



## Urban tourism: The case of India

Shiji O

Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Economics, Dr. John Matthai Centre, University of Calicut,  
Aranattukara, Thrissur, Kerala, India

### Abstract

People visit different areas according to their own liking. Every city and country has various types of attraction for the visitors. Urban tourism is an important factor of present tourism trend. In recent times, many developed countries have been using urban tourism development policies as effective measures in their drive to regenerate and rejuvenate their historical and modernising cities so that they are becoming much sought after destinations in regional and international tourist circuits. It is developing very rapidly in the world. The main intention of urban tourism may be MICE, Leisure, short break holiday makers, day trippers as well as long holiday makers. On this background this study is aimed to assess the importance of Indian urban tourism in the light of rapid and uncontrollable Indian urbanisation.

**Keywords:** tourism, urbanisation, development, urban tourism

### Introduction

We are living in a vibrant world. Where people like to travel abroad and explore the world. Humans find more and more place to entertain him. The main reason behind this is that the life is becoming materialistic day by day. Now every country is making their historic places more attractive to get more tourists. People visit different areas according to their own liking. Every city and country has various types of attraction for the visitors. Urban tourism is an important factor of present tourism trend. In recent times, many developed countries are using urban tourism development policies as effective measures to revitalise their tourism sector. The important significance of these policies is that they generate more employment in the service sector of the urban economy along with producing a liveable urban environment. Therefore, the strategies are multipronged. This is having an immense attraction towards cities. It is also known as city tourism. It is developing very rapidly in the world. The main intention of urban tourism may be MICE, Leisure, short break holiday makers, day trippers as well as long holiday makers.

### Objective

The objective of this paper is to assess the importance of urban tourism in India in the light of rapid and uncontrollable Indian urbanisation.

### Urban Tourism

The concept of urban tourism is very broad and it consists of all kinds of entertainment activities that are held in cities. The improvement of urban environment and the perfection of all kinds of services and facilities are all great attractions to tourists. It consists of good and suitable transport links, well-blooming market, better trade and good atmosphere for shopping, latest and developed information and technology, great service and leisure, modern urban land and rich urban

culture. Therefore a lot of people decide different types of cities as a destination to spend their holidays and the urban tourism in those cities are well-known (Zou and Tian, 2002). According to Colantonio and Potter (2006) the tourism that is held in urban area of the city is known as urban tourism. Urban tourism consists of different types of activities. Different people visit urban cities for different purposes like visit historical buildings, tourist attractions, landscapes, art galleries, special events, to see culture and heritage and for leisure purposes.

Urban city also offers a lot of activities to increase tourism and attract the people. All those things are the characteristics of urban tourism. The image of the city is very important for all types of visitors that is, they have a lot of expectations like the behaviour and attitude of the community. If it is positive, it attracts the visitors again and again. In this way, the tourism growth increases in that city. The cities change in public culture, architecture and design, education, urban planning, parks and leisure and public party which resulted from dramatic redevelopment of the city's central business and historic district. Urban tourism increasingly generates images of heritage and identify that are consumed as much by residents as by visitors. The cities where the tourism infrastructure and marketing are largely build up (Chambers, 1997). For many cities urban tourism is their number one industry, generating not only rising income but also underpinning many regeneration projects. The University of Gloucestershire (United Kingdom) says in its prospectus that tourism and culture had been catalysts for large-scale urban development internationally.

Trips and visits with a focus on town and city destinations are called urban tourism. It is also known as "city tourism". It is a fast growing form of tourism stimulated by historical and cultural attractions as well as shopping and event attractions. The development of the urban tourism implies a horizontal

and integrator co-ordination of more activities and having the following stages (Profiroiu, 1998):

- Mobilization of all the actors to create a collective dynamics, to listen, inform and encourage their professionalism
- Defining a strategy, which must have as base the identity of the city, which must co-ordinate the actions from different sectors taken into consideration
- The development of a coherent offer in every domain, considering first of all what already exists and correlating in the organization of this offer the external expectations with the city (Boniface, 1995)
- Fostering the use of the city by everybody (informing and signalling, transport and access)
- Initiating one or more urban events (equipments, holidays, festivals, congresses), which are an essential tool because they can conjugate the economy and culture, the local and exterior actors, the townsmen and visitors, the economical contribution and resuscitation of the urban space
- Promoting the city and the “useful counters”.

