

Evaluation of the Infrastructure Facilities created by Department of Tourism in Karnataka

Executive Summary

India is one of the main tourist destinations of the global tourists with its rich heritage and places of historical importance. Tourism has become one of the major industries earning huge foreign exchange and this is increasing year after year due to increased tourist arrivals into the country. The varied and rich culture and festivals of the country have been attracting large number of tourists from across the globe. As a result of changes in income levels of the people & development of infrastructure, tourist population has been showing higher growth. Consequently, this industry has come to attract entrepreneurs as it provides attractive returns and creates gainful employment. Apart from wage employment, tourism has also provided scope for self employment to large number of persons.

Karnataka, the eighth largest State in India has been ranked as the fourth most popular state in the country for tourism. It is home to 507 of the 3600 centrally protected monuments in India; the largest number after Uttar Pradesh. Tourism is spread all over the State and mainly centres around the ancient sculptured temples, modern cities, the hill ranges, forests and beaches. Infrastructure for tourism includes basic infrastructure components like transport facilities (airport, railways, roads, waterways); electricity, water supply & other services; facilities like accommodation, restaurants, recreation, shopping, etc.,. Tourism infrastructure therefore, involves the integrated development of basic infrastructure and amenities along with all tourism facilities in a balanced manner. With a view to taking advantage of the opportunities for development of tourism not only in the existing tourist centres, but also in new locations, the Department of Tourism, Government of Karnataka has been focusing more on developing infrastructure at

all tourist destinations across the State. The Department has formulated a forward looking tourism policy for promotion of tourism related activities in the State. Some of the major projects are being taken up through Public Private Partnership. The Department of Tourism has identified five tourism sectors in Karnataka for development of tourism infrastructure; which includes (i) Heritage circuit, (ii) Coastal circuit, (iii) Eco-tourism, (iv) Hill stations and (v) Wild life & waterfalls. As a strategy for development, the Government has identified various tourism components which include (i) Accomodation – Hotels, Yatrivas, Dormitory facilities etc., (ii) Way-side amenities, (iii) Public convenience and drinking water facilities, (iv) Land scaping – Children’s Park, Entertainment park etc., (v) Information centres, (vi) Interpretation centres, (vii) Development of link roads, Air strips, Helipads, (viii) Flood lighting to the monuments, sound and light show projects, (ix) Beautification of the destinations, (x) Development of tourism circuits, (xi) Development of night safari , & (xii) Development of special tourism area such as lakes, dam sites, temples and forts.

The Government of Karnataka is being assisted by the Government of India in development of tourism with financial assistance. A number of infrastructure facilities are created to serve the swelling tourist traffic. Having invested huge sums in infrastructure, the Government of Karnataka considered it appropriate to evaluate the infrastructure facilities created by the Department during the years 2009 & 2010 by an external agency to have an objective first hand information on the effectiveness of the projects. In all 16 projects were selected for detailed study. Indian Resources Information & Management Technologies Ltd., (IN-RIMT) was entrusted with the work and accordingly, IN-RIMT conducted the evaluation focusing on the objectives and scope contained in the Terms of Reference (ToR) The main objective of the present evaluation is to know the overall impact of the

development of infrastructure facilities, document the qualitative & quantitative performance, identification of felt needs of the tourists, enlist major, technical, management and other related problems encountered during project implementation and to suggest changes required, if any.

The following 16 centres in eight categories where works were taken up during the two financial years i.e., 2008-09 and 2009-10, were taken up for the study.

Sl. No.	Type	Locations
1	Tourist facilities	Chitradurga (2009), Sadhanakere in Dharward (2009), Meke Daatu near Kanakapura (2010), Nrupatunga Hills in Hubli (2010)
2	Yatri Nivas and other facilities	Shantisagar near Davangere (2009), Kuruvatti near Bellary(2010), Varur near Dharwad (2009)
3	Dormitories	Uduthadi near Shimoga (2010), Shikaripura near Shimoga (2010)
4	Eco Tourism	Hanumanthanagar near Mandya (2009), Kamalapura near Hampi (2010)
5	Link Road Development	Belur in Hassan District (2009), Badami in Bagalkot District (2009)
6	Beach Resort	Malpe near Udupi (2010)
7	Hotel Upgradation	Madikeri (2009)
8	Jungle Camps and trails	Sakkarebailu near Shimoga (2010)

Chitradurga

In Chitradurga, the Department of Tourism has constructed a Yatri Nivas and the facilities created include Dormitory with facilities to accommodate 8 + 5 beds, a yoga cum meditation centre, reception and a restaurant. An estimated 2000 tourists including school students visit this place and make use of the facilities.

