

TOURISM SAFETY AND SECURITY IN INDIA: AN UPHILL JOURNEY

- Sagar Ghodasara¹

ABSTRACT

Tourism sector has been one of the key components for overall development of various sectors associated with it. In order to boost tourism, both state as well as central government came up with various guidelines to improve the effectiveness of tourism sector in India and their respective states. According to National Investment Promotion & Facilitation Agency, tourism sector is expected to grow at 6.7% to reach 35 trillion Dollars by 2029. The tourism sector can be said to be a major player in boosting the economy. It can be very well established that the enhancement in tourism sector is directly associated with development in various other sectors as well, like infrastructure, transportation, healthcare and many more. But in order to achieve the said growth we need to address the issues of security and safety of the tourists. Traditionally the local police force is responsible for security of said area under their jurisdiction. With the forecasted increase in arrival of foreign tourists it is to be understood that a well-trained police force is required to address various issues that may hinder the growth of tourism in India. Many players in the tourism sector have already started to hire private security in order to ensure that their place is safe and secure. This paper highlights concerns related to safety and security of tourist and the role of police in addressing the said concerns. Data has been taken from various international and national reports, books, journals and various other relevant literatures. This Paper also gives a broad framework for tourism safety and security in India and suggests towards the end changes in laws that would help in growth of the tourism sector in India.

Key Words: Tourism, Policing, Economy, Private Security

¹ M.Phil. Scholar (Police Administration), School of Internal Security and Police Administration, Rashtriya Raksha University, India

INTRODUCTION

We usually define the role of police as the saviour of public the organisation responsible for maintaining law and order in any country. We all have that sense of protection when we see a person in uniform protecting us, the same is the situation with the tourists whether they are foreign or domestic national.

Let us start with defining tourism. Like terrorism there is no concrete definition on tourism as no one as been able to come to consensus on how to define tourism. First definition of tourism was made by Guyer-Feuler (1905) as “A phenomenon unique to modern time which is dependent on the people’s increasing need for a change and relaxing, the wish of recognizing the beauties of nature and art and the belief that nature gives happiness to human beings and which helps nations and communities’ approaching to each other thanks to the developments in commerce and industry and the communication and transportation tools’ becoming excellent.” Whereas in 1976 tourism society of England defined tourism as “Tourism is the temporary, short-term movement of people to destination outside the places where they normally live and work and their activities during the stay at each destination. It includes movements for all purposes.”

World Tourism organisation in United Nation (UNWTO) defined tourism as “Tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes.”²

UNWTO has classified tourism into following forms:

- a) Domestic Tourism: Which comprises the activities of a resident visitor within the country of reference either as part of a domestic tourism trip or part of an outbound tourism trip.³
- b) Inbound Tourism: Which comprises the activities of a non-resident visitor within the country of reference on an inbound tourism trip.⁴
- c) Outbound Tourism: Which comprises the activities of a resident visitor outside the country of reference, either as part of an outbound tourism trip or as part of a domestic tourism trip.⁵

² Jyoti Bhoj, Himanshi Bhoj & Riddhi Barwer, *A Comparision Between India and China’s Tourism Sector*, 1 INT. J. RES. DEV. 104 (2016).

³ UNITED NATIONS, *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics* (2008).

⁴ *Id.*

Further tourism has been classified into various types depending upon the region. In India, Tourism is classified into the following types:

