sector participants, more private guest houses, home stays and hotels are still required to accommodate the growing strength of the tourists in future in less or unexplored destinations of the state.

Himachal Pradesh has strengthened the infrastructure in tourism industry: –

The HP Tourism department has improved and built new facilities in several destinations, but there is still a lot of room for expansion. Tourists have generally visited the too-seasonal Shimla – Kullu Manali – Shimla circuit during the summer. Additionally, this circuit does not keep the visitors busy all year round. There is a need for additional specialised institutions, qualified personnel, infrastructure, and field trips for the state's more well-known locations.

Table 4: Detail of Registered Tourism Assets In Himachal Pradesh

NAME OF DISTRICT	REGISTERED TOURISM ASSETS ON RECORD IN HIMACHAL PRADESH						
	HOTEL	HOME-STAY	GUIDE	TRAVEL AGENCY	ADVENTURE GUIDE	PHOTOGRAPHER	TOTAL
BILASPUR	84	14	29	28	2	1	**115**
CHAMBA	225	106	106	51	5	17	**298**
HAMIRPUR	60	7	2	6	0	0	**66**
KANGRA	672	267	128	231	97	3	**1003**
KINNAUR	73	66	12	19	0	0	**92**
KULLU	953	327	386	1374	73	783	**3183**
LAHAUL & SPITI	88	258	1	15	0	0	**103**
MANDI	198	100	75	115	38	4	**355**
SHIMLA	493	336	451	978	7	91	**1569**
SIRMOUR	112	42	55	7	0	0	**119**
SOLAN	286	125	69	81	0	0	**367**
UNA	106	9	0	7	0	0	**113**
TOTAL	**3350**	**1657**	**1314**	**2912**	**222**	**899**	**7383**

(Source: Himachal Pradesh Tourism Department website)

Table 5: Tourists Arrival in Himachal Pradesh in the Last Ten Years

YEAR	INDIAN	FOREIGNER	TOTAL
2012	156.46	5.00	161.46
2013	147.16	4.14	151.30
2014	159.25	3.90	163.15
2015	171.25	4.06	175.31
2016	179.98	4.53	184.51
2017	191.31	4.71	196.02
2018	160.94	3.56	164.50
2019	168.29	3.83	172.12
2020	031.70	0.43	032.13
2021	056.32	0.05	056.37
2020 (UPTO DEC 2022)	150.70	0.29	150.99

(Source: Himachal Pradesh Tourism Department website)

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF DESTINATIONS FOR PROMOTION OF CUISINES WITH COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

HP Tourism department has displayed the detail of district wise popular destinations and narrated distances from popular places, methods of approach, staying arrangements in hotels, Rest Houses, Home stays, transportation, sightseeing places, suitable season, fests and fairs, weather conditions, destination products, services, tourist utilities, things to do in the nearby areas and contact numbers to meet their requirement etc but no emphasis has not been given for the popular cuisines of Himachal Pradesh.

Aims And Strategies

The HP Tourism Policy states that it would promote themed travel products to target certain market segments, but it is silent on destination-based branded goods and services. There is no mechanism in place to actively involve the community or the local people who can provide detailed information about their particular tourist destinations, their skills, experiences, activities, products, and services. The HP Tourism Policy mentions in its strategies to provide support to community based tourism development and planning for year-round tourist engagement activities. Although it does not include the local people, their prospective tourist attractions, their goods, or their services in any way, it also tries to give job possibilities in rural, tribal, and isolated regions. There is only top-to-bottom target-oriented planning, but bottom-up planning is required. Considering their abilities for excellent tourism, the people must participate and create a new philosophy to use manpower to have benefited the actual people.

Prevailing Management System

Currently, only a two-tier structure of top-to-bottom planning is created by establishing the HP Development Board at the state level and the Tourism Development Council at the district level, both of which include just a handful of stakeholders' selected members. The interests of the populace must be taken into account in this planning, along with major designs for structures, ropeways, events involving paragliding, etc.

