

**HARYANA STATE AS A TOURISM RESOURCE: CHALLENGES AND
PROSPECTIVE SOLUTIONS**

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a foremost source of economic development and a catalyst for employment generation and is projected to grow even faster in the 21st Century. Haryana has enormous potentiality of growth in the Tourism sector with its varied attractions. The State aims at tie together with the direct and multiplier effects of tourism in employment generation, poverty deduction and women empowerment in an environmentally sustainable manner. The State proposes to reposition itself as most preferred destination by maximizing productivity of Haryana's natural, human, cultural and technical resources.

The present study examines the infrastructure and tourism resources available in Haryana and challenges faced by tourism industry of Haryana. The data used are secondary in nature. The paper found that the state has successfully en-cashed pilgrimage and highway tourism concepts.

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The study tries to explore the unique opportunities for contemporary areas of tourism i.e. culture, heritage, eco, adventure, farm/agritourism, rural, medical in Haryana. Apart from this study tries to analysis the available infrastructure in term of transportation, accommodation to promote tourism circuits in Haryana.

Keywords: Haryana, infrastructure, tourism resource, challenges.

HARYANA

The State is bound by Uttar Pradesh in the east, Punjab in the west, Himachal Pradesh in the north and Rajasthan in the south. The National Capital Territory of Delhi juts into Haryana. Haryana has 21 administrative districts. The state has a geographical area of 44,212 km and a total population of 25.3 million. It also surrounds New Delhi from three sides and around 40 per cent of the National Capital Region (NCR) of Delhi falls in Haryana only.

Haryana has a great history dating back to the Vedic period. The state was habitat to the legendary Bharata dynasty, after which the country was named Bharat. The earth of Haryana has been the support of Indian culture and civilization. Archaeological research execute by Guy E. Pilgrim in 1915 recognized that 15 million years ago, the early man lived in the Haryana Shivaliks. In Vamana Purana it has been described that King Kuru ploughed the field at Kurukshetra with a golden plough, drawn by the Nandi of Lord Shiva, and reclaimed an area of seven 'Kosas'.

Replete with myths legends and Vedic references, Haryana's past is steeped in glory. It was on the pious land of Haryana that saint Ved Vyas wrote Mahabharata epic. It was here that Lord Krishna delivered the celestial gospel of karam yoga to Arjuna enshrined in Siri Madbhagwad Geeta about 5000 years ago. It was here that the epic battle of Mahabharata was fought.

The Huns, the Turks and Tughlaqs invaded Haryana and decisive battles were fought on this land. At the end of the 14th Century, Tamur led an army through this area to Delhi. Later, the Mughals defeated the Lodhis in the historic battle of Panipat in 1526. Another decisive battle was also fought in 1556 at this very site, establishing the supremacy of the Mughals. Third battle between Marathas and Ahmed Shah Abdali was also fought at Panipat in 1761, in which the Marathas have been defeated. The region of northern Haryana, being in chaotic condition, the various Sikhs established themselves as rulers of Jind, Kaithal, Thanesar and Ladwa.

Haryana emerged as a full-fledged state on November 1st, 1966 with 2% of India's population and less than 1.37% of total area of country. The state impressed a place of distinction for itself with in record time in term of infrastructure development. The state is blessed it with rich base of various types of tourism like heritage, culture, farm, rural, adventure, medical and nature tourism. Tourism industry has grown rapidly in state and tourist traffic reached 6955882 in years 2010-11 (Haryana Tourism Development Corporation, 2011). The report also reveals that, Kurukshetra received maximum number of tourists which was followed by Faridabad.

Agriculture remains the mainstay of more than 65 percent population of Haryana, and the state is the second largest contributor of food grains to the Central pool. The production of food grains which aggregated 25.92 lakh tonnes at the time of inception of the state and is likely to touch the mark of 183 lakh tonnes in the year 2011-12

The power is considered main instrument behind the progress of a state. The Average power availability in the year 2011-12 has remained 996 Lakh Units per day. The Haryana Power Generation Corporation Limited (HPGCL) has increased three times its installed generation capacity within the state during the last 7 years.