- a) **Adventure Tourism:** Adventure tourism India has registered a formidable growth in recent years. For this growth to continue, efforts must be taken by the government of India so that India ranks alongside international destinations for adventure tourism.⁶
- b) **Wildlife Tourism:** India has a rich forest cover which has some beautiful and exotic species of wildlife some of which that are even endangered and exceedingly rare. This has boosted wildlife tourism in India. The places where a foreign tourist can go for wildlife tourism in India are the Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary, Keoladeo Ghana National Park, and Corbett National Park.⁷
- c) **Medical Tourism:** Tourists from all over the world have been thronging India to avail themselves of cost- effective but superior quality healthcare in terms of surgical procedures and general medical attention. There are several medical institutes in the country that cater to foreign patients and impart top-quality healthcare at a fraction of what it would have cost in developed nations such as USA and UK.⁸
- d) **Pilgrimage Tourism:** India is famous for its temples and that is the reason that among the different kinds of tourism in India, pilgrimage tourism is increasing most rapidly. The various places for tourists to visit in India for pilgrimage are Vaishno Devi, Golden temple, Char Dham, and Mathura Vrindavan.⁹
- e) **Wellness Tourism:** Wellness tourism is one of the fastest growing forms of international and domestic tourism. This form of tourism involves people who travel to a different place to pursue activities that maintain or enhance their personal health and wellness, and who are seeking unique, authentic or location-based experiences. Wellness tourism include massages, body treatments, facial treatments, exercise facilities & programs, weight loss programs, nutrition programs, pre- and post-operative Spa treatments and mind/body programs.¹⁰
- f) **Business Tourism:** Business tourism can be defined as travel for the purpose of business. Business Tourism can be divided into three sections: Trading for goods to

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ T Arunmozhi & a Panneerselvam, *Types of Tourism in India*, 1 INT. J. CURR. RES. ACAD. REV. 84–88 (2013).

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.*

be resold on a wholesale basis, conduct business transaction e.g., visiting a client, contract negotiations Attending a conference, exhibition or event associated with their business.¹¹

- g) **Heritage tourism:** The tourism of heritage in India has been on rise, the reason can be owing to the interest of many foreigners in the temples of India. Madurai is known as the temple city due to the presence of many temples in the city. And for this reason, many tourists go and visit the place each year. The most important temple in Madurai is the Meenakshi temple. Heritage tourism India has grown in recent years but there is scope for further development which can be attained only through combined efforts of the government of India and the tourism boards.¹²
- h) **Educational Tourism:** Educational Tourism is defined as a program in which participants travel to a location as a group with the primary purpose of engaging in a learning experience related to the location. This emphasis on the educational value and learning opportunities necessarily excludes from serious consideration many of the commercial organizations that offer quasi-educational vacations. Thus, educational tourism is largely the province of educational institutions together with a small number of specialist tour companies.¹³

TOURISM IN INDIA

Development of Tourism in India can be attributed to the glorious traditions and precious cultural heritage. The widespread history that can be seen in India from Indus Valley Civilization to the magnificent monuments built all over the region. Natural landscapes, architectural marvels, music, dance, paintings, customs, and languages all contribute to India's status as a tourist destination.

There were no travel requirements in ancient India during the Chandragupta-II period, and the renowned Chinese pilgrim Fa Hien travelled without a passport between A.D. 401 and 410. According to Kautilya's Arthashastra, a passport or mudra was required for all travellers in the 3rd century B.C. Tourists were welcomed at the country's "dhams," or holy places, throughout the Vedic time.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ David Bodger, *Leisure, Learning, and Travel*, 69 J. PHYS. EDUC. RECREAT. DANC. 28–31 (1998).

As a result of Vasco de Gama's discovery of a new maritime route, the number of visitors to India increased dramatically. When Alexander the Great arrived in India, he discovered well-kept roadways flanked with trees and wells, as well as rest areas. Men travelled on chariots, palanquins, bullock carts, donkeys, horses, camels, and elephants along the 1920 km long and 19 metre wide royal highway.

Tourism in India was becoming increasingly organised during the British period. India's finest foods are as diverse and rich as its culture. The three renowned Sanskrit phrases "Aththi Devo Bhava," which means "the visitor is actually god," are a principle of hospitality in India.

India is a wonderful collection of art, paintings, and crafts, which first appeared on pots revealed in the Indus Valley civilization in the 3rd century B.C. Ajanta and Ellora cave paintings date from the first to fifth centuries A.D. In the nineteenth century, the British established the Archaeological Survey of India to catalogue the vast amount of material available in the country. Considering Indian art and culture to be an important part of the century's heritage.

