

Policies and Initiatives Implemented by the Government Encourage the Expansion of the Economy and Rural Tourism in Bihar

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ABSTRACT

It was the end of the 20th century; tourism is expected on the way to grow more quickly in the 21st century. It is currently the largest worldwide industry. The fact that a global tourist revolution has been sweeping the globe for the last forty years or so should be considered. It was predicted in 2001 that roughly 700 million tourists would leave their homes globally; by 2030, that number is expected to reach a billion. Bihar must develop creative tourist promotion and management strategies to establish tourism as a significant industry supporting our GDP and participating actively in this revolution. It must also modify its strategy, goals, and the equipment and tools used in its implementation.

According to a predicting study conducted through the global sphere T&T Council, India's GDP will be contributed by the spending activity resulting from both domestic and foreign tourism by 6.3 percent in 2001. Additionally, 26 million permanent employees, or 7% of India's employees, will be supported by tourism.

Over ten lakh visitors have visited Bihar in the past ten years due to its natural beauty and tribal festivities, and this number is expected to grow in the future.

Therefore, to transform the State into a popular tourism destination, coordinated efforts by the federal, state, and municipal governments are needed.

Keywords: Rural Tourism, WTTC, GDP, Natural Beauty

Need for Tourism Policy

Increased demand for land, high-quality infrastructure, and services will be necessary as the tourism industry grows. As a result, the state must act quickly to improve the current situation while preserving the ecosystem and ecological balance of the region. Due to the aforementioned factors, policy changes are required to offer incentives, tax and duty breaks to entice possible promoters, institutional structures, and reforms to carry out project execution, as well as various regulatory and control measures. Considering those mentioned above, Bihar, as a state, urges to change in the policy framework.

National Tourism Policy: An Overview

The 1982 formulation of the National Tourism Policy took place in a closed economy with strict licensing requirements. However, because the strategy was developed in a closed economy, it did not acknowledge the significance of the private sector and discouraged foreign investment in the travel and tourism industry. Furthermore, domestic tourism was not sufficiently addressed by the policy. In 2002, the Government of Bihar developed the National Tourism Development Policy to prioritize tourism and close the gaps in the previous framework. The policy's primary goals were:

To emphasize domestic travel as a key factor in the expansion of tourism.

To promote India's unrealized travel potential and establish India as one of the world's leading brands to profit from international tourism.

To work with the government, the commercial sector, and other organizations to design and build integrated tourism circuits based on socioeconomic and cultural factors.

To acknowledge the role played by the investment in the private sector in the tour and travel tourism business, by the regime catalyzing to increase in travel industry revenues.

To promote tourism as a key driver of economic expansion.

To utilize the job and poverty-eradication potential in an environmentally sustainable way, both through direct and multiplier effects.

The Government of Bihar has set a new policy framework for tourism, which has not yet been adopted, and recent changes or breakthroughs in the tour and travel segment worldwide. The following are key elements that occur in the new set of tourism:

The policy mainly focuses on creating jobs and encouraging community involvement in the growth of tourism.

Place emphasis on the responsible and sustainable growth of the tourism industry.

An all-encompassing policy that involves connections with other departments, ministries, states, unions, and stakeholders.

In addition to encouraging Indians to travel within their nation, the Program enriches the objective of creating and delivering the country as a "MUST EXPERIENCE" or "MUST RE-VISIT" place for tourists from around the world.

The creation and marketing of tourism-related products, such as the nation's heritage and specialty offerings in the areas of health and wellness, adventure, wildlife, CIME, Conference, Incentives, Meetings, Exhibitions, etc.

Construction of tourism set-up as well as basic infrastructure (roadways, railroads, canals, etc.).

Creating opportunities for the development of skilled human resources in the tourist and hospitality sectors, spanning from professional to vocational skill development.

Fostering an atmosphere that encourages investment in travel and infrastructure associated with it.

A focus on how technology has facilitated tourism development.

Pay attention to domestic travel as a key factor in the expansion of tourism.

Concentrate on promoting through focused and nation-specific campaigns, trends in well-known sources, along with potential markets, which are major contributors to the world's tourism traffic.

A focus on tourism as the hub of multisectoral activity and the alignment of Ministry initiatives with significant/flagship Government of India schemes.

Three important strategic goals must be met to realize the broader vision for the growth of tourism. These are:

Making the development of tourism a national priority and sustaining it

Increasing and preserving India's competitiveness as a travel destination

Creating, developing, and increasing products to meet the needs of the market

The Tourism Development Plan of 2000

The implementation of policy related to tourism adopted by the Bihar government, of Bihar Tourism Development, has been formulated with the Master Plan for tourism.

Tourism Plans/Projects

The Tourism Department of the government of Bihar, 2020, initiated the tourism development plan in the following :

The following tourism development plan was initiated by the Tourism Department of the Government of Bihar in 2000.