The state is moving fast and forward on the road to becoming a hub of education and centre of excellence. According to 2011 census, the literacy rate in Haryana is 76.64 per cent against the all India literacy rate of 74.04 per cent. Haryana's female literacy rate is also 66.77 per cent and

male literacy rate is also 85.38 per cent. As many as 21 universities including technical, medical, veterinary, defense and private university have been set up, besides two regional centres and one IIM has also been set up in the state during last 7 years from March 2005 to March 31, 2012. The total strength of the universities in the state has increased to 30 besides two regional centres and one IIM.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY FOLLOW AS:

- To identify the infrastructure and tourism resources available in Haryana state.
- To study the potential tourism circuit in Haryana.
- To examine the challenges and prospective solution for Haryana tourism development.

TOURISM RESOURCES IN HARYANA

Cultural Attractions-

Culture attractions are man-made attractions. In Haryana State there are so many cultural attractions. Culture of Haryana is unique in itself. There are many aspects of its culture like- folk songs and folk dances, cuisine, dressing style, fairs and festivals, historical monuments etc. The folk songs of Haryana includes- Teej songs, Sawan songs, Marriage songs, Songs based on Radha Krishan, Phag and Holi songs etc.

The folk dances are- Phag Dance and Loor Dance (performed on Holi Festival), Jhoomar (performed by married girls), Khoria Dance (performed on the wedding and harvesting), Daph Dance (on harvest and spring), Gugga Dance (performed in the procession taken out in the memory of Gugga Pir) etc.

The cuisines are- Bajare ki khichadi and chapati, Dudh, Dahi, Ghee are consumed up to a greater extent and Dalia made of wheat etc.

Dressing Style- Usually the men wears 'Dhoti-Kurta and the women folk wears "Ghagra' made from at least twenty meters of fabric along with chundri and a short Kurti. On the forehead there is round knob-like ornament called Borla. The neck is adorned by a solid silver necklet called 'Hansli' and a necklace called 'Kanthi'. The man wears colorful turbans along with Dhoti-Kurta.

Fairs & Festivals- The famous fairs of Haryana are- Surya Grahan Fair (Kurukshetra), Kapal-Mochan Fair (Yamunanagar), Mansa Devi Fair (Ambala), Falgu Fair (Pharal Village), Sheetla Devi Fair (Gurgaon), Surajkund Craft Fair (Faridabad), Baisakhi Fair (Pinjore Complex), Cattle Fairs (Rohtak, Bhiwani, Hisar) etc.

Apart from these fairs some of important festivals of the state are- Holi, Diwali, Dussehra, Shivratri, Janamashtmi, Ram Navmi, Basant Panchami, Durgaashtmi etc.

Ras Leela

This dance is familiar amongst the people living in the Braja area of the Faridabad district. Lord Vishnu has been manifest in many incarnations. He is the supreme embodiment. He is Lord Krishna. The Gopis of Braj Bhoomi, the simple milk maid are his true devotees. In this circular dance the bracelets, the anklets and the bells of the gopis sound together in perfect harmony. Gopis moving in Rhythm, sway their bodies gracefully.

Daph dance

Daph dance is also a seasonal dance connected with the harvest and spring. It depicts the joyful emotions of the farmers. Men and women of all sections of the village community participate in this dance, separately. For melodic instruments the ancient Haryanavis used flutes, lutes and beens.

Dharohar as a Heritage Museum

Dharohar Haryana Museum, situated on the campus of the Kurukshetra University, is one of the best museums of Haryana Kurukshetra University to see all peoples who belongs to village region from Haryana. The museum has an enormous collection of artifacts and objects pertaining to War-Heroes, Freedom Fighters, Architectural Heritage of Haryana, Archaeological Heritage, Folk Musical Instruments, Wall Paintings, Manuscripts, Gher (Cattle Shed), Agriculture & Folk Festivals, Water Heritage, Hukka, Charpais.

Folk craft of Haryana

Rural Haryana has its own embroidery tradition also. Literally meaning flower work, it was an essential part of life for rural women who regard it as a auspicious sign of Suhag, happy conjugal existence. Unfortunately, this priceless tradition which can earn handsome amount of foreign exchange has become almost extinct and no sustained efforts have been made to revive it. The reason is no one has the patience, time and energy to embroider a phulkari which would take months together. The price, in fact, would be higher than that of an old one available in the market. Moreover the workmanship could be poor and crudely commercialized.

