

ASSESSING TOURISM POTENTIAL IN PUNJAB THROUGH TOURISM ADMINISTRATION AND PROMOTIONAL INITIATIVES

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Abstract

Tourism being a multi-sectoral industry, requires a well-planned policy to regulate the activities of other related sectors. Badly managed tourist activities may cause many problems. That is why it has been rightly pointed out that unregulated or unplanned tourism can cause unbalanced social change and skew economic development. It can also generate social tension and cause environmental pollution resulting in distortion of life styles and cultural decay, which are the very foundation on which the tourism is built. The haphazard growth of tourist facilities and injecting of tourist inflow beyond the absorption capacity of a particular place/region leads to the depletion of tourism resources of the country. Therefore, the planned policies and programmes help the nation in developing and promoting its tourism. Thus, keeping in view the significance of policy in the field of tourism, an attempt has been made in this Chapter to study the Tourism Potential of Punjab. Further, an attempt has been made to evaluate the Tourism Policy of the Punjab Government for the development and promotion of tourist destinations of Punjab and the Tourist Circuits of the State in particular.

TOURISM POTENTIAL IN PUNJAB

Tourism being a multi-sector industry, includes variety of

economic activities, services, facilities, human relations, etc. The potential for tourism development in any area depends on the type of facilities and services offered to the tourists and the availability of a strong recreation resource base. The term 'potential' broadly means something existing but not yet fully exploited. Thus it symbolizes the sum total of quantitative and qualitative values on which the degree and the extent of exploitability depends.¹ It is difficult to explain or assess the potential in numerical terms as, it involves many factors in the context of tourism. For example, a place that has very good geographical location, scenery etc. but is devoid of proper access, has the potential that can be exploited only if transport facility makes it accessible to tourists. Similarly political instability restricts the potential visitors to an attractive spot. For assessment of tourism potential, the first step is to enlist the various tourist attractions and to identify their degree of fascination. It requires in-depth study of the tourism potential, tourism trends at national and international level, keeping in view the interests, preferences

¹ Punia, Bijender K., *Tourism Management : Problems and Prospects*, Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, 1994, p. 31.

and priorities of tourists. However, the value of tourism potential can be defined only after weighing the various quantitative and qualitative factors, such as climatic conditions, accessibility to the region, attitude of host and the facilities available at the places of attraction.²

Academicians and researchers have made numerous attempts to assess tourism potential, but such studies can be used only as distant models. F.F. Ferrario³ had made a significant contribution on tourist resource analysis with reference to South Africa. He listed as many as 2300 features that could be classified as tourist resources and he further subdivided these features into 21 categories. The potential value of each feature was calculated on the basis of tourist response collected through a questionnaire. He revealed that the eventual resource value of a tourist feature could be finally determined through working out the inter-relation between the availability (i.e. supply) and intensity of demand by using the following formula:

$$I = \frac{A + B}{2}$$

Where

- I is index of tourist potential
- A is demand or preference component
- B is the availability component or supply.

Gearing, et al., also made an attempt to assess tourism potential. The author had selected a set of 17 more or less independent variables and organized them into 5 sub-groups and assigned numerical value to all variables individually on the basis of preferences indicated by tourists.⁴ The numeric value thus assigned was taken as an index of the tourist attractiveness to be used in the following formula:

$$T_j = f(N_j, S_j, H_j, R_j, I_j)$$

Where

- T_j = Total tourist attractiveness of a region
- N_j = Natural factors
- S_j = Social factors
- H_j = Historical factors
- R_j = Recreational and Shopping opportunities
- I_j = Accessibility and accommodation above the minimal tourism related quality

From the above parameters, it is evidently clear that while applying any of the above approaches to assess the tourism potential of Punjab there ought to be the

² Ibid, p. 33.

³ Ferrario, F.F., *An Evaluation of Tourist Resources of South Africa*, Unpublished Doctoral thesis, University of California, 1978, p. 22.

⁴ Gearing, et al., "Establishing a Measure of Tourist Attractiveness", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. XII, No. 3, 1977, p. 1-8.

following common steps:-

1. Identification and mapping of available tourist resources in a given area.
2. Assessment of the degree of tourist preference and tourist interests for each of these features.
3. Determining the resource value in qualitative or quantitative terms.