Table: Government Tourism Development Plan initiated by the Tourism Department of the Government of Bihar

S No.	Scheme	Budget Sanctioned Rs (in Lakhs)	Action Plan
1.	Tourist Facility & Information Centre, Purnia	146.23	Leisure & Info Capacity for Travelers
2.	Visitorpoint, Singh Eshwar	56.61	Accommodation & Information Facility for Tourists/Travelers
3.	Visitor point, Haripur	148.23	Accommodation & Information Facility for Tourists/Travelers
4.	Visitor point, Bhim bandh, Munger	149.23	Relaxation facility in nature nature-friendly environment
5.	Expansion&Remodeling of Kakoli Falls, Narada	96.98	Develop as a Picnic Spot
6.	Expansion & Remodeling of Sun Temple, Dee, Aurangabad	56.16	Pilgrimage Centre
7.	Development & Beautification of Kundera, Gaya	56.16	Visitor center
8.	Visitor Centre at BatakariKhargharMadhapur, Saharsha	150.00	Accommodation & other facilities for Tourists &Travelers
9.	Development of Architectural Monuments, Bikram Sila, Bhagalpur	50.00	Expansion &Remodeling of architectural monuments, Rs 4.68 lakh have already been spent.
10.	Visitor center , Bhagalpur	75.00	Rooms and other amenities for Travelers
11.	Expansion &Enhancement of Dighi Lake in Janaki Pari path, Darbhanga	40.00	Tourist Attractions

12.	Expansion & Elegance of Golghar, Patna	400.00	Beautification & of Golghar includes railing, security, check-post, toilet for ladies & gentlemen, landscaping, Musical Fountain, Water Supply & Water Body Motel & Cafeteria. Project initiated on 6-2-2003
13.	Enhancement of Temple, Rajgir	40.00	Tourist attraction & pilgrimage
14.	Tourist attraction at the Mahabodhi Mandir, Bodhgaya	64.00	Tourist attraction & pilgrimage
15.	Expansions & Elegance of Maya Lake, Bodhgaya	98.97	Visitor lure
16.	Building of Visitor Block, Bodhgaya	96.92	Budget Accommodation for Tourists/Pilgrims
17.	Construction of Tourist Centre, Vaishali	98.60	Lodging & other amenities for Local & Overseas Visitors
18.	Creation of Visitor Centre, Muzaffarpur	68.99	Lodging & other amenities for Local & Overseas Visitors
19.	Enhancement & Elegance of Maner, Patna	38.24	Picnic Spot
20.	Expansion of Hot Spring, Rajgir	110.677	Visitors lure
21.	Beautification & Elegance of Ganga Ghat, Patna	56.85	Recreation Centre
22.	Advance of “Kund”, Rajgir	200.00	Visitors lure
23.	Building a visitors center, Munger	43.13	Lodging & other amenities for Local &

			Overseas Visitors
24.	Prettification & Progress of Abhishek Pond, Vaishali	86,84	Tourist Attraction of Ancient Heritage
	Total A	2,427.81	

Source: Anoa Report, 2019-2020, Dept. of Tourism. Govt. of Bihar

New Tourism Policy:

The Government of Bihar Cabinet, led by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, agreed to the Bihar Tourism Policy 2023, a major step in promoting infrastructure and economic growth. The goal of the policy is to encourage investments in the leisure industry and enable complete development.

The significance of the leisure industry to the world's economy and society was emphasized by Abhay Kumar Singh, Tourism Secretary, during a news conference held in the Secretariat auditorium.

With references to nations like Malaysia, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Indian regions like Kashmir, Rajasthan, Goa, and Sikkim, Singh underscored the leeway of achieving fiscal stability and expansion via the Tourism industry. According to the tourism department's estimates, the recently adopted policy may fetch investments worth Rs 10,000 crore.

Nand Kishore, the managing director of Bihar Tourism Development Corporation, and Vinay Kumar Rai, the director of tourism, were in attendance at the news conference.

Multi-faceted Objectives

The primary objective is to build world-class infrastructure, with an emphasis on obtaining first-rate amenities that improve the traveller experience as a whole. The development of varied and alluring tourism offerings through the production of infrastructure and tourism goods is another important goal. The policy highlights the need for a skilled workforce to support these endeavours and promotes skill training programs to guarantee the industry has the requisite knowledge. In addition, there is a great focus on the amenities and safety of tourists, with a dedication to upholding the highest standards of excellence and safety.

Finally, the strategy promotes technology-focused tourism, seeking to include state-of-the-art technology in a range of tourism programs. In general, the policy expects the tourism industry to develop at an unprecedented rate, with favourable effects on the state's economy, job market, and company prospects. It is planned to offer financial incentives to investors and recipients who help the tourism industry grow.

Subsidies

A maximum of Rs 3 crore will be the maximum amount of a 30% subsidy offered for investments up to Rs 10 crore. A 25% subsidy up to Rs 50 crore would be available for investments, with a Rs 10 crore. A 25% subsidy will still be given for investments beyond Rs 50 crore, but the maximum amount is Rs 25 crore.