Urban tourism has got mainly three elements namely primary elements, secondary elements and additional elements. The primary elements include

- Cultural facilities
  - Museums and art galleries
  - Theatres and cinemas
  - Concert halls
  - Convention centers
  - Other visitor attractions
- Sports facilities
  - Indoor stadiums
  - Outdoor stadiums
- Amusement facilities
  - Night clubs
  - Casinos and bingo halls
  - Organized events
  - Festivals
- Physical characteristics
  - Historical street pattern
  - Interesting buildings
  - Ancient monuments and status
  - Parks and green areas
  - Waterfronts (harbour, canal, river)
- Socio-cultural features
  - Liveliness of a place
  - Language
  - Local customs and costumes
  - Cultural heritage
  - Friendliness
  - Security

The Secondary elements are

- Accommodation
- Catering facilities
- Shopping
- Markets

The Additional elements are

- Accessibility
- Transportation and parking
- Tourist information (Maps, Guides etc.)

According to the opinions of specialists (Kotler Ph, D.Haider, I. Rein, 2004), urban tourism varies from other forms of tourism by the following two elements:

- It takes place in towns having at least 20,000 inhabitants and has as main feature short-term stays which according to the WTO definition mean the trips outside residence for 1-3 nights. Therefore, the only criterion for being different from the other forms of tourism is the demographic one, although in some countries (France, for example) the official statistics show the limit of 2,000 inhabitants in order to define an urban area
- The movement distance should be at least 100 km observing the conditions regarding trips’ duration and reason, also taking account of one-day trips.

Along time, the evolution of urban tourism has been influenced by a number of economic, social, demographic, juridical and technological factors. Among them, the following have had an important role in order to improve short-term stays (Stănciulescu G., 2004):

1. More and more free time due to the gradual decrease of work time, the increase of studying duration, the retirement age which has become lower, the holidays which have grown longer etc., also due to the development of certain services that significantly contribute in reducing the time spent with chores.
2. The increase in people’s mobility mainly due to the progress of transportation regarding higher travelling speed and lower travelling costs and also to certain social factors such as the decrease in retirement age according to which old people’s mobility diminishes, to which several facilities provided add, the increase in the number of unmarried people and families with no children.
3. The transportation growth registered by road and railway networks, high-speed means of transport, air transport deregulation and the openness to new destinations, the emergence of various tariffs.
4. Towns’ attractiveness equally generated by municipalities’ efforts to diversify urban entertainment by rehabilitating historical centres, shopping centres, by improving the quality of urban areas through the development of general and specific infrastructure. These factors have gradually contributed in increasing the importance of short-term stays within urban areas, a phenomenon manifested as a consequence of certain defining features of movements within towns (Ioniță I., 2006, Law, C. M., 1995, Loftman, P) <sup>[5]</sup>.
5. The lack of seasonality since urban movements takes place all throughout a year irrespective of the season.
6. Without prior planning which is also encouraged by the progress in the field of information technology which gives one the opportunity to know any time the

- possibilities to travel and book accommodation in specific units.
7. The short duration of trips is generated by tourists on their own behalf and they are associated with certain events like painting exhibitions, festivals, concerts, entertainment nights, crafts fairs etc.
  8. They trigger significant financial gains as tourists spend a lot from the cultural point of view, they go shopping, have fun, which is something quite important to a town's economic growth.
  9. They significantly influence the increase in a town's attractiveness, the efforts made in order to promote the cultural patrimony, the hospitality and the elements of the natural and entertainment environment, thus contributing in a better image abroad and in order to attract tourist flows.

Knowing the peculiarities of the demand in urban tourism is a very hard process because of the national statistical systems that register the number of visitors in an urban area and of people's travelling motivations, they are extremely heterogeneous systems which especially emphasize the stays lasting more than four days as compared to the short term ones and occasional visits (Boniface, P., 1995, Selby, M., 2003).

### **The Emergence of Urban Tourism**

The urban tourism was emerged through a process when tourism was seen as a danger in 1970. The economic conditions after the 1970's were the most significant phenomenon in the city, which allowed tourism to be placed as an important urban function. The economic decline of the cities in the UK, Western Europe and Northern America in the late 1970's highlighted the role of tourism as a catalyst to boost urban economies. Therefore, tourism is suggested as a mean to manage the change and transition of city functions, and then is expanded to become the principal sector in the city economies. In parallel with this, tourism and urban regeneration started to become important activities and received greater attention in the 1980's related to the problems that exist in the city (Ashworth, 1989; Law, 1991)<sup>[5, 2]</sup>.