In the year 1945, tourist organisation of India was established. In the same year Government of India constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Sir John Sargent, Educational Advisor. The interim report of the Sargent Committee was submitted in October 1946; however the implications of the committee's recommendations were not implemented until after independence. Tourist Traffic Committee was established in 1948, according to the Sargent Committee's findings. In 1949, a Tourist Traffic Branch was established based on the recommendations, with regional offices in Kolkata and Chennai. In 1955-1956, the tourist traffic branch was enlarged from one to four branches and hand over a function to them viz.

1) Tourist Traffic 2) Tourist Administration 3) Tourist Advertisements 4) Distribution Section

On March 1, 1958, a new Department of Tourism was established within the Ministry of Transport and Communication to replace the Tourist Traffic Branch, which provides services such as lodging, food, and hospitality.

In March of 1963, a committee was formed under the chairmanship of L. K. Jha. This Committee made several recommendations to improve tourist flow in India, particularly in terms of facilitation; three new corporations named Hotel Corporation, Indian Tourism, and

India Tourist Traffic Corporation, were established in 1965, but they did not work well and were merged in October 1966 to form the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC). The Indian Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) is the principal agency of the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation, which promotes tourism in India.

Tourism activities did not really take off until the 1980s. In 1982, the government announced a tourism policy. A National Action Plan was created in 1992, and a National Strategy for Tourism Promotion was drafted in 1996. The Ministry of Tourism has chosen a "pro-poor tourism" strategy that has the potential to considerably reduce poverty. More than half of the Tourism Ministry's Plan budget is dedicated to developing destinations, circuits, and megaprojects, as well as rural tourism infrastructure projects. The Tourism Finance Corporation was founded by the government in 1989 to finance tourism developments. In addition, the government developed 21 Hotel Management and Catering Technology Institutes and 14 Food Craft Institutes to provide specialised training in the hotel and catering industries.¹⁴

National Tourism Policy (2002) defines five key strategic objectives to be achieved for overall development of Tourism. They are:

1. Positioning and maintaining tourism development as a national priority activity.
2. Enhancing and maintaining the competitiveness of India as a tourism destination.
3. Improving India existing tourism products and expanding this to meet new market requirements.
4. creation of a world class infrastructure; and
5. Developing sustained and effective marketing plan and programmes.¹⁵

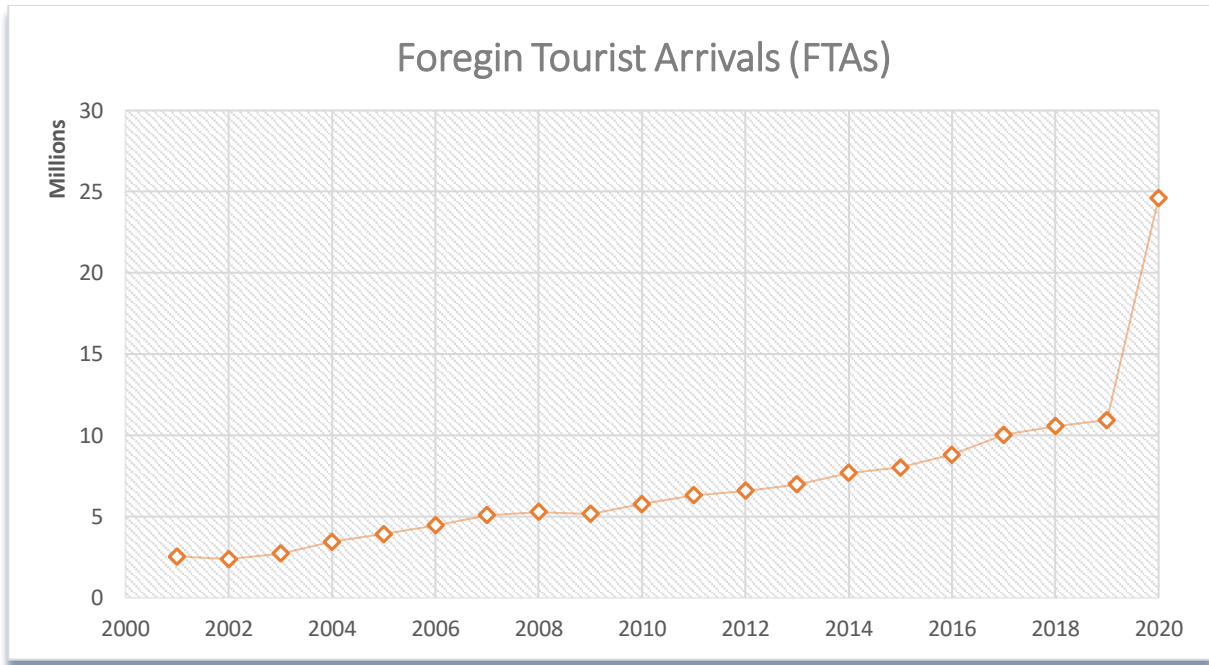
Looking at the growth that has been achieved over the time in the tourism industry all over India. Tourism has been on a constant growth rise, and this can be attributed to the rapid development of infrastructure and various initiative by government at both state and central level.

Having a look at Arrival Foreign Tourist in India (FTA's) we can clearly see the increase of tourist. FTAs in 2020 has been pegged at 24.62 million with a growth of 74.6% over the same

¹⁴ Bhoj, Bhoj, and Barwer, *supra* note 1.

¹⁵ GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF TOURISM, *National Tourism Policy 2002* (2002), https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2019-11/National_tourism_Policy_2002.pdf.

period of the previous year. This increase is also due to better record keeping of several tourist arrival under different type of tourism. ¹⁶



(Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India)

Various scheme by state as well as central government has led to a significant rise in domestic tourism also. Domestic tourism continues to be a major contributor to the tourism sector as per government data 2321.98 million domestic tourist visited all over the country in 2019.¹⁷

Tourism sector has a wide impact on the economy of the country too. Tourism industry has contributed Rs. 44,203 Crores on the account of Foreign Exchange Earning (FEEs) with a growth of 15.6% over the same period of previous year.

¹⁶ GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF TOURISM, *Annual Report 2020-21* (2021).

¹⁷ *Id.*

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Share in GDP (%):	5.68	5.81	5.09	5.04	5.00	5.00
Direct (%)	3.06	3.14	2.65	2.62	2.6	2.6
Indirect (in %)	2.62	2.67	2.44	2.42	2.4	2.4
Share in Jobs (%)	11.91	12.14	12.38	12.2	12.29	12.95
Direct (%)	5.19	5.3	5.4	5.32	5.36	5.65
Indirect (%)	6.72	6.84	6.98	6.88	6.93	7.3
Direct + Indirect jobs due to tourism (in million)	67.19	69.56	72.26	75.71	80.54	88.72

(Source: Annual Report 2020-21, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India)

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, India placed 10th out of 185 nations in terms of total contribution to GDP from travel and tourism in 2019. The contribution of travel and tourism to GDP in 2019 was 6.8% of the overall economy, or around Rs.13,68,100 crore (US\$ 194.30 billion). The sector's direct contribution to GDP in India is predicted to expand at a rate of 7.1 percent per year from 2018 to 2028. In FY20, India's tourism sector employed 39 million people, accounting for 8.0 percent of the country's overall workforce. It is estimated to employ almost 53 million people by 2029.¹⁸

CRIME AND TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES:

¹⁸ INDIA BRAND EQUITY FOUNDATION, *Tourism & Hospitality* (2021).

Any type of criminal activity against tourist not only has impact on the visitor, but also damages the city and its economy. Police departments plays a crucial role of a community's front-line defence's in combating these illicit practices. In an era of tight resources and increased demands, police officers must not only defend the residents of their community, county, or region, but also the image and economic sustainability of their community at large.

Tourism has been an important industry with over 88.72 million jobs in year 2018-19 both direct and indirect and this industry is considered to be an unpredictable and can fluctuate on various factors, Crime is considered to be one of those factors.

Peter E Tarlow in his chapter titled '*The Relationship between Tourism and Economy*' in the book '*Tourism Security*' described four categories of potential crimes within the tourism locale that may create economic difficulties¹⁹. These are:

1. Crimes by locals against tourists
2. Crimes by tourists against locals
3. Crimes by locals against other locals that create a negative image.
4. Crimes by tourists against other tourists

Crime in India, 2019 which report the crimes registered in India in a particular year and according to the report it states that Delhi has 30.1% of the total crime committed against foreigner in the country in 2019 followed by Maharashtra (11.7%) and Karnataka (11.2%).

Furthermore, the major portion of the crime reported are Theft against the foreign nationals. Out of the total cases of theft reported police disposed majority of the cases due to insufficient evidence or untraced or no clue obtained by them and only a small portion of cases were charge sheeted in 2019.

From the total crimes against the foreigner total of 57.7% of the cases are still pending and are consider under investigation. While the total pendency rate increases under the judicial system to 93.5% considering the convection rate of the same.

When we investigate the crimes committed by the tourist (Foreigner) there has been an increase in crime committed by foreign national in year 2019 from the year 2018. Most of the cases against foreign national revolve around theft, Foreigner Act, 1946 & Registration of

¹⁹ Peter E. Tarlow, *The Relationship between Tourism Security and the Economy*, in TOURISM SECURITY 23–48 (2014).

Foreigners Act, 1939, Narcotic Drugs & Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 and The Passport Act, 1967.

TOURISM POLICING:

Tourism being one of the major and dynamically developing sector of economic activities. The growth and development rates, substantial volume of foreign currency inflows, infrastructure development along with new management and educational experience affect various sectors of economy this all factors positively contribute to the social and economic development of the country.

Being a deciding element in choosing a destination, safety and security have always been essential conditions for travel and tourism. Due to different developments in the world, such as terrorist attacks, local wars, natural disasters, diseases, and pandemics, safety and security have become considerably more important in recent years. Because tourism is a multi-sector industry, the detrimental effects and consequences of such events could not be ignored. This indeed increases the necessitates tourism-related study on safety and security issues.²⁰

The safety and security of tourists is one of the most important requirements for the sector's long-term viability. Tourists' safety and security concerns become crucial during their transit, stay, and visit to tourist destinations. Since, law and order is a state matter, state government/UT administrations are ultimately responsible for the safety and security of tourists. Some state governments have deployed Tourist Police from their current police forces to ensure the protection and safety of visitors. However, because this is not a committed force, they might be re-deployed in the event of other urgent law and order problems.

Furthermore, it is believed that many governments have not deployed Tourist Police due to funding constraints that prevent a designated unit for protection of the tourist. As a result, there is a need for a specialized Police organization whose officers can be deployed to significant tourist destinations/circuits with the goal of assuring tourist facilitation, guidance, safety, and security.

Major threats to the safety and security of tourist can be further be understood via the following table.

²⁰ PROF. SANDEEP KULSHRESHTHA, “*Functioning of Tourist Police in States/UTs and Documentation of Best Practices.*”

Threats	Example
Accidents	Car accidents, airplane crashes, skydiving Political unrest
Crime	Pickpocketing, robberies, murders, rapes
Ethnic unrest	Fighting between ethnic groups, conflict between religious groups, ethnic rebellions
Health concerns	Unrefrigerated dairy products and meats, uncooked fruits and vegetables, food-borne illnesses, insanitary water, diseases
Natural disasters	Earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions
Political unrest	Coups, border closures, corrupt administrations, political scandals, riots
Terrorism	Bombings, shootings, mass destruction, kidnappings
War	Military altercations, cross-border armed conflicts, multi-national wars

Tourism is said to be an evolving process that comprises of many components of the government and private sector working in synchronisation for development of the entire sector. When we talk about the approach of tourist it has been said that most common response to calamities is avoidance. Usually when visitors perceive that a place is unsafe and insecure, they tend to cancel their plan, find alternatives and this has negative impact on the tourism sector that is one of the fastest growing sectors. The concept of tourism policing is based on such perception that has negative important on the tourism sector.

“Police” is a subject specified and enumerated in the state list (list II) of the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution, which encompasses the whole domain of state governments. “Police (including railway and village police) subject to the provisions of Entry-2 A of list – I,” says point No. 2 of the State List. As a result, it is proposed that the Tourist Police, like the regular police, be under the supervision of the state government.

Moreover, the central government provides financial grant to state government for effective safety and security of tourist areas. Let us try to define the role and responsibilities of Tourism Police that can be considered as a base further:

- a) The prevention of crime and the maintenance of law and order in the tourist destination:
- b) To obtain knowledge of the people addicted to the crime at tourist attractions and to - maintain adequate supervision over them.
- c) To ensure that all cognizable crime is reported and registered as well as the tourists are encouraged to give full information in this respect.
- d) Taking charge of the kiosks, which act as reporting points for tourists in case of any security breach or for availing any similar kind of services.
- e) Curbing the activities of touts, beggars, and hawkers of the concerned area.
- f) The entry of unauthorized people, beggars and persons hawking articles for sale in the tourist areas shall be reported as and when it is required.
- g) Making the travel of the tourists hassle free by immediate intervention in case of any mishap.
- h) Providing emotional support to the victims when they are cheated, their belongings are stolen, or whenever they fall prey to any other mischief or wrongdoing.
- i) Imparting information to the tourists about locations, transport systems, facilities in the destinations, legal information, information about authorized shopping centres, information regarding medical help in case of physical assault etc.
- j) Every Tourist Police person should show civility to all tourists and advice where they can get appropriate transport, accommodation and other services needed.
- k) The tourist police person should be able to intervene in the event of pick pocketing, eve teasing, harassment.
- l) The Tourist Police person should also interfere in case the tourists are involved in drug trafficking and consumption.
- m) Sensitizing tourists regarding the law-and-order system in the state like rules related to accommodation, entry/exit rules, reporting at local police stations, special permits; security conditions at the destination; social and cultural taboos and other local conditions.
- n) Tourist police should assist tourists while dealing with foreign currency exchange and guide them to do the same in authorized exchange counters and banks.

- o) To deal with immigration issues with Foreigners Regional Registration Offices (FRROs) at entry/exit points as and when it is required.
- p) Restricting the entrance of unlicensed tourist guides and other unauthorized agencies into the destinations and places of tourist interest.
- q) In case of beach destinations and water-based destinations the tourist police should be provided with an aquatic wing to enhance the security of the tourists.²¹

In India we have another growing industry that has a major role to play in Safety and Security of Tourism destinations- “Private Security Industry”. While basic law and order duties cannot be given to private security but the duties that are usually considered ancillary can be trusted to the private security industry. More and more government policies are focused on Public private partnership, and this has been a successful model in many areas and the private security industry can also be explore for effective utilization of the resource.

CONCLUSION

Each incident that happens in a country can have a positive as well as negative impact on the tourism sector like government policies, natural disaster, protest, Police action and many more. Further action to negative event will eventually impact the rate of recovery of tourism sector. In India, the growth of tourism sector has been on a steady pace and the action taken by government to effectively secure the industry has been mainly focused on the development of the tourism destination, but the security aspect has taken a backstage even after many reports in this regard. The formulation of tourism police by respective state government will not only help build confidence among the public but also strengthen the concept of tourism to a whole new level. Many states government has implement the concept of Tourism policing, but this also needs to be reworked as regular police for with specialized training for the police officer deployed looking into the requirements of the area. The value and the emphasis must be given to both police forces as well as private security agencies for enhancing the tourism sector to a new level.

²¹ BPRD, *Tourism Policing*, [https://bprd.nic.in/WriteReadData/CMS/Tourism Policing.pdf](https://bprd.nic.in/WriteReadData/CMS/Tourism%20Policing.pdf).