Funding Repayment Milestones

50% during the 1st two consecutive years of saleable operations, 25% after two 2-years, and the remaining 25% after five years.

Additional Financial Incentives

The program also provides additional financial incentives, such as a 100% reimbursement for the Land Conversion Fee, guaranteeing the full return of this outlay. A lump-sum refund of 100% is given for the Stamp Duty and Registration Fee associated with the lease, sale, or transfer of land. For 5 years following the date of marketable operation, the State Goods and Services Tax (SGST) reimbursement rate is eighty percent, with a maximum reimbursement amount of one hundred percent of the approved project cost.

For the first five years, new tourism units receive a 100% reimbursement for electricity duties. Additionally, recognized tour guides receive a refund of 5% of their monthly fees from impaneled organizations for a two-year term; the maximum monthly reimbursement per guide is Rs 5,000. In addition, the policy promotes environmentally friendly practices by providing up to Rs 10.00 lakh in reimbursement for 50% of the certification fee paid to a globally recognized organization to get green certification. A 50% GST reimbursement is also available for the expenses incurred in organizing meetings, exhibitions, conferences, and events under the Exhibition, Meetings, Conferences, and Incentives.

New Bihar Tourism Policy Gets Cabinet Approval:

The Policy for Tourism in Bihar 2023 was approved by the cabinet to increase investment in the tourism industry.

The policy incorporates provisions for stakeholders and intends to construct basic infrastructure close to popular tourism spots in the state. The new policy offers investors many financial incentives. Among them are: a 30% capital subsidy on reserves up to Rs. Ten crores. Twenty-five percent of the sums up to Rs 50 crore in investments. 25%, up to a maximum of Rs 25 crore, for investments over Rs 50 crore. Land conversion fees, stamp duty, and registration fees are all fully reimbursed. For up to five years, 80% of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on commercial operations is reimbursed. 100% of the five-year electricity bill refund for new tourism units. A reimbursement of five percent of the monthly compensation paid to tour guides will be given to hoteliers and tour operators. For a maximum of two years, the monthly restriction for this will be Rs 5,000 per guide. The policy also covers enticements for green certification and promotions for meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibits (MICE). At the start of commercial operation, 50% of the subsidy will be paid, followed by 25% after two years and 25% after five years. An additional Rs 62 crore has been approved for the building of a bus depot and an alternate access road with sheds close to the Vishnupad Temple in Gaya. Well-known tourist destinations in Bihar include the Valmiki Nagar Tiger Reserve in West Champaran, the Mahabodhi Temple Multifaceted in Bodhgaya, the Vishwa Shanti Stupa in Rajgir, Nalanda, and the old city of Pataliputra. Infrastructure Project Approval | Bihar | December 28, 2023.

The Union Cabinet recently gave its approval to nearly Rs. 5,500 crores worth of infrastructure projects in Bihar and the Northeast. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has also approved projects totaling Rs. 2,586.68 crores for the strengthening and enlargement of the 137-kilometer section of the NH in Tripura that runs from Khowar to Harina (CCEA). Take note, the MSP minimum support price for Copra for 2024 was also authorized by the CCEA. Important Points The cabinet permitted the creation of a 5.56 km long, six-lane bridge across the Ganga to connect Digha and Shneur in Bihar.

There is already a railcar-road bridge that connects Shneur, in the Saran district, with Digha, in the Patna district, but it is limited to light vehicle use. The Minister of Information and Broadcasting stated that the new bridge would allow heavy vehicle transportation and link the north and south of Bihar. The project, which is expected to be finished in 42 months, would also enhance Connectivity for Buddhist pilgrimage destinations, viz. Vaishali.

CONCLUSION

Bihar's socio-economic condition over the years has undergone little basic transformation and is not well differentiated. It has a largely agrarian economy with a small manufacturing base. By evolving the right curve of marketing mix and pilgrimage service sector strategy, we can improve the economic condition of Bihar.

The upsurge in the number of visitors will result in the need for a direct workforce to serve them and provide them with the conveniences in accommodation, sanitation, food and beverage, and transportation, as well as the augmented revenue of the people. The source of Art and Crafts, Regional Textile, Paintings, particularly the Madhubani Paintings, Transportation like Bullock-cart, Tetum, Rickshaw, etc.

The residents of Bihar are Intelligent, spirited, and arduous. The rural tourism will provide them prospect to believe in the flow of income and to grow, with employment as well as the entrepreneurial activities.

Hence, to encourage rural tourism as a primary tourism artefact and spread tourism's socio-economic aids to rural and new geographic regions, key geographic regions should be identified for the development of rural tourism. The enactment should be made through a convergence committee headed by the district collector. Apart from financial assistance, the focus needs upon tapping the resources available under different schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development, State Govt., and other Ministries of the Govt. of India.

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