Related on this, Ashworth (1992)<sup>[3]</sup> names two conditions how as to the concepts urban and tourism join together, which shows the complexity of relationship between urban features and tourism functions in creating urban tourism. Firstly, the characteristics intrinsic of cities as a settlement type are an instrument in shaping tourism or leisure activities where the roles of urban tourism emerge. Secondly, the function of tourism or leisure also becomes the instrument in shaping important aspects of cities. Moreover, cities are places where various major facilities such as transport, hotel facilities and event facilities are located. Based on this, Blank (1994) identifies five major factors that characterise cities as tourism destinations. They are:

- Location of high populations, which attract high numbers of tourists who are visiting friends and relatives.
- Major travel nodes that serve as gateways or transfer points to other destinations.
- Focal points for commerce, industry and finance.

- Harbour concentrations of people services such as education, government or administration centre, health and others.
- Places that offer a wide variety of cultural, artistic and recreational experiences.

From a more comprehensive view, the complexity of urban tourism can be addressed through three elements that involved in it are the tourist, the tourism industry and the city (Fainstein and Judd, 1999). These elements interact and produce a complex ecological system, where each of them is unique but is strongly related. As a new subject for the political economy of the cities, this complexity of urban and tourism relationships has been increasingly discussed from various perspectives and backgrounds such as geography, urban planning and tourism disciplines (Ashworth, 1989, 1992; Law, 1991)<sup>[5, 2]</sup>.

### **Advantages of Urban Tourism**

Urban tourism, if correctly planned, developed and managed, may create advantages and benefits both to urban communities and overall society (Iordache and Cebuc, 2009). The tourism encourages the development of some new cultural and commercial facilities and improved that can be used both by the residents and the tourists. The tourism permits the collection of necessary funds to preserve the natural, archaeological and historical monuments, art and cultural traditions and most of all, contributes to the improvement of environment quality (Stanculescu, 2009). Within an urban community, the tourism can bring significant benefits (Stanculescu, 2009) like

- Creating new work places
- New perspectives for local tourism firms
- New investment possibilities
- Increase of incomes and implicit the improvement of life standards for local collectivity
- Generating incomes from local taxes which can be used for restoration of infrastructure and improvement of the community facilities
- Improvement of the infrastructure whose direct beneficiaries, besides the tourists from the area, will be the residents of that area
- Assurance of the financial sources for conserving the natural areas, art, handicraft, archaeological and historic areas, cultural traditions (European Commission, 1998)
- Improvement of the environment quality (World Tourism Organization, Earth Council, 1997).

Some specialists (Shaw and Williams, 1994) argue that the tourism sustains a low cost of the fund for creating new work places, quickens the economical development through powerful multiplying effects, improves the aesthetic ambience of the constructions from the city and intensifies the facility of spending the leisure time for residents. In the same time it offers support in default of alternatives for developing a solid economical base: if the cities do not compete for the financial resources of the tourists, are likely to lose in the increasing competitions which takes place globally.

## Urban Tourism in India

Urban tourism is not a new phenomenon in India since Indian cities have been well known to the world for several centuries. However, in viewing Indian urban tourism development from this perspective, as an instrument of positive urban regeneration it may not be as palatable to many in India as the demand for the establishment of basic urban infrastructure is overwhelmingly high. As the recent population statistics indicate, India no longer lives in villages, instead it is expected that by the turn of this century nearly 305 million Indians will live in nearly 3700 towns and cities of India (<http://urbanindia.nic.in/urbanindia/scene.htm>). In modest terms this comprises 30 per cent of its total population and sharply contrasts with the scenario of pre-independent India when a meagre 60 million inhabited the urban landscape. During the last fifty years, the population of India has grown two and half times, but Urban India has grown nearly five times (<http://urbanindia>). India's urban population is quite obviously larger than all the urban populations of the world put together (barring China, Russia and United States). The trend of urban population in India is shown in the table 1.