Lack Of Public Awareness

The public is uninformed of the numerous beneficial government initiatives related to tourism, such as community-based tourism initiatives, training programs for skill development, financial incentives for new businesses, etc. This is a result of the Tourism Department's lack of accessibility. The community, locals, Self Help Groups (SHG), village development societies (VDS), village development committees (VDCs), Mahila Mandals (MM), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), volunteer organizations (VO), common interest groups (CIG), cooperative societies (CFs), etc. are not actively involved in the discussions below the district level.

Public Participation For Bottom-Up Planning

A village tourism coordination committee must be established in addition to the two executing bodies at the state and district levels that have already been notified. This village-level committee must be led by a district tourism officer who has been permanently designated as the Nodal Officer for village-level meetings. After deliberations with the community, local people, SHG, VDS/VDCs, MM, NGOs, VO, CIG, co-operative societies etc, the destination wise, season wise, group wise, item wise cuisines/food along with local tourism products need to be earmarked with do's & don'ts, quality and discipline codes.

Five villages from each district with tourism potential may initially be considered for development after

following specific selection criteria. Every year five new villages having tourism potential from every district except bigger Kangra district (10 potential villages) will be considered for development and preparing area specific projects of tourism so that the communities are benefited at the grass root level for exploring their best tourism products and services. The members of the village level co-ordination committee may be included as per requirement of the area specific development. These meetings will serve as the foundation for the real strategy for promoting tourism in HP. By contracting with NGOs for a set amount of time, hiring field employees from any department, such as the forest department, on deputation, or sending out tourist facilitators or village organizers on their own, the tourism department may reach the grassroots in this way.

The higher officer formulating the policies for the growth of tourism will benefit greatly from the important input of these grassroots groups. For proper planning, execution, reporting, maintenance, monitoring, and evaluation, "Bottom-up-Planning" entails public input from both executors and beneficiaries. Locals with firsthand knowledge of a destination's unique resources, goods, and services can contribute to sustainable tourism and year-round tourism activities. They may be assigned tasks involving food with their value addition, food goods, and food services in addition to other native specialized products for sale. Particularly women feel comfortable and content with food related tourism.

There is no deployment of the field staff, workers at the field level to collect actual field information, data etc which are most important and inadvertent for deciding the real planning and implementation.

Awareness And Publicity Plans For The Promotion Of Cuisine Or Food Tourism In Hp

The HP Tourism Policy does not include any plans to develop food unique to a particular location, their availability in certain locations, or the benefits and drawbacks of various cuisines from a health perspective. On its official website, the HP Tourism Development Corporation has, however, provided illustrations of the ingredients and preparation techniques for some of the local dishes, which includes Chah Meat, Sepu Badi, Channa Madra, Khatta Kaddu, Chicken (Anardana), Malpura, Siddu with Ghee, Kachalu Ka Salan, and Ghandiayali Ka Khatta. There are several additional dishes in the cuisines of HP that are not included on this page, including Dham from nearly every district, Kachori & Ghebar from Mandi, Rumali Roti from Una, Luchhi of Mandi, various types of Siddu, Bhaturu, and various types of Meat from Chamba. There is no information regarding cuisine-based destinations, their data, statistics for likes &/or dislikes, or reviews of the visitors. The HPTDC website seems to have put efforts to publicize cuisines of Himachal Pradesh. There is a need to put more efforts for the same.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SCHEMES AND INCENTIVES

There are many schemes provoked by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India which provide a) trainings of skill development, b) seed money to start new business, c) relaxations in taxes, and d) funding to the state/ UT governments etc but the state governments need to be aware for such schemes and gain profit of these schemes for the socio-economic growth of their people and ultimately their states/UTs. Some of the schemes are illustrated hereunder:

Vocal For Local Campaign:

In order to strengthen the home economy and eventually attain self-sufficiency, the Government of India program aims to promote domestic industry, encourage consumers to buy as locally as possible, and take advantage of the long-term effects of increased demand. Our beloved prime minister of India, Mr. Narinder Modi, believes that if people support small local enterprises, not only will the homes of the poor, craftsmen, and weavers be brightened, but also their celebrations. He stated that he thought the campaign, which was started with the public's assistance, would be more successful during the festivals. Mr. Modi advised people

to share on social media the local items they buy and encourage others in their immediate area to do the same. This campaign may be utilized to promote the regional cuisines and foods of Himachal Pradesh.