From the above discussions, it was realised that the assessment of tourism potential is a time consuming process and it requires full-fledged and in depth study of the area. It also requires the cooperation of other government departments associated with the field of tourism. During the pilot survey, It was realised, that, the Assessment of tourism in Punjab became more difficult in the present time, because of non-availability of adequate and consolidated relevant secondary data, with reference to Punjab. The State of Punjab is a lesser-known tourist zone at National and international and the Government of Punjab has not made enough efforts to recognise its potential from tourists' point of view, and no survey or research has been conducted by the State Government to place the State of Punjab on Tourist Map of India. Keeping in view the above factors, the a modest approach has been adopted to understand the tourism potential of Punjab on qualitative considerations. The criteria adopted for assessing the tourism potential in Punjab is given in table 1.1

Table 1.1 shows the assessment criteria of tourism potential in Punjab on the basis of general factors such as attractions, accessibility to the site and facility available at the site, The above factors have been dealt with, in detail in the following discussions:

Table 1.1
CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF TOURISM POTENTIAL
IN PUNJAB

Group Heading	Criteria	Considerations
A. General factors	1) Climate	
	2) Socio-Cultural factors	Settlement pattern, Local Way of Life, Folk traditions, folklore and Legends, Arts and Crafts, Fairs and Festivals, folk Dances/ Music and Musical Instruments.
	3) Government Policy	
	4) Political Stability	
B. Tourist Attractions	1) Scenic Attractions	Mountains, Lakes, Forests, Rivers, Flora and Fauna, Wildlife, Sanctuaries, National Park and Mini zoo etc.
	2) Religious, Historical and Archaeological Attractions	Religious Centers of Local, National and International Significance, Historical buildings, Monuments, Museum sites of important Historical Events, Excavation Sites and other Places of Archaeological

		Importance.
	3) Shopping Attractions	Various Shopping Centers of Special Tourist Interest.
C. Accessibility to the site	1) Location	
	2) Transportation	Roads, Rails, Airways, Public and Private transport etc.
D. Facilities available at the site	1) Accommodation and Catering	Hotels, Motels, Restaurants, Bungalows, Rest Houses, Fast Food Counters and Others Eating Houses
	2) Entertainment Recreational and Other Facilities	Water sports, Golf Courses, Cycling, Aerosports, Rural Sports, Parks, Zoo, Picnic Sports, Light and Sound Programmes and Indoor Sports, other outdoor Sports and other facilities (Communication system, Health services, Medical Services, Safety Facilities, banks and Post Office etc.)

A) GENERAL FACTORS

General factors, viz., climate, socio-cultural factors, government policy and political stability etc. can play an important role in developing tourism potential of any area. A brief introduction to the said factors is as under:

Climate

For holidaying, good climate is one of the most important factors. It helps in making vacation a pleasant or unpleasant experience. Climatically, Punjab is a sub-humid to semi-arid region. Its latitudinal and continental position has resulted in extremes of temperature conditions. Though the mean daily temperature rarely drops below 0°C, ground frost is quite common in mid-winter. On the other hand, the maximum temperature is very high in May and June and sometimes it exceeds 45°C. The amount of rainfall in the Punjab varies between 25 centimeters and 100 centimeters, the maximum near the Shivalik Hills and the minimum in the western side of the state.⁵

Socio-cultural Factors

In Punjab, about 60 per cent of the people are engaged in agriculture. However, industries are also growing in few selected areas of the state. The small-scale sector is predominant in the state, as there were more than 1.88 lakh small-scale units as compared to 476 large and medium scale units. The major industrial centers in the state include Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Phagwara, Mandi-Gobindgarh, Goraya, Batala and Mohali. The new centers are also emerging at Dera Bassi and Rajpura. Besides this, there are 29 universities in the state providing higher education in sophisticated areas and disciplines. There are 49 medical/nursing

⁵ Randhawa, M.S., *Green Revolution – A case study of Punjab*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1974, p. 26.

colleges and 200 Engineering Institutes. The standard of living of the people of Punjab is higher as compared to those of other states. The per-capita income in Punjab increased from Rs. 25,611 in 1999 to Rs. 1.15 lakh in 2020-21.⁶ The people of the region are straight forward, simple, hardworking, and enterprising and above all valiant defenders of the motherland. The region is a land of many castes but the only state where Sikhs form the majority. Milk and its products (Curd and butter etc.) are essential part of everyday Punjabi meal. Salwar Kamiz, a long kurta and baggy trousers drawn in at the ankle are traditional and popular forms of dress with men and women. Women in rural areas usually wear an accompanying Dupatta (long scarf). Sikh men are distinctive for their turbans and beards.