**Table 1:** India: urban Population 1901-2011

Year	Urban population (million)	Percentage of Urban to total population	Decadal growth rate (percent)
1901	29.9	10.8	-
1911	25.9	10.3	-13.38
1921	28.1	11.2	8.49
1931	33.5	12.0	19.21
1941	44.2	13.9	31.94
1951	62.4	17.3	41.18
1961	78.9	18.0	26.44
1971	109.1	19.9	38.27
1981	159.5	23.3	46.2
1991	217.6	25.7	36.43
2001	306.9	30.5	41.04
2011	377.1	31.16	22.87

**Source:** <http://urbanindia.nic.in>

Although in terms of numbers, the population figures may be overwhelming but in terms of the quality of life and liveability Indian cities do not fare as well. Despite the serious urban planning efforts of the successive governments, the primacy of the mega cities is still a force to be reckoned with in midst of the modest challenge posed from the remaining 19 million cities. The table 2 explains the distribution of urban population in India.

**Table 2:** Distribution of urban population by size

Size of towns	Population Range	No. of Towns	Share of Urban Population (%)
I	100,000 & above	300	65.20
II	50,000 to 99,999	345	10.95
III	20,000 to 49,999	947	13.19
IV	10,000 to 19,999	1,167	7.77
V	5000 to 9,999	740	2.60
VI	< than 5,000	197	0.29
All classes		3,696	100

**Source:** <http://urbanindia.nic.in/urbanindia/scene.htm>

From the above table it is easily discerned that about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of urban India lives in metropolitan cities (million plus) and the number of such cities increased from 1 in 1901 to 5 in 1951 to 23 in 1991. It is estimated that the number became 46 in 2011. The positive side of India's urbanisation is the level of its contribution to the national economy as against the rural contribution. The growth of employment (main workers) in urban India during 1981-91 was recorded at 38 per cent against 16 per cent in rural areas and 26.1 per cent in the country as a whole (United Nations Development Program, 1995).

**Table 3:** India's Urbanisation and Economic Growth

Year	% of Urban to total population	Estimated contribution to national income (%)
1951	17.3	29
1981	23.3	47
1991	25.7	55
2001	30.5	60
2011	37.7	63

**Source:** <http://urbanindia.nic.in/urbanindia/scene.htm>

The figures shown in the table 3 may well speak for the rapid growth of Indian cities and the growing concentration of population in these centres in years to come. They also indicate the economic potential available, at least in generating employment in different sectors of the urban economy. Before analysing the quality of Indian cities and their capacity to adopt the tourism development policies enunciated in North America and Europe, it is essential to have a glance at existing urban development policies of India.

## India's Urban Policies

Since 1950, the urban development policies have come a long way. The Five-Year plans of modern India have given sufficient emphasis to urban India's growing demand for shelter and institution building. During the First Five year plan (1951-56) the concern was to establish organizations such as 'The Ministry of Works and Housing', 'National Building Organisation' and Town and Country Planning Organization to consider the emerging problems of unchecked urbanisation. The construction of Chandigarh was an important milestone in this period. The Second Plan (1956-61) incorporated three new schemes, namely, 'Rural Housing', 'Slum Clearance' and 'Sweepers Housing'. The Industrial Housing Scheme, enunciated during the first plan, was expanded to more states. The Third Plan focused more on the development of 'Master Plans' for major cities and state capitals such as Gandhi Nagar (Gujarat) and Bhubaneswar (Orissa) were developed. Liberal assistance was provided to state governments to acquire land to develop building sites in numbers. The Fourth Plan (1969-74) saw to the establishment of 'Housing and Urban Development (HUDCO) to fund remunerative housing and urban development programmes in selected cities. The major thrust of the urban development policy during this plan was to prevent further growth of population in large cities and the creation of smaller towns through spatial location of economic activities. In 1972-73, a central scheme to improve the environmental conditions of urban habitat was mooted focussing on major improvements to urban slums. The Fifth

Plan (1974-79) comprised urban policies favouring the development of small and medium towns and emphasising a comprehensive regional approach to problems in metropolitan areas. The Urban Land Ceiling Act was a major innovation policy of this period.