The move was undertaken to boost the revenue of the cooperatives, craftsmen, and weavers who are already receiving benefits. Mr. Modi's call for "Vocal for Local," which will assist in the realisation of Atma Nirbhar Bharat, has resulted in a boost for regional producers in rural areas.

Swadesh Darshan 2.0

The redesigned Swadesh Darshan 2.0 programme aims to achieve "Aatma Nirbhar Bharat" self – sustainability by realizing India's full potential as a tourist hub under the motto "VOCAL FOR LOCAL." The Swadesh Darshan Scheme is a comprehensive mission to create sustainable and responsible tourism destinations. It encompasses tourism related infrastructure, tourism services, human capital development, destination management and promotion. It also supports policy and institutional reforms. (Source: GOI Ministry of Tourism Guidelines for Swadesh Darshan 2.0)

Skill Development:

Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam (An HP Govt. Undertaking) has started vocational courses to train the unskilled or semi-skilled person as the quality professional to earn their livelihood. This institution has sought the co-operation of many other institutions to provide quality training to the aspiring candidates. Short term trainings of 3 to 5 months period are imparted in the field of tourism and hospitality in many institutes of HP which are funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB). Centre for Excellence (Waknaghat – Solan) is providing training of one year duration in the field of Hotel Management. HP Kaushal Vikas Nigam has executed covenant with other institutes like Training Hotel Red Fox Bhiwari, American Hotel and Lodging Education Institute, Tourism and Hospitality Skill Coucil, Lemon Tree Hotel. 66 trainees have passed out after 15 Dec 2022. The poor participation reflects that the people are not much aware about the schemes of the centre and the state governments.

Vocational Education:

Himachal Pradesh state has started Bechlor Degree Program in two sectors a) "Retail Management" and b) Hospitality & Tourism in 18 colleges of the State. These colleges are Government College (GC) Bilaspur, GC Chamba, GC Dharmshala (Kangra), GC Nurpur (Kangra), GC Kullu, GC Mandi, GC Sanjauli, (Shimla), GC Rampur (Shimla), GC Una, GC Hamirpur, GC Solan, GC Nahan (Sirmour), GC Dhaliara (Kangra), GC Ghumarwin (Bilaspur), GC Sarkaghat (Mandi), GC Haripur (Kullu), GC Seema Shimla) and Rajkiya Kanya Mahavidyalaya (RKMV) Shimla, Total 2,533 students have been enrolled for training during the academic session 2022-23.

(Source: HP Economic survey 2022-23; page 285)

Private Sector Involvement:

The private sector must be actively involved for the cuisine/ food tourism development in Himachal Pradesh however; some efforts have been made to invite the private players to participate in tourism by organizing various events such as the HP Global Investors' meet held in Dharamshala on 7th – 8th November, 2019. After this meet, 72 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) worth Rs. 8071 crore were signed with various tourism entrepreneurs by the state government. This global Investors' meet was attended by Hon'ble Prime Minister, GOI, Mr. Narender Modi.