Punjabis are generally fond of community life and like to participate in social gatherings. The famous folk dances of Punjab are 'Bhangra' (Male) and 'Giddha' (Female). While others male, dances are 'Jhummer', 'Luddi', 'Julli' and 'Dankara' The female one is 'kikli'. Music is an important part of culture. No occasion goes off without the association of music in Punjab. Birth, marriage, separation, harvest, rain, changing season, drought, fairs and festivals etc. form popular themes of folk songs. Numerous songs are associated with wedding. In the bride's home, 'Suhag' is sung and in the bridegroom's home 'Sehara' and 'Ghodi' are sung. Other songs are 'Jugni', 'Sammi', 'Tappe', and 'Bolies' etc. A strong tradition of the 'Kissa Sahitya' is very much part of Punjabi folk music. The legends of 'Heer Ranjha', 'Sohni Mahiwal', 'Sassi Punnu' and 'Puran Bhagat' are sung in semi-classical style⁷. There is great variety of musical instruments, which accompany them whether it is song or dance. The popular instruments used in Punjabi folk are 'Toombi' 'Algoza', 'Cheeka', 'Chirnta', 'Kaanto'. 'Daphali' 'Dhol', and 'Manjira' etc.

Punjab has a rich variety of handicrafts, Hoshiarpur and Kartarpur districts specialize in making artistic furniture with intricate designs. The wood workers of Hoshiarpur particularly are specialists in ivory and copper inlay. Wooden toys for children in bright colors are another item of interest in this part of Punjab. Patiala is famous for Punjabi 'Jootis' and 'Phulkaris'. The Roopnagar district has the distinction of making terracotta statuettes.

The Government Policy for Tourism

Favourable tourism policy of Government help in a big way in tapping the tourism potential. In the past, there was no specific policy for the development of tourism in the State. The Government of Punjab decided late to treat tourism as an industry and in 1996, it declared tourism an 'industry' entailing incentives.

The State Government has formulated its tourism policy in 2003 and tourism master plan which consists of a twelve-years action plan that includes all district headquarters, tehsils and sub-tehsils for the development of tourist spots in a phased manner. To monitor the tourism activities and problems being faced by tourism industry and its allied services, the State Government has constituted a Punjab State Tourism Monitoring Committee under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, Punjab.

Political Stability

Political stability affects the flow of visitors. In case of a stable political system, it

⁶ Statistical Abstracts of Punjab (2021), *Government of Punjab*, Chandigarh.

⁷ Kaur, Manmohan, *Encyclopedia of India*, Rima Publishing House, New Delhi, 1994, p.34.

may be possible to project potential visitors' departures to various destinations but one may not be able to do so with countries that have unstable political conditions. Political instability and civil unrest are a damper to the desire for travel. The State of Punjab was affected by terrorism for long time that had an adverse impact on the growth of tourism in the region. The negative image of Punjab projected through media was also responsible for the decline in tourist traffic in the State.

B) TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN PUNJAB

Scenic Attractions

Earlier restrictions used to be imposed on foreign nationals' entry and stay in the Shivalik that cover the eastern most area of Punjab and separate it from Himachal Pradesh. The range is broken near Rupnagar where the river Sutlej enters the plains and near Talwara where the Beas enters the plains. The width of the hills is nearly six to ten kilometres. Their height ranges between 400 and 725 meters above the sea level.