The Sixth Plan (1980-85) conceived policies to create more services for the urban poor. The major outcome was the launch of 'Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns' program to make provision for roads, pavements, minor civic works, bus stands, markets, shopping complex in towns with less than 100 000 population. The Seventh Plan (1985-90) incorporated urban development policies to involve the private sector in major urban housing projects. The policies saw a three-fold role was assigned to the public sector, namely, mobilisation for resources for housing, provision for subsidised housing for the poor and acquisition and development of urban land. The important milestones of this plan were establishment of 'National Housing Bank' and introduction of 'Urban basic Services for the Poor'. The submission of a report prepared by the 'National Commission of Urbanisation' during this period was very clear about the impending dangers of uncontrolled urbanisation and its effect on the quality of liveability in India's cities. The Eighth Plan (1992-97) on the grounds of the report's findings and suggestions recognized the importance of the urban sector for the national economy (Ministry of Urban Affairs & Employment, 1998). The Plan identified the following key issues of the emerging Indian urban scenario:

- The ever increasing urban population has placed enormous pressure on the accumulated backlog of urban housing thereby creating more slums and degrading the city environment
- Creation of widening gap, between the demand and supply with reference to basic services like drinking water, sanitation, education and health, and shrinking the opportunities for the urban poor in all spheres of urban development and
- Creation of high incidence of urban poverty as 41.8 million urban people lived below the poverty line (World Bank, 1996).

The newly formulated 'National Housing and Habitat Policy' in 1998 by the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment, Government of India, attempted to look into the desperate urban scenario created by the unchecked urban population growth. The report proposed several strategies to create a better urban environment for all and to go along with the national agenda 'Housing for all'.

The strategies are:

- Understanding the fact that the state funding will never be adequate to create more urban dwellings and services, the report suggested the unlimited participation of the private sector in creation of these basic necessities of urban life.
- To enable this participation, the report recommended the removal of legal, financial and administrative barriers while accessing land, finance and technology for the nongovernmental initiatives.

The redeeming feature is the strong recommendation of the NHHP to involve the Corporate, Private and Cooperative in a

purposeful manner to create a more amenable urbanisation than the existing one. The thrust of all these urban policies is to insist a legitimate share for the private sector in alleviating the stressful urban environment. In general, the policies aim to create more basic urban infrastructure and services to create a better quality of life for its inhabitants. The same policies with alterations may pave the way for similar initiatives in developing urban tourism related functions and services. The public-private partnership understanding can well be extended to other spheres of urban development such as creation or maintenance of tourist icons inside the city or town. The already existing modes of 'Private-Public-Partnership' may also be extended to strengthen and revitalise the existing urban cultural and heritage tourism.

### Classification of Urban Tourism

Indian urban tour circuits can be classified as

- Capital cities both central & state capitals such as New Delhi, Bangalore, Bhopal, Mumbai, Chennai, Ranchi, Guwahathi, Port Blair, Chandigarh etc.
- Metropolitan cities such as Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai.
- Large historic cities such as Ajmer, Amritsar, Allahabad, Aurangabad, Dwaraka, Chidambaram, Palakkad, Hyderabad, Jabalpur, Jodhpur, Rameshwaram, Baroda, Bhuj, Mysore, Hampi, Nagpur, Pune and Jayapur.
- Inner city areas such as Rajkot, Gurgaon, Lucknow, Indore, Pimpri, Nasik, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Thane, Kanpur, Mahabaleshwar, Tiruvannamalai, Kancheevaram etc.
- Revitalized water coastal lines areas such as Mangalore, Goa, Mumbai, Elephant caves, Karwar etc.
- Industrial cities such as Bangalore, Nagpur, Noida, Hoshiarpur, Chandigarh, Patiala, Kanpur, Vijayawada, Firozabad, Bhiwandi, Ludhiana, Moradabad, Bhagalpura, Rourkela, Bokaro, Indore, Pitampur, Dibrugarh etc.
- Seaside resorts and winter sports centers like Mangalore, Vishaka pattanam, Machalipattanam, Panaji, Surat, Vadodara, Diu, Daman, Cochin, Tuticorin, Puri, Porbandar, Tiruvanthapuram, Thrissur, Calicut, Kottayam, Ernakulum, Mumbai etc.
- Purpose-built integrated resorts such as tourist home stays in Ladakh, Shimla, Darjeeling, Uttarakhand, Jammu, Kashmir, Srinagar etc.
- Specialized tourist service centers
- Cultural art galleries, museums, conclaves.