(Source:https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/72-mous-worth-rs-8071-crore-signed-to-promote-tourism-hp-cm-119090501678_1.html)

Marketing Development Assistants (MDA) Scheme:

The Ministry of tourism, Government of India has approved the guidelines for the Marketing Development Assistants (MDA) scheme which is a sub-scheme of Overseas Promotion and Publicity Scheme of Government of India. Under this scheme, there is a provision of financial assistance to the identified stakeholders and tourism service providers (TSP) for marketing and promotional activities. After the approval of the tourism projects of the states or UTs, the financial support is provided for the specified activities such as road shows, tour sales, participation in travel, fairs, and exhibitions organized by the ministry of tourism. Online promotion of destinations, products, and tour packages in foreign markets, are encouraged which include content creation and production of digital promotional brochures and leaflets. *(Source: Govt of India/ Tourism related schemes of India /MARKETING/Approved Revised MDA Scheme Guidelines 0f Overseas Promotion Effective from 1st January 2021.pdf)*

Co-Operative Federalism:

Cooperative federalism means cooperation and interdependence between the Centre i.e. Government of India and the States (Constituent states of the country) to ensure smooth governance of the country. Meetings between Centre government and States governments, the sharing of best practices, policy assistance, and the capacity building of state/UT bureaucrats are just a few of the actions that NITI Aayog has undertaken. Additionally, NITI Aayog fosters private-public partnerships and offers technical guidance on the established models and programmes for infrastructure development. .

(Source: GOI Ministry of Tourism Guidelines for Swadesh Darshan 2.0.)

Tourism Scenario Of Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh state is facing the financial crunch, the state Government must consider about the private sector active participation and investment in food tourism integrated with other site specific tourism activities. The long-term planning is required to be prepared so that private participants feel secured to do with great zeal and courage. The basic facilities of accommodation, restaurants, shopping complexes, vehicle parking, cleanliness & maintenance, transportation, parks, destination excellent products & services are required. The safety & security of the tourists, their grievances quick redressal mechanism, trained and registered guides, professionally skilled man power are to be improved. However, the state government has registered many Home stays, restaurants, hotels etc. Some people have been trained in the hospitality sector but still, lot of works, trainings, infrastructures & facilities are required.

Convergence With Line Departments:

The state government has established an effective co-ordination committee to develop coordination with all other departments/agencies at Central, State and District Levels but there is no mechanism to have linkage with people at the grass root level which is very important and urgent. Without any information of the fields, it is very difficult to discuss about planning, implementation, reporting, maintenance, monitoring & evaluation, welfare of people, development of their socio-economic, socio-culture status from the available potential resources, native products & services etc. Thus, the Government must ensure full participation of the local community so that the benefits of tourism so derived must percolate directly to them.

(Source: HP Development Report — Finance Department of HP)

Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation

The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation staff requires improving the communication, services, courteous and multi-lingual skills at all levels for the entire satisfaction of the tourists. At present,

these skills are lacking and are not followed professionally. The HPTDC staff needs to develop their mental makeup as per private entrepreneurs and not of government staff. They must earn profit for the corporation and improve the standard with the changing scenario. Food and Beverage practices require improvements to satisfy the customers.

(Source: HP Tourism Development Report 2017-18 by HP Finance Department)

CONCLUSION

The public is unaware of the numerous beneficial government initiatives related to tourism, including training programs for developing skills, financial incentives for new businesses, and community-based tourist initiatives. This is due to the non participation of local community in the Tourism growth. There is no active community or public participation in the discussions, which are solely confined to the state and district-level tourism development councils.

The state tourism administration must consider and brand locally produced goods and services as per specialty of a particular destination while promoting cuisines and food & beverages in a way that integrates sustainability with multiple types of tourism. The state government must create public engagement mechanism for the mass movement of tourism development in order to embrace bottom-up planning, decision-making, implementation, reporting, maintenance, monitoring, and evaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY UPDATES: To take full use of the incentives offered in the National Tourism Policy and NITI Aayog, the HP tourism policy has to be updated concurrently. Our world-famous cuisines should receive more attention.

BOTTOM-UP PLANNING: Although the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Policy states a desire to help local communities and tourism hosts, "bottom-up planning" mechanism is not devised since it does not include people at the local level in planning, implementing, maintaining, reporting, monitoring, and evaluating. There is no established method for reaching to the grassroots level.