Rivers and other minor water bodies, i.e. lakes, tanks, kunds and sarovars etc. can play an important role in the aesthetic and recreational life of the people. Presently, Ravi, Beas, Satluj and Ghaggar flow through the State. Except for the last one, the other rivers are perennial with their sources located in the high snow-clad mountains. After passing through Chamba and Dalhousie hill ranges, the Ravi emerges from the foothills at Madhopur where the headworks of the upper Bari Doaba canal have been constructed. Nearly six kilometres south of Kathua, the Ravi forms an international boundary between India and Pakistan and finally enters Pakistan. The Beas rises in the Pir Panjal Mountains at Beas kund. After covering about 256 kilometres in Himachal Pradesh territory, it enters the Punjab plains at Mirthal. At Pong near Talwara, a large earthen dam has been constructed which will impound the water of the river for releasing gradually into the Rajasthan Canal and the Sirhind feeder taking off from Harike. The Satluj rises at altitude of 4,630 meters near the southwest of the Mansarovar Lake. It flows in a long and narrow channel along the southern slopes of the Kailash Parbat. Running circuitously through the erstwhile state of Bilaspur, the river pierces the Naina Devi range of hills at Bhakra, where the world's second highest dam has been built. The Satluj resumes its journey to the plains at Nangal. A dam at Nangal has also been constructed across its course to bring out the Nangal Hydel channel, along which two powerhouses – one each at Kotla and Ganguwal – have been built. The Beas joins the Satluj at Harike-Pattan and sixty kilometres below Harike, the Ferozepur headworks have been built. Below Ferozepur the river forms the international boundary between India and Pakistan and enters Pakistan at Subkimanki near Fazilka.

The Ghaggar is another river, which flows along the Southern limits of Punjab. As the source of the river is not in the snow-capped mountains, it is seasonal in character. Besides these three rivers of the present Punjab, there are many small streams, rivulets and torrents. At Bhakra Dam, a beautiful lake Gobind Sagar named after Guru Gobind Singhji has been constructed. Kanjli is a picturesque resort with a small lake, just 8 kilometres from Kapurthala.

The viewing and photographing of wildlife are also important tourist activities. However, various types of forests are found in Punjab including the Himalayan moist temperate forests, sub-tropical pine forests, tropical dry deciduous forests and

tropical thorn forests. The important trees found here are Chir-Pine, Khair, Bamboo, Mulberry, Babul, Kikar, Shisham and Eucalyptus.

There is very little forested land in the State. All this has an effect on the wildlife also. In 'Dhak' forest of Sangrur and Patiala deer are found. Barking Deer, Jackals and Wolves are found in the sub-mountain regions. Among the birds, pigeons, parrots and partridges are also available in 'Dhak' forests. Peacock is found in sub-mountain forests and cranes in marshy parts, besides the common domestic sparrows, crows, hawks, woodpeckers and similar other habitual tenants of the farm. Punjab also receives migratory birds during the winter. The most important is Harike-Pattan Bird Sanctuary. It is a scenic picnic spot where the two rivers Beas and Sutlej meet. Every year, 5000 birds are ringed in Harike-Pattan – one of the important National Wetlands of India. In Abohar, there is certain area for wildlife, which is worthwhile for deer only. Bathinda is famous for Bir Talab Deer Park. Panasar Bagh Mini Zoo in Sangrur is an attraction for visitors. Near Amaltas Tourist complex at Ludhiana, one can visit the Lion Safari, which is famous in Punjab. Takhni Rehnapur Sanctuary in Hoshiarpur district is famous for deer. Near Hoshiarpur the Kangli Wetland is good for bird watching. In Patiala, Deer Park is the main attraction for wildlife tourism. Kanjli area in Kapurthala district has also been selected as one of the National Wetlands. Near Chandigarh, the Zoological Park, Chattbir has an interesting collection of animals and birds from all over the world. Every year about 2000 Siberian birds arrive at the Chattbir Zoo. Earlier, the Sukhna Lake at Chandigarh used to attract the maximum number of migratory birds. But with work going on at the regulator end of the lake and the music blaring at the pubs, the Siberian birds are moving towards the quiet water feature of Chattbir Zoo.

The above discussion reveals that Punjab's scenic attractions are mainly based on dams, rivers and fauna. Moreover, the Government of Punjab has not taken stringent steps to introduce water sports and water related activities except boating facilities at Kanjli and Rupnagar. The State wildlife attractions are comparatively poor but have potential for future development.