Going by the number of visitors, there is need to increase the number of beds in the centre. Starting of a restaurant is highly essential to facilitate visitors. It may also be necessary to provide recreation facilities to the visitors in order to attract more tourists. Overall working of the centre is rated as good but publicity needs to be intensified to create awareness among the tourists. Since Chitradurga has a number of places of historical importance, any additional facility provided here would benefit the tourists who frequent this district.

Sadhanakeri, Dharwad

The tourist facilities created in Sadhanakeri park area of Dharwad town include entry arch, foot path, benches, fountain, toilets and gazebos. Boating facilities have been provided and the tank has been desilted to facilitate smooth operation of boating . A bore well is also provided. Overall, the facilities created under the project meet the demand of the visitors. Additional facilities required and suggested are (i) a Taralaya, (ii) pisciculture, (iii) additional irrigation facilities through sprinkler, (iv) Border planting with shelter belts with wind break species and (v) At the entry point, there is drainage problem (sewage line flowing into the tank in rainy season). This needs to be addressed by constructing a diversion drain for sewage water immediately. There is shortage of drinking water for the visitors within the centre. All the civil works are of good quality and as per specifications.

Mekedaatu

At Sangama, the Department has constructed a hotel building with rooms and dormitories, a reception counter and few shops. The work is fully completed and the hotel would be ready to operate in a month or so. In view of heavy influx of tourists particularly during holidays, there is need to create adequate parking facilities also. The other works being taken up are providing seating/ benches, gate & compound, road works, water weir & protection wall. Vehicle entry fee is being collected from the owners who park their vehicles near the river, whereas, no parking arrangement nor any shade is erected. The entire area is full of garbage and leftovers and plastic package materials. At the Meke Daatu Valley point , no arrangements are available for sitting nor there is any shade to protect the tourists from sun or rain. The following improvements are necessary:

- Parking lot for the vehicles at the entrance or in some strategic approachable place
- Lighting, roads, gates at entry point
- Protection fence/ shade facilities at Mekedaatu.
- Road connecting Sangama from Kanakapura need to be improved and bus facilities to be provided from Bangalore, especially during holidays.

Nrupathunga Hills, Hubli

The project here, covered development of facilities in about 8 acres of land on Nrupathunga hills in Hubli, and the work includes providing pavers/ kerbs for pathway, electrification & lighting works, landscaping, gardening, water supply/ borewell, ornamental works (arch/ hand railings), gazebos, construction of canteen, toilet blocks, overhead tank, watchmen/ electric room sheds, sloped pathway,

waterfalls, fountain and statues. All the works executed are good and as per specifications and are fully complete in all respects. In view of increase in number of visitors and their expectations, there is need to provide additional facilities such as creation of a water body, construction of Yatri Nivas, few stalls, and a dhyan mandir. Rope way facilities, border planting with trees, facilities for deer park/aquarium etc., may be useful. It is also suggested that the entire area should be declared as “No Plastic zone” in view of influx of large number of visitors frequenting the centre . Hawkers and traders presently use plastic bags/ carry bags for various sales / parcel purposes. Such plastic material is often dumped randomly creating environmental hazards.

Shanti Sagar (Sulekere), Davangere district

This project at Shanti Sagar was originally sanctioned during 2007-08 but was inaugurated during 2009-10. The facilities include 5 dormitories, 2 VIP rooms, a reception and kitchen. Provision for a garden/ park has been made, but yet to be taken-up. On the bank of Sulikere tank, work on turfing, path ways, cruising is in progress and it is expected to be completed within the next six months. Civil works are as per standards and specifications. The works for creation of the above facilities have already been completed but are yet to be handed over for facilitating the use by the visitors.

In view of its natural panoramic view, it is going to serve as a very good tourist centre, in future. The Department may suggest Forest Department to plan and take up afforestation programme in the hill range bounded by the reservoir.