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (MIS): It is a crucial platform for peer evaluation of the programs, is either not updated or not posted to the web. To encourage peer learning among state ministries/departments, NGOs, and other researchers, the HP Tourism Department website should publish a compendium of best practices for using administrative data for monitoring and evaluation.

DESTINATION BRANDS: Himachal Pradesh has to develop some instantly recognizable brand symbols for its products, such as houseboats, shikara-style boats, water scooters, paragliding spots, Largi Dam, and snow skiing like the Taj Mahal, Statue of Liberty, and Statue of Unity, among other things. To the complete pleasure of the tourists, it is more important than ever to identify the tourism activities, goods, and services that are particular to each place.

YEAR ROUND TOURISM: Tourists should have access to all-season tourism products and should experience all of Himachal Pradesh. The districts of Kullu and Shimla currently get almost 50% of all tourists visiting the state of Himachal Pradesh. Even in these areas and that too for three to four months each year.

TOURISM CORPUS: The HP tourist Policy must keep a tourism corpus fund that may be utilized to provide startup capital to small tourist business units, cooperative societies, and other entities.

DECENTRALIZATION OF POWERS: HP Tourism Policy shall establish a power-sharing structure among officers at various levels including village institutions to facilitate quick project development, approval, and sanctions for execution.

GUIDELINES THROUGH MANUALS: The HP Tourism department has to provide several manuals to give clear instructions to both user agencies and tourists.

ADVERTISEMENT OF TOURISM: The social environment and requirements are rapidly changing as a result of networks, mobile devices, laptops, and computers, and new inventive philosophies must be embraced for advertising through brand ambassadors, social media, digital screens, and other channels, as well as for improvement through artificial intelligence and data science. Periodically, their effects need to be examined and taken into account. Tourism must be skillfully advertised utilizing all available techniques of marketing campaigns. Along with print media, websites, Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Telegram, Snapchat, and other social media platforms should be utilized.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND CAPACITY BUILDING: All tourism-related host industries must be prepared to adopt new technology and increase their capacity. The tourism education curriculum must be expanded from the secondary level to the universities to explore the tourism potential.

RELATIONSHIP STRENGTHENING: The relationship between the state, central, interstate governments needs to be strengthened so that national programs like the Sustainable Action for Transforming Human (SATH) capital program, the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP), the Sustainable Development schemes in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) of 11 hill states, etc., can be carried out with support of the central government. It is possible to organize, plan, and carry out small to large area-specific tourism initiatives to fulfill the mission of reducing poverty, creating jobs, and generating financial resources with other states of India.

CONCURRENCE OF POLICIES AND RESEARCH: The policies of the states must concord with the policy postulates of central government. The 'Research Scheme of NITI Aayog 2018', a new set of rules, had been operationalized by NITI Aayog. The updated rules intended to broaden the scope of research activities in addition to supporting reputable universities in hosting conferences, workshops, and seminars. They also provided non-financial assistance by allowing the use of the NITI brand for various events.

GENDER ISSUES: The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Policy, 2019 does not address the gender issues. The cuisines of Himachal Pradesh are focused on the needs of women and should be given top consideration.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: The roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders need to be outlined in the specific strategies, action plans, schemes, and guidelines that will be established for the Policy's implementation.

CUSTOMERS' REVIEWS: The customers' reviews and service feedback will help in improvement. There must be an easy digital way for visitors to express their complaints and look for a solution.

SUSTAINABILITY: Promoting the sustainable use of natural resources helps local communities, increases public awareness of the issue, and supports tourism enterprises.

PRIVATE PARTICIPATION: The National Digital Tourism Mission's policy acknowledges that the opportunities for private tourism enterprises to extend their market reach, boost growth, boost operational efficiency, and strengthen their competitive edge in the tourism industry.

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