THE HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF HARYANA ARE:

In Ambala

There is famous- Amba Devi Temple and Bishop Deal Church.

In Kurukshetra

Brahmsarovar, Karna ka Tila, Shekh-Chili's Tomb and many ancient temples.

In Kaithal

Razia Sultan's Tomb, Tomb of Faquir Shah Kamal, Mosque of Sheikh Tayyab etc.

In Faridabad

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Dargah of Ahmed Chisti, Raja Nahar Singh Fort, Attali Fort, Sun Temple etc.

In Hisar

Gujari Mahal, Lat Ki Masjid, Tomb of Mir Tijarah, Hansi Fort etc.

In Bhiwani

Khaki Baba Ka mandir, Gauri-Shankar Temple.

In Mahendragrah

Mausoleum of Shah Ibrahim, Tomb of Shah Quli Khan, Birbal Ka chatta etc.

In Gurgaon

Shish Mahal, Shiv Kund etc.

In Jind

Bhuteshvara Temple, Kalayat Temple, Rani Talaab, Hatkeshwar Dham etc.

In Karnal

Fort of Prithvi Raj Chauhan etc.

In Panipat

Tomb of Ibrahim Lodhi, Kala Amb, Panipat Museum, Devi Temple, Hali Park etc.

In Rohtak

Gaukaran Dera, Khokharakot, Daksh Khera, Baba Mastnaath Dera Herbal Garden etc.

NATURAL RESOURCE

While think about natural tourism in Haryana there is opportunity for this beauty also. One can observe natural beauty and wild life at bird sanctuary, Sultanpur and Kalesar wild life santury and Hathinikund at Yamunanagar. The Cactus Garden is Asia's biggest garden devoted to rare and endangered species having more than 3500 species. The outdoor Cactus Garden has 25 raised ground features, 3 water bodies with water ways. On raised mounds about 800 species of Cacti and Succulents have been naturalized

AVAILABILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN HARYANA

Physical Infrastructure

Roads: A Haryana roadways has a fleet of 3490 buses in the state and are plying on various roots to cater the needs of the commuters of the state. The total length of roads in Haryana is 26,883 km with nearly 1,518 km of National Highways. It is one of the states with 100 per cent connectivity of rural areas with metalled roads. Some of the major National Highways, NH-1, NH-2, NH-8, NH-10 and NH-22, pass through the state. Road condition is comparatively good than most of the states in India.

Railways: Haryana has a railway-route length of approx. 1,553 kms⁴. The important railway stations in the state are Kalka, Kurukshetra, Rohtak, Jind, Hissar, Ambala, Panipat and Jakhal. Gurgaon is also connected to New Delhi through Delhi Metro.

Airports: The Indira Gandhi International Airport at New Delhi is the closest International Airport to Gurgaon and Faridabad. A domestic airport is located at Chandigarh while civil aerodromes are located at Pinjore, Karnal, Hissar, Bhiwani and Narnaul.

Accommodation: Haryana Tourism Corporation provides accommodation facility with memorable experience. Haryana Tourism complexes have a capacity of total room of 846 of different types according to the demand of tourist. Apart from accommodation facility these complexes provides delicious cuisine with a variety of menu.

POTENTIALITY OF VARIOUS FORMS OF TOURISM IN HARYANA

Gurgaon as Convention, Exhibition Hub and Golf City

The Haryana Tourism policy, 2008 also proposed to build up Gurgaon as a convention and exhibition hub with mandatory world class infrastructure, recreation, Information Technology and support facilities. A complete convention centre would be set up in public private partnership in Gurgaon. It is planned to set up adventure sites in public & private partnership in Sohna and Damdama for theme parks and camping sites for recreation and holidaying. The existing Golf Courses, spas and polo etc. near Gurgaon will be an added attraction.