Religious, Historical and Archaeological Attractions

Punjab is stuffed with places of historical, religious and archaeological importance spanning millennia. The forthcoming discussion is related to centers of religious, historical and archaeological importance in the State of Punjab.

i) Religious Attractions For Sikhs

Punjab is dotted with large number of places of religious interest. Amritsar, the city of the Golden Temple is considered a religious capital of the Sikhs. It is situated in the northwest corner of the state, about 225 kilometers from Chandigarh and about 450 kilometers from Delhi⁸. The Golden Temple is already considered as a major tourist attraction, drawing Sikh devotees not only from the sub-continent but also from all over the world. Amritsar also has a tower built in the memory of Baba Atal, an octagonal nine-storied structure, decorated with frescoes on the life of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. Twenty-four kilometers South of Amritsar is Taran-Taran – a town famous for another important Gurdwara. This place is

⁸ Speaking to the newsmen at the Conclave organized by the PHD Chambers of Commerce and Industry and INTACT on "Developing Tourism Potential in Punjab", the Punjab Chief Minister announced that the government would submit documentation to UNESCO for listing the 'Golden Temple' as World Heritage site. *The Tribune*, December 14, 2002, but this issue is still pending.

hallowed by the memory of Guru Arjun Devji. There is a sarovar here that is believed to cure many diseases. The Gurdwara is designed in Mughal style with a dome covered with copper. Another historical Gurdwara – Govindwal Sahib – is located 30 kilometres southeast of Amritsar.

Thirty-five kilometers west of Gurdaspur, 'Dera Baba Nanak' is situated, which is as sacred to Sikhs as 'Madina' is to Muslims. Sri Hargobindpur, a historical as well as religious town, is situated at a distance of 38 kilometres in the south of the Gurdaspur town⁹. Here, Gurudwara 'Dam-Dama Sahib' is associated with the sixth Guru Hargobindji. Thousands of pilgrims visit this place on the eve of Maghi in the second week of January every year. Thirty kilometres south of Kapurthala is the town of Sultanpur Lodhi where there is Gurudwara 'Ber Sahib', a renowned center of pilgrimage. The Gurudwara is named after the Ber tree under which Guru Nanak Devji meditated. There is another Gurudwara 'Thumb Sahib' at Kartarpur. Every year, a fair is held on the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji where a large number of devotees gather to pay homage. Ludhiana is an important center as there are many historic Gurudwaras in and around it. In Machiwara of district Ludhiana there is a Gurudwara 'Charan Kamal' named after Guru Gobind Singh's lotus feet. Another famous Gurudwara 'Manji Sahib' is at Alamgir, 10 kilometres from Ludhiana, where the two Muslim devotees placed the cot on which Guruji was being carried. There is a ten feet deep tank near the Gurudwara where according to a legend, Guruji shot an arrow into the parched land which miraculously yielded water. Gurudwara 'Nanaksar Sahib' is also a popular shrine of the Sikhs situated near Jagraon at a distance of about 38 kilometres from Ludhiana.

Anandpur Sahib is an important Sikh religious center in the backdrop of the Naina Devi Hills. It is situated 41 kilometres from Rupnagar on the left bank of river Sutlej. It has a number of historical Gurudwaras. These Gurudwaras are important religious places being related to tenth Guru Gobind Singhji. This is the place where Guruji founded the Khalsa. A day after the holi, thousands of devotees visit the holy shrine from far and near to participate in Holla Mohalla. The most important shrine at Anandpur Sahib is Gurudwara 'Keshgarh Sahib'. Other important Gurudwaras near the Keshgarh Gurudwara are 'Manji Sahib', 'Sisganj', 'Bhora Sahib', 'Anandgarh Sahib' and Gurdwara 'Mai Jitoji'.

Fatehgarh Sahib is also a place of great veneration for the Sikhs. It commemorates the martyrdom of Guru Gobind Singh's two young sons, Zorawar and Fateh Singh, who were entombed alive by one of Aurangzeb's generals when they refused to embrace Islam. Gurudwara 'Dukhniwaran Sahib' at Patiala is also a sacred shrine for Sikhs. Thirty-five kilometers south of Bathinda is 'Dam-Dama Sahib'. It is an important pilgrimage center associated with the visit of tenth Guru Shri Gobind Singhji. Muktsar is also a pilgrimage center for the Sikhs.

ii) Religious Attractions for Hindus

There are many temples in all the districts of the state but there is hardly any of the national fame. In Punjab, 'Durgiana Mandir' at Amritsar, similar to some extent in architecture to the Golden Temple, is situated in the old city. It is a Hindu shrine

⁹ The State Government wanted to earmark the area around Shahpur Kandi in Gurdaspur district for the promotion of Health Tourism. *The Tribune*, December 13, 2002.

dedicated to Lakshmi and Narayan. It is a center of attraction to large number of worshippers. Eleven kilometers to the west of Amritsar is 'Ram Tirth', a holy place with a big tank where Ram's exiled wife Sita gave birth to her twins, Lav and Kush, in sage Valmiki's ashram. A big fair lasting for four days is held here since time immemorial on every Kartika Purn-Mashi night. People to the tune of about two lakhs from all parts of the country visit the place. 'Shitla Mandir' is located towards the north of Durgiana Mandir. This shrine is held in great veneration by the people; children with measles are brought to this temple by the parents for the blessing of the goddess. The 'Devi Talab' temple at Jalandhar is a large masonry tank considered sacred by Hindus. Baba Sodal is another Hindu shrine at Jalandhar. An annual fair is also held at the Samadhi of Baba Sodal, a child deity. In Kapurthala, there are five Hindu temples, called Panch Mandir. Kali Devi temple at Patiala is also a famous shrine of Hindus. Some Buddhist caves and a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva can be seen in Shahpur Kandi. At a short distance from Sangrur, Sitasar Sarovar is situated at Sunam. Sitasar is traditionally believed to be the tank where Sita took a bath during her exile.

iii) Religious Attraction for Muslims

Among the places of worship for Muslims, the most important is the mosque of Imam Nasiruddin at Jalandhar, which was constructed during the early Mughal rule. A big fair is held every year at this shrine on the occasion of the Urs. Qadian in Gurdaspur district is the main center of Muslim Jamat called Ahmediyas. It is venerated as second Mecca by Muslims. Another important place is the tomb of Hazrat Nadir Ali Shah at village Jahan Khelan at a distance of a few kilometers from Hoshiarpur. This place is also visited by a large number of Muslims. The Moorish Mosque at Kapurthala, a Muslim place of worship is indeed a unique building in India built in the Moorish style. In Sirhind, there is a Rauze of Hazrat Mujadid-Alaf-Saani-Sheikh Ahmed Farooqi regarded by many Muslims to be only second to the prophet Mohammed. This mausoleum is held in high esteem by the Muslims. In the month of August, it is visited by thousand of pilgrims from all over India, when they come to participate in the Urs of the saint.

The Historical Attractions

The Jallianwala Bagh became an important landmark in the history of freedom struggle. On 13 April 1919 several thousand people had peacefully gathered at this Bagh to listen to some leading freedom fighters. General Dyer ordered machine-gun fire on them and killed innocent people. Vivid bullet marks can still be seen on the walls of the Bagh (see photograph at Annexure-IV). The Bagh is now a well-maintained garden, a national memorial. An impressive monument in the form of a rising flame dedicated to the memory of the martyrs has been built there. Other places of historical importance around Jalandhar are Nurmahal Sarai at Nurmahal. The Fort at Phillaur and the tombs of Ustad and Shagird at Nakodar. The tomb at Nakodar is a protected monument by the State Archaeological Department. The Sarai in Doraha situated on the main highway between Ambala and Ludhiana was constructed by Emperor Jahangir. Pathankot has number of old tombs and mosques. The Sheesh Mahal situated in the heart of the city of Hoshiarpur is a source of attraction for visitors.

The historical places at Patiala are Quila Mubarak, Sheesh Mahal, Moti Bagh and Baradari Gardens. Nabha is situated at a distance of twenty kilometers from Patiala.

In the center of the town is the old fort, which houses the Rani Mahal. The Bahadurgarh Fort was founded by Nawab Saif Khan at Bahadurgarh village, which is situated at a distance of two kilometers from Patiala on the Patiala - Rajpura road. The Baradari garden at Sangrur is another place of historical interest. In the southeast of the Sirhind city is a Mughal monument, Aam Khas Bagh which was initially built by Babar and extended and rebuilt by Emperor Shahjahan, The Department of Archaeological Survey, Punjab, has taken the responsibility for preserving this monument.

Bathinda is an old historical town. It has an eleventh century fort, which has seen the rise and fall of many chieftains. Razia Sultan, the first woman ruler of India, was imprisoned here by her enemies before her execution. There are various historic places and memorials in and around Ferozepur. There are heroic martyrs like Bhagat Singh and his two associates, Rajguru and Sukhdev, who have their final resting place on the bank of the river Sutlej near Ferozepore. The Shaheed Bhagat Singh Memorial marks the spot and every year on March 23, thousands of people gather to pay homage to these noble heroes. In Faridkot, there is a tomb of Baba Farid, which is called 'Chilla Baba Farid'.

Archaeological Attractions

Dholbaha (District Hoshiarpur) and Sanghol (District Fatehgarh Sahib) and Rupnagar are the three main places of archaeological importance in the state of Punjab. Dholbaha is situated at a distance of thirty kilometers from Hoshiarpur. It came into news a few years back with the excavation of Vishnu head sculpture. The other important ones are reclining Ganesha, Shiv, Parvati, female figures or couples on architectural members and a statue depicting four Jina Images seated back to back. Most of the sculptures are of sandstone. Lots of articles of archaeological interest have already been dug out from the ruins of Dholbaha. To display the excavations, a small museum has been set up here by the State Government.

Sanghol is another prominent place from archaeological point of view. It is situated at a distance of forty kilometers towards west from Chandigarh. The digs here yielded evidence of cultural activity in the region almost continuously from the post Harappan days through the mediaeval period. The discoveries included a few coins and sealing of some well known and little known imperial or local rulers of ancient period. Rupnagar is important as excavations of Harappan rulers were first discovered there.

Shopping Attractions

Shopping itself is an important tourist attraction. It is a fact that large numbers of tourists visit a particular place simply because there are good shopping centers which provide special goods. There is no doubt that the state has good shopping attractions particularly in the field of hosiery, sports goods and handicrafts. More than 95 per cent of the state's hosiery establishments are based in Ludhiana. Jalandhar today is known as the 'Sports City' of India. Amritsar being one of the oldest center of carpet weaving in the country, is also famous for woollen shawls and blankets. Punjab has a rich variety of handicrafts. Various centers of handicrafts such as Patiala, Hoshiarpur and Kartarpur have already been mentioned under socio-cultural factors.

Marketing of such products is mainly through private concerns. However, the

Punjab Government has also opened its emporiums at various district headquarters for this purpose. It is worth mentioning that the State Government has not made many sincere efforts to popularize the specialties of Punjab, unlike its neighboring State of Haryana that regularly organizes craft melas every year.

C. Accessibility to the Site

Accessibility of a region or site has definite impact on the tourism potential. Tourist attraction of whatever type would be of little importance if the place is not accessible. This can be judged on the basis of the geographical location of a place. Moreover, the transport facilities available to reach a particular destination are another factor affecting the accessibility. A brief description of these factors is as under:

Geographical Location

Punjab is located in the north-west of India and shares its boundaries with Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Rajasthan. Chandigarh is the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana. The State is divided in 22 districts. The important places viz. Amritsar, Tarn Taran, Beas, Gurdaspur, Madhopur, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Rupnagar, Faridkot, Harike-Pattan and Sirhind are situated on National Highways, other places of tourist interest like Patiala, Bathinda, Nangal, Anandpur Sahib, Husainewala, Govindwal Sahib, Kanjli, Dera Baba Nanak, Hoshiarpur, Kapurthala, Muktsar and Sangrur etc. are located on State highways¹⁰. The location of other places viz., Sultanpur Lodhi, Shahpur Kandi, Ram Tirth, Dam-Dama Sahib, Dholbaha, Chhattbir Zoo, and Sanghol etc. are not easily accessible as these are situated on link roads.

Transport Facilities

Transport forms an integral part of Tourism. If the tourist attractions are located at places where no means of transport can reach or where there are inadequate transport facilities, these have little value. Punjab has all the three modes of transport, i.e., air, rail and road. As regard air transport, this facility is not commonly used, as the State has only one international air port at Amritsar and four domestic airports at Bathinda, Ludhiana, Pathankot and Patiala as far as tourism is concerned. As regards rail transport is concerned, Punjab is served with an efficient railway system, as all its major cities of tourist importance are linked. Amritsar, Pathankot, Jalandhar, Ludhiana and Bathinda are some of the busiest railway junctions of the country. There are many superfast and express trains between Amritsar & Delhi and Jammu & Delhi. There are other trains that provide rail link among major cities and towns of the State.

Road transport occupies a significant place in Punjab. Roads of Punjab fall into four categories, viz., national highways, state highways, major and minor district roads and village roads. There is regular bus service to the places that are situated on the national highways as compared to state highways. All the major towns of the state have a well-developed network of roads. All the villages are also connected by link roads. All the places of tourist interest are easily accessible by means of transportation except few tourist destination such as, the Chhattbir Zoo, Shahpur Kandi, Sultanpur Lodhi, and Damdama Sahib. No doubt, location of Madhopur is very good, but it is not easily accessible by public transport as there is no frequent

¹⁰ Statistical Abstracts of Punjab, 2011.

bus service from Pathankot and long route buses do not have stoppages there.

D. Facilities Available at the Site

Facilities are the necessary aids to the tourist centers because these compliment the site's attractions. These include accommodation, food and beverages, entertainment and recreational facilities, as well as other facilities. A brief description of these, with reference to Punjab, has been discussed in the following paragraphs.

Accommodation and Catering Facilities

Adequate supply of accommodation suitably tailored to the requirements of the tourist market is one of the basic conditions of tourism development. Without development of hotels, the state's natural beauty, its climatic attributes, and sporting and recreational facilities will not be enough to sustain a good volume of the tourism trade. Accommodation could be in the form of hotels, motels, tourist rest houses, circuit houses, youth hostels, dak bungalows, railway retiring rooms, dharamshalas, and paying guest accommodation. All kinds of boarding facilities other than hotels fall under the category of supplementary accommodation.

The hotel industry is not an organized sector in the state of Punjab. Therefore, no precise accounts are available as regards number of hotels, total bed capacity or the range of facilities and services provided by them. However, there are two or three star hotels in Punjab situated at Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Bathinda and Patiala. Gurdwaras and Dharamshalas provide boarding facilities to tourists mainly at pilgrimage centers.

Entertainment, Recreational and Other Facilities

Entertainment is an inseparable part of the tourist industry and a major component of the tourist packages. Recreation comprises a major component of leisure. Tourism sports like polo, horse riding, camel riding, elephant riding, golf, swimming, tennis, squash and cinemas are necessary not only from recreational point of view but are also important for building mental and physical health. City parks, Zoos, Gardens, Picnic spots etc. are other sources of entertainment. These facilities are not in abundance in Punjab.

With a view to provide fun and entertainment to the people of Punjab, the corporation has decided to set up an amusement park (at the floating restaurant at Sirhind), but due to financial scarcity of the government, the said project is yet to be implemented and to celebrate important festivals of Punjab in the traditional way at various tourist complexes. Tiger Safari has been introduced at Chattbir.

Conclusion

Punjab, which is famous for religious tourism, but, after making an analysis of the tourism potential of Punjab, it is startling to note that, Punjab is quite rich with regard to tourism potential that remains untapped. As the table 1.1 reveals that in Punjab almost all the resources for tourism development are available, but are not harnessed by the State Government. Though, Punjab has an independent Department of Tourism and the Tourism Development Corporation, yet, the growth of tourism is very slow as compared to other neighbouring States. Further, it is observed that, in Punjab, there was no tourism policy to provide guidelines to this industry for a significant period of time. The Department of Tourism, has for the first time formulated its tourism policy in 2003. Keeping in view the objectives

and goals of tourism policy, it is realised that, this policy is still not implemented and all the resources discussed above are not properly exploited and explored. The author, realized, that keeping in view the existing natural and manmade potential for tourism in Punjab can help the State Government in getting more socio-economic benefits like employment generation, poverty elimination, increasing per capita income, improving standard of living, establishing small scale entrepreneurs, foreign exchange earnings etc. But, for getting these benefits out of tourism industry there is a need for i) Government effort; ii) private sector participation; iii) administrative improvement; iv) travel and tourism research for infrastructural improvement; v) adoption of integrated and coordinated tourism development programmes; and vi) people participation; vii) development of human resources; viii) wide range tourism marketing; ix) safety and security of tourist etc.

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