Yatri Nivas, Varoor

This project at Varoor was sanctioned during 2009-10 and the facilities proposed are (i) Dormitories (ii) Studio Rooms & (iii) Dining Hall; located very near the famous Jain Temple. The purpose was to provide lodging and food facilities to

tourists and pilgrims visiting the Jain temple. Presently, first floor of the building is at finishing stage, with over 80% of the work completed. The second floor is partially completed and the civil works at this stage are as per specifications. The Yatri Nivas and other facilities provided here would be fully utilized in view of visit of large number of pilgrims who set out their journey from Gujarat/ Maharashtra and Rajasthan on a circular route, covering Jain temples at different places and ending their journey at Sravana Belagola, near Hassan.

The Construction work is to be completed soon and canteen facilities need to be started immediately as there are no eateries nearby. Also, there is need to request the Transport Department (KSRTC) to provide an official bus stop with shelter near the facility, which will certainly help the pilgrims. Landscaping of the garden would add to aesthetic value of the area

Yatri Nivas, Kuravatti

The facilities created at Yatri Nivas at Kuravatti include a Multi-purpose hall, a VIP room, a small hall and a Kitchen. Since the centre is in the vicinity of the temple which is a famous local pilgrim centre, there would be regular flow of tourists and pilgrims to the temple . It would also create local employment opportunities. Since the centre is yet to be opened for public, its impact on the local population can be assessed only after a couple of years.

Shikaripura

The dormitory facilities created by the Department at Shikaripura include 5 dormitories, 2 VIP rooms with attached facilities such as reception counter, toilets & kitchen. A park with lighting and fountain, play area for children is also present. In addition, a tank and boating facilities is also included and is nearing completion. There is delay in some civil works construction due to water stagnation problem.

This centre is expected to cater to the needs of the visitors with facility of eatery, children's play and rest area.

This centre is strategically located and can attract large number of visitors when thrown open to public. Since it is yet to be opened, interviews with tourists could not be carried out. However, informal interactions with some of the residents of the area indicated that they are waiting for the centre to open and opined that the facility will be attractive and useful to the locals as well as tourists. Delay in completion of some works, particularly in the park area. need to be addressed to immediately. Otherwise, this centre has high potential of tourist utility and quality of Civil works are to the specifications.

Uduthadi

This centre is in the vicinity of Akka Mahadevi Trust/ temple and the objective of creating this facility is to cater to the pilgrims visiting the temple, as the present accommodation at the trust building is inadequate to meet the demand. The facilities proposed include 2 VIP rooms, 2 dormitories, kitchen, dining room, toilets and electrification & fencing.

The structures are completed but the centre is yet to be handed over to the Akkamahadevi Trust. Though the building is completed, no electricity or water connection is provided. Completion of the remaining works relating to electricity and water supply is necessary to use the same. Location of the centre has historic importance and would serve the purpose effectively and assist the trust in meeting the demand of the visitors.

Hanumanthanagar (Nisarga Dhama), Mandya This centre is located 4 km. away from Bharati Nagar near Mandya, which is basically a temple related tourist cum pilgrim centre. This centre is also known as Nisarga Dhama and the facilities created include a deer park enclosure, children's play area, food court, toilet

blocks, fountains, water bodies, fish pond, a Raja Mantap, boating pond and an aquarium.

This being managed by a well established and reputed Religious Trust with highly placed office bearers, is well maintained and the amounts released for development of facilities as proposed, have been judiciously utilized. The facilities created are being used by tourists and pilgrims and the centre is able to generate good income. On an average about 200 visitors frequent on weekdays and between 2000 to 5000 on holidays and festivals. Since this centre is just adjacent to the famous temple, pilgrims continue to pour in on almost all holidays and festival days.

In view of heavy influx of visitors on holidays and festivals, additional toilet block is necessary . The existing two units need to be maintained in hygienic conditions.

Since procurement of deer for the deer park appears to be difficult as at present, it may be prudent to convert the deer park into an Aviary stocking with domesticated fowls, and poultry such as geese, turkeys, guinea fowl, etc. Rabbit rearing could also be an alternative.

There is need to adopt a water recycling/ circulation system in the fish pond to maintain cleanliness of the same and avoid heavy mortality of fish.

