

8.2. Tourism

Tourism generates more foreign exchange and employment with less investment, compared to manufacturing and agriculture sectors. Employment to youth, opportunity to artistes, safeguarding the monuments, business to traders, facilities to public, foreign exchange to Government and fraternity between states are being extended by Tourism sector. Tourism promotes national integration, tolerance and understanding of different cultures. Tamil Nadu is having abundant tourist wealth. Nature has bestowed Tamil Nadu with countless number of tourist spots such as hill stations, beaches, wild life sanctuaries, bird sanctuaries, zoological parks etc. The long and rich history of the Tamil language and society is marked by temples, pilgrim centres, historical and heritage monuments etc.

Tamil Nadu received 506.47 lakh domestic tourists and 17.53 lakh foreign tourists in 2007 with growth rate of 29% and 31% respectively. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism was Rs.5430 crore in Tamil Nadu achieving an increase of 80% in 2007 as against Rs.49413 crore with an increase of 67% for India.

The average length of stay of a tourist in Tamil Nadu is 4 to 5 days in the case of domestic tourist and 7 days in the case of a foreign tourist. A foreign tourist spends Rs.2,252/- per day and a domestic tourist Rs.711/-, a day, visitor spends Rs.449/- per day. Among the foreign tourists 23% stay in Star Hotels, 44% in Budget Hotels and 13% in Guest and Rest Houses. The corresponding percentage for domestic tourists is 10, 49 and 14 respectively.

The Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