### Understanding Indian Urban Tourism

Urban tourism depends on urban people who want to take off time with leisure for an outing with their families as they wish to know the ethno-cultural significance of India through tour destinations. They would like to visit museums, art galleries, aquariums, concert halls, convention centers, drama theatres, amusement parks, cultural bonanza, entertainment plazas, biz sporting complexes, fun fairs, consumer fairs and such other sponsored festive events. Urban people want to share this leisure time with entertainment, fun and information (Ministry of tourism, 2014) <sup>[9]</sup>. Most of the urban complain that the accommodation facilities, rooms, lodges, boarding, street conditions, eateries, shopping facilities etc. are what they

expect from touring. But most of the urban touring places either suffer from shortage of basic amenities or infrastructure facilities. The lack of parking facility, amusements, ATMs, drinking water, food outlets etc. sometimes the transportation to such destinations are so hazardous that urbanites like to stay at home rather than touring. Most of the urban cities suffer from land mark marking, urban mapping, data on internet, destinations listing, online services etc. (Ministry of tourism, 2014)<sup>[9]</sup>.

### Strategies

1. Setting up of Information centers or internet centers, tourism information centers, tour guide information, brochure and manual guide centers, nodal centers for linking tourism spots etc. will help urban tourism industry.
2. Handicrafts training by encouraging the development of supportive networks of women entrepreneurs across India can help promote urban tourism.
3. Training urban youth and women as a whole on product development and management marketing or urban products in an organized way can promote urban tourism capacity building and training them towards producing special products for foreign and local tourists can support urban tourism (Ministry of Tourism, 2014).
4. Cultural sensitivity approaches and commitment to society provide women involvement in urban tourism. Hence women can be provided with training to reach out urban tourists (Ministry of Tourism, 2014).
5. Programs to generate income on tourist spots can also assist promotion of urban tourism. In this way urbanite's consumer needs can be met within the purview of the tourist destination (Ministry of Tourism, 2014).
6. Urban tourism related handicrafts artisanal cooperatives can train women entrepreneurs, youth and skilled persons to promote urban tourism.
7. As government can be made to fund seed capital to urban self help groups to engage in tourism promotion and tourism related industrial encouragement.
8. Requirements of local tourism needs can be met through awareness programs which aims at social inclusion can be a best tool to endorse urban tourism. Women can be trained in this respect (Ministry of Tourism, 2014).
9. Revenue from urban tourism enlargement helps in their livelihood opportunities and assists in sustainable development through building infrastructure, drinking water projects, sanitation facilities, improved accommodation, access to specialized health care, etc. (Ministry of Tourism, 2014).
10. Besides urban tourism helps in procuring equitable access, volunteering opportunities, tour packages, exchange ideas, success stories and customized program design services which can be an useful tool in capacity building (Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 2000).

### Innovation in Urban tourism

Indian urban tourism can be promoted with several pioneering innovations.

- Promotion of bicycle tourism inside urban circuit.
- Financing for eco friendly investments and making pollution free city touring.

- Collaborative process through inviting NGOs, private enterprises, tour organizations etc. (Ministry of Tourism, 2014).
- Popularizing traditional architecture, traditional accommodations, garden houses, green postures, reducing motorized transport have been tested in other countries with success.
- Projecting urban tourism as main engine for economic growth with harnessing local human resources for tourism promotion with good training.
- Domestic tourism has to be projected as a base for developing tourism sector.
- Promotion of a global brand with specialties hither to not known will help Indian urban tourism industry.
- Acknowledging the key role of private sector as a facilitator and catalyst of tourism sector as tourism should be physically invigorated, mentally rejuvenated, culturally enriched, spiritually elevated.
- Finally developing a tourism circuit with special carbon free connectivity can boost urbanites (Ministry of Tourism, 2014).

### The Urban Tourism Potential of India

India is a country with enormous potential for economic growth, with the world's eighth largest economy and the tenth most industrialised country. It has a dynamic private sector which needs capital and technology that cannot be met domestically, and a growing middle class, seeking economic opportunity and better environmental conditions (World Bank, 1996). Foreign exchange rates may cause these figures to look meagre and insufficient, but in technical terms, India has progressed from abject poverty and industrial inactivity caused by hundreds of years of colonisation and exploitation to prosperity. The unchecked population growth has dwarfed the colossal progress achieved in several spheres of economic growth. It has also to be noted that all this progress had taken place in less than 50 years of continuous democracy. Very few non-European nations can match India in this respect.

India has been gifted with nature's bounty. It has an unrivalled coastline, impressive mountain ranges, scenic valleys, rich forests, dazzling wildlife and splendid memorial masterpieces. The recent incentives that have been accorded to the tourism industry in many parts of India, proves that, finally public and private sectors have understood the socio-economic potential of this industry for the general good of the country (The Hindu, 25-5-1999). The status accorded to tourism in ministerial levels (in central as well as state levels) earns status from all sides. The merger of National Airport Authority of India with that of Airport Authority of India to create an Airports Authority of India in 1995 was a worthy step towards improving the travel component of the gigantic industry. The up gradation of 20 airports has also given a boost to international tourism inside India.