Kurukshetra as Pilgrim destination:

It is proposed to plan ample incorporated Development of Kurukshetra as a pilgrim destination with world class infrastructure for which a specialized expert will be appointed. The tourism activities will be associated with religious temples in the area like Thaneshwar and Pehowa. An integrated tourist route of Panipat- Kurukshetra- Pinjore will be developed and promoted.

Eco Tourism

To promote Morni, Kalesar and Sultanpur as eco tourism sites in close coordination with the Forest Department.

3.5 Farm/Agri Tourism

Haryana Tourism has taken the proposal to introduce the model of Farm Tourism in India. This is first-of-its-kind in India. The Department of Tourism, in joint venture with 21 farm owners in Haryana, which is mainly an agrarian State, is offering special countryside holiday packages in these chosen farms in Haryana and around Delhi. It has attracted a lot of response from people and the clientele is increasing day by day. Modern agriculture and rich cultural heritage in

Haryana needs to be leveraged for promoting tourism and meeting the need for the tourists to go back to natural world and back to the roots.

Adventure Tourism

Haryana Tourism Corporation is carrying out a range of activities of adventure tourism at different places in the State such as camping trekking, rock climbing, para sailing, etc. Adventure tourism has become very admired amongst the young people. Some initiatives have also been taken by private sector. The Government will identify existing hubs and create new hubs of adventure tourism activities and implement the projects under public-private partnership. Event Managers would be used for marketing the areas set up by Haryana Tourism Corporation and conducting adventure camps to promote the tourist potential. Such activities would provide large scale employment opportunities in State of Haryana. It is proposed to set up adventure camping sites in Surajkund, Badkhal, Damdama and Morni.

Golf tourism

Sports tourism is gaining new means in India .When it comes to Golf tourism India truly proved the prospective on international standards. Haryana government is also focusing on golf Tourism. As this state is quite rich in source of natural possessions and it comes into one of the most accessible state from all over the world. The state has Aravalli golf course, highway golf course which offer world class facilities.

Heritage Tourism

The Government will formulate appropriate scheme for identifying and refurbishment of the historical sites in association with the private sector/business houses under corporate social responsibility scheme so that these sites are made as a point of attraction for the tourists. The private sector would maintain these sites for a specific period as per the conservation plan prepared by the Archaeology Department, Haryana. The publicity mileage will be given to

private sector in the form of installation of plaque etc. It is proposed to promote Kurukshetra, Surajkund and Pinjore as heritage destinations.

Medical Tourism

The Government would coordinate with leading hospitals especially Medi City for promotion of Medical Tourism. Appropriate land will be identified by the HUDA for creation of speciality hospitals in all the important towns of the State. The Haryana Tourism Corporation would introduce Panchkarma and spa facilities in their hotels to make it more tourist friendly either by itself or in public-private partnership

IDENTIFIED CIRCUITS TO DEVELOP HARYANA AS A TOURISM DESTINATION

Circuit 1: Kalka - Panchkula - Naraingarh- Yamuna Nagar –Kurukshetra - Thanesar – Pehowa- Panipat

Circuit 2: Yamunanagar- Panchkula- Poanta sahib(Himachal Pradesh)

Circuit 3: Panipat- Kurukshetra- Pinjore

Circuit 4: Rohtak – Meham – Hansi – Hissar - Dabwali

Circuit 5: Surajkund – Damdama Lake – Faridabad (Badhkal Lake) – Palwal

Circuit 6: Mahendragarh – Madhogarh – Narnaul – (exit towards Shekhawati)

Among the above mentioned circuits, circuits 2nd and 3rd are under mega project of Ministry of Tourism (Govt. of India).

The key infrastructure gaps seen in this circuit is given as follows:-

1 Kalka: Some of the features that could adversely affect tourism activities in the destinations in Kalka were unavailability of shaded shelter, parking and drinking water facilities

2 Panchkula: There is lack of sufficient parking facilities in destinations in Panchkula on weekends. Other issues are that of street lighting, kiosks and cafeteria as well as drinking water facilities and public conveniences.

3 Naraingarh: Some of the issues that need attention for facilitating better tourist inflow in Naraingarh are those of drinking water, public conveniences, resting spaces and parking.