To meet the additional demand from the visitors on festival days, it is desirable to add some more cottages on a detailed estimate of actual number of such cottages that could be maintained judiciously and with justification of their viability.

It is advantageous to go for border planting along the entrance of the park to enhance the aesthetics of the same. Declaring the eco park as plastic free zone is necessary and the trust should initiate steps in this direction

Since there are no sign boards between the main road and the centre, pilgrims and visitors find it difficult to locate to reach with ease. If adequate number of sign/direction boards are installed to provide proper direction to the visitors right from the deviation point on Mysore road, it would be highly useful to the tourists.

Kamalapura (Hampi)

The main works incorporated under this project are cottages, kitchen, dining hall, staff quarters, rest room, vehicles for sight seeing and landscaping. The centre is in an easily accessible location and is being used by the tourists of different tastes and ages. This resort is being managed by the Jungle Lodges and Resorts Ltd, (Govt of Karnataka). As per indications, the peak period for tourists is between October and February every year, while lean period is between March and September. The visitors book maintained at the centre shows that the tourists like to visit this spot mainly for (a)

good service food and accommodation, (b) site seeing, bird watching and bear watching arrangements (c) natural greenery and vegetation maintained at the centre.

Discussions with the in-charge of the centre revealed that there is inadequacy of infrastructure to the extent of about 10% as compared to the requirement. Main requirement is a good conference room. Opinions of some of the visitors indicated that the quality of facilities and services is good. Interactions with locals also indicated that the centre has provided opportunities to the local youth.

Suggestions for further improvement include construction of a good conference room, office room and a cloak room.

Belur (Hassan)

In Belur, the Department of Tourism has constructed a road between Belur bus stand and Channakeshava Temple but the work was only done up to a distance of 200 m, from the main temple entry, since there was objections from the Archeological Survey of India. The condition of the road already constructed is good and to the specifications. This has helped the pilgrims reach temple without any difficulty even during rainy season.

Badami

The Department of Tourism has constructed a link road at Badami and the work was executed by the Public Works Department, Government of Karnataka. The main objective of this project was to provide better communication to the tourists among whom a good number of foreigners also visit this historically important and internationally known tourist centre. This work also included earthen road improvement, construction of concrete drain, improvement of connecting road, florescent lighting and improvement of drain near minor bridge.

The work has been carried out as per specifications within the cost estimated for this purpose. Consequent on renovation and improved approach / link road between the town bus stand and the tourist spot, the tourists are in a position to reach to the spot without any difficulty. Interactions with some of the visitors/ groups revealed that this facility has come at a right time and would provide enhanced comfort to those using their own mode of transport. It is observed that the roadside concrete drains needs regular maintenance.

Hotel Mayura, Madikeri

This project was taken up during 2009 with an objective to enhance the capacity, improve facilities and attract more and more visitors and tourists. During summer months and holidays, tourists from different parts of the country as also foreigners visit this centre for rest and recuperation. The project involved provision of facilities such as additional rooms/ utilities, landscaping, electrical works, bore well, conference halls, separate transformer, generator, laundry facilities etc., to meet the growing demand.

An exclusive room is earmarked for an Ayurvedic Treatment centre where a Doctor attends on the tourists interested in seeking advice and treatment.

The works at this centre are complete in all respects and the additional facilities created in this hotel have upgraded its status since the earlier accommodation and ambience was not adequate, including its aesthetic look. With added accommodation, other additional facilities, good facelift and ambience, this hotel has been attracting more and more tourists.

However, there is need to augment occupancy during lean season in order to earn higher income and sustain any higher cost of maintenance. The following are the aspects which need to be looked into:

- Leasing out of hotel on long term basis – the lease amount charged should take into account the total sunk cost and other recurrent costs including cost of monitoring
- Conference halls are presently being used only occasionally. Though some revenue is being generated, there is scope to augment the same through publicity and propaganda. With a number of institutions/ agencies located

around Madikeri and other districts like Mangalore, Chickmagalur, Mysore; some publicity programme could boost use of the facilities created.

Overall, the project has produced positive results and investment is justified.

Malpe, near Udupi

The beach resort, located around 6 kilometres from Udupi town, was developed during 2002 and handed over to Malpe Beach Development Committee. Further development work was taken-up during 2009 to provide a parking lot, foot path and a statue of Mahatma Gandhi.

The petty shops have been shifted outside and area between the foot path and the beach is cleared of encroachment. Granite benches are provided around the Circle housing Mahatma Gandhi Statue to facilitate people to rest for a while on visiting the beach area and spending some time there.

In view of good accessibility of the beach, large number of tourists frequent this place, more so, foreigners. The beach resort lacks adequate water supply, sewage facilities, storm water drain, shopping kiosks and staying facilities for those who would like to stay overnight.

Interactions with local and foreign tourists indicated that they love this place because of its serenity, calm & quiet environment away from crowded cities, but yet, closer to mainstream . Further enhancement of facilities and improving the cleanliness of the beach and banning littering of plastic, might go a long way in boosting the image of this resort.

Sakkarebail (Shimoga)

This is an Elephant trailing camp and is managed by the Karnataka Forest Department and is one of the ten such camps. It is essentially a rehabilitation centre for elephants. The theme is mainly to educate the children and other citizen having

interest to understand more about nature and wildlife. In this camp, there is a children activity area where children have freedom to learn and play. The facilities created in this camp include stay units (tents), dormitories, kitchen & dining hall, store room, watchmen shed, ticket counter, gardner's sheds, solar electricity, children's play/ activity area.

Since the camp is yet to be opened, no staff is posted except a watchman. In the elephant camp, the Forest Department has positioned adequate number of personnel to man the elephant stock. The centre when operational, would provide gainful employment to good number of local youth.

Since the project works have been completed and accommodation and other facilities are lying idle, it is desirable that the same are thrown open to the public soon. As it is an educative venture, it is suggested that some publicity could be given among the student community/ youth in and around the area, to create awareness of the facilities created & make use of the same.

Based on the studies carried out, the following are the observations/ suggestions:

1. The facilities, in particular the sixteen projects taken up for implementation are mostly completed and are ready to be used by the tourists. Those which are yet to be opened for general public need to be expedited since there is loss of revenue to the State
2. The programmes formulated and implemented by the Department of Tourism are carried out under the administrative supervision and control of the Deputy Commissioner of respective districts (who is the Chairman of District Tourism Committee), such as approval of award of contracts, release of funds, monitoring the progress and periodical review. The present

arrangement is working effectively and no bottlenecks/ difficulties are observed.

3. The civil works carried out by respective contractors are in general, satisfactory and are in accordance with the specifications and standards. However, there was some delay in completion of the remaining works at Mekedattu, Udatadi and Shikaripura centers. However, some additional facilities of complementary nature need to be provided to make these centres more attractive and accessible

- a) The tourist facilities at Mekedaatu, particularly the Water Weir at the Sangam and others proposed need to be completed early. At the last point of Mekedaatu, shelter for tourists and some resting place is necessary to protect them from rain and sun
- b) Additional facilities at Hanumanthnagar as requested by the committee, such as, repairs to existing toilets, additional cottages etc., are to be considered in view of huge influx of tourists. Awareness about the location of this pilgrim centre needs to be highlighted with necessary sign boards and direction posts
- c) Further improvement of Malpe beach by maintaining cleanliness and ban on littering of plastic and other materials, more utilities/ services might be necessary, as expected by the tourists
- d) There is need to increase the number of beds and establish a restaurant at the tourist centre at Chitradurga

- e) Additional facilities like taralaya, pisciculture, sprinkler irrigation system and diversion drain etc., to be created at Sadankere, Dharwad
- f) Additional facilities such as waterway, ropeway, border planting, aquarium need to considered at Nruputunga hills, Hubli
- g) Afforestation programme on the hill range surrounding the lake/ reservoir at Shantisagar, Davangere district may be taken up in association with the Karnataka State Forest Department.
- h) Official bus stops provided and wide publicity given for Yatri Nivas, Varoor and Sakkarebail Jungle camp & trails.

Recommendations

Conclusions & Suggestions :Tourism is developing rapidly than anticipated with enhanced economic status and higher levels of education across the Country and State, in general. Therefore, there is need to recognize the potential and respond to the emerging demand. In view of this, based on the studies carried out at the 16 centres where the Department of Tourism has created infrastructure facilities, following are the observations & recommendations:

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