The National Action Plan for tourism (1992) outlined number of programs to boost the well-being of the country's tourism industry. These include development of special tourism areas, selected travel circuits and destinations, heritage hotels and paying guest accommodation. To achieve its plan objectives, seven committees were initiated to look after tourist accommodation needs, development of tourism infrastructure

in identified circuits and destinations, development of adventure tourism, marketing and publicity, international aviation and tourism, domestic aviation and tourism and manpower development of tourism.

The liberalisation of the economy since 1991 has prompted many overseas investors to consider investments in India. The accommodation sector of the tourism industry (The Hotels Association of India) utilised this by preparing a blue print for a 'Tourism Export Promotion Council'. It is laudable on one side, as most of the developments would take place in urban environs and as secondary elements in urban tourism setting, they would invigorate tourist traffic inside cities. The growing middle class is a very good sign for the domestic tourism industry. The major frailty lies in the transport and visitor service sectors of Indian tourism industry. It is purported that the non-starter of a civil aviation policy and the inability of the national carrier to carry its share of traffic in bilateral arrangements severely affected the overseas sector (The Hindu 12-11-1998). The hesitation to involve its counterparts from the friendly neighbours in this mode of transport further impeded the international arrivals. Perhaps in some ways these actions inadvertently starve many urban centres of India of their tourist incomes. The remarkable growth of road and rail networks since 1950 is a good sign for tourism industry.

States with urban tourism potential like Rajasthan, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh have had their share of net work development through the years. It is sufficient to say now that despite improvements, this sector, as a significant component of the tourism industry, has not telescoped with the other two sectors of the Industry. This particular achievement has been the mainstay of the success of the tourism industry of many developed countries. Hence, it is crucial to consider the inclusion of urban tourism development policies in every tourism potential urban region of India.

### Conclusion

Thus urban tourism is an imperative factor of tourism initiative. Policy makers can provide novelty in popularizing the urban tourism sector. An emergent tendency of developing city tourism which has been innovatively taken up by other countries across the globe can be taken as example to India. India has good potential for that and the government should encourage it.

### References

1. Annual report of Ministry of tourism, 2012.
2. Ashworth CJ. Is there an Urban Tourism' in C.J Ashworth, and B.K.Roy (eds), Urban Tourism in Tourism Recreation Research. 1992; 17(2):3-8.
3. Ashworth GJ. Urban Tourism: an imbalance in attention', in C.P. Cooper (ed), 1989.
4. The Hindu (Chennai) (<http://www.indiaserver.com/thehindu>), 1999.
5. Law CM. Tourism as a focus for Urban Regeneration: the Role of Tourism in the Progress in Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality Management, London: Belhaven Press, 1991.
6. Promoting Women's Empowerment through Involvement in Ecotourism: Experiences from the Third World, Journal of Sustainable Tourism. 2000; 8(3).
7. Report of the tourism department, Government of India publication, Ministry of Tourism, 2014.
8. Robert John Inbakaran. Tourism and the Indian Urban Regeneration: The Importance of Urban Tourism in India: A General Perspective Retrieved on: 2003, 2016. from <http://www.Indian Urban Tourism-3-4-01.Pdf>.
9. Report of the Ministry of tourism council- government of India, 2014.
10. Shashikumar. International Journal of Academic Research. 2015; 2, 3(2):114-118. retrieved from [http://www.v2-i3\(2\)-a025.pdf](http://www.v2-i3(2)-a025.pdf).
11. Urban Regional Economy, London: Regional Studies Association.
12. United Nations Development Program. Human Development Report, New Delhi, 1995.
13. World Bank. India's Environment, 1996.
14. World Bank. World Data. Electronic Database, 1995. (<http://www.worldbank.org/data>)
15. World Tourism Organisation (WTO) International Tourism Statistics, Madrid: World Tourism Organisation, 1999.
16. <http://www.ukessays.com/essays/tourism/urban-tourism-industry-and-its-impacts-tourism-essay.php#ixzz3zBsaC6wM>
17. <http://urbanindia.nic.in>
18. <http://urbanindia>
19. <http://urbanindia.nic.in/urbanindia/scene.htm>