4 Yamuna Nagar: Yamuna Nagar is a potential tourist destination, which despite its scope for expansion in tourism activities, lacks basic physical and supporting infrastructure such as solid waste management facilities, public conveniences, drinking water facilities, street lighting and information and directional signage.

5 Kurukshetra: Kurukshetra is a city with religious significance, characterised by numerous temples and kunds, where thousands flock to during the peak season. Despite its high domestic tourist inflow, there are issues in facilities such as accommodation and parking. The sites are well maintained by temple trusts except in some cases where non-availability of continuous water supply for the kund has led to a decline in tourist inflow.

6 Pehowa: Pehowa is located in Kurukshetra district. Some of the infrastructure gaps present there are lack of proper approach road to tourist destination, inconsistent water supply for the various kunds and lack of basic amenities like solid waste management, public conveniences, drinking water facilities, street lighting and directional signage.

7 Panipat: There are several infrastructural issues in Panipat that hamper tourism. The major issue is that of approach road and parking facilities as well as space for development, which is hard to find. Other issues include lack of basic amenities such as solid waste management, public

convenience, drinking water facility, street lighting and directional signage. Some of the problems which are characterised in all the places are that of operation and maintenance.

CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTIVE SOLUTIONS TOWARDS HARYANA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

No doubt Haryana state has a great potentiality to attract domestic as well as international tourist. But the state is not getting its expected tourist inflow. The main challenges which is observed by Haryana tourism: Tourism professionals, community participation, effective tourism policy and bottleneck of infrastructure at destination. The effort would be to promote untapped areas of heritage, adventure, eco, medical & farm/rural tourism in order to promote large scale employment opportunities while protecting environment and heritage.

Human Resources Development

The staff in Haryana Tourism Complexes are not seem well trained and experienced; the tourist are highly unsatisfied (Kumar Naveen, 2010). He also indicated that the staff is not trained in hospitality manners. So there is need to train tourism staff time to time so that visitor satisfaction can enhance. Haryana government is concerned about this problem so it is proposed to set up Hotel Management institutes in public private partnerships. Initially, the Institutes of Hotel Management (IHM) will be set up at Rohtak and Faridabad. It is also proposed to set up more such Institutes on similar lines. A training programme for people from various walks of life like policemen, cab drivers, guides etc. will be organized. These awareness training programmes can rid people of some basic prejudices which often lead to undesirable behavioral patterns.

Marketing

Haryana, the birthplace of Rigveda and Mahabhartar is not achieving its potential tourist inflow in the absence of right way of marketing. There is need to target market for Haryana on which base marketing policy should implement. Tourism marketing is a specialized activity which requires

planning, market research and analysis. The tourist offices of Government of India abroad should be used for promotion purposes to the maximum. The State Government/ Haryana Tourism Corporation should appoint marketing agencies, event managers and authorized tour/ travel agents in different parts of the country to promote tourist attractions of Haryana. Appropriate budget provisions will be provided in the annual plans of the Tourism Department. A separate Marketing Cell should set up in the Tourism Department for marketing the State in co-ordination with the northern States. Marketing agent/ agents will be appointed to sell important destinations.

Other efforts in the way of tourism development in Haryana

Efforts should be made to plan special trains in collaboration with Indian Railways with stopover at Kurukshetra and Pinjore in order to attract tourists. Special buses should plan in coordination with Haryana Roadways and private tour operators for visits to tourist destinations. The govt. should start half day sightseeing/full day sightseeing at various destinations in Haryan. There is need of Public Private Partnership in various sector of tourism development including marketing, human resource development, infrastructure, and accommodation development. Similarly, the participation and cooperation of the tour operators and hoteliers who concentrate on Haryana is essential and effective marketing campaign should organise for promoting domestic tourism in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkatta, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Fairs and Festivals such as Surajkund Crafts Mela, Pinjore Heritage festivals, Gita Jayanti festivals should regularly held for further international prominence. Online booking should available for private sector and every HTC resorts.

CONCLUSION

Haryana is a state which is reach in every wealth needed for tourism development. There will be great opportunities in the state if the Government support private sector to participate in Tourism industry .In Indian Tourism Industry Haryana has put a benchmark which really hard to cross by any other state particularly when we speak about Highway Tourism and MICE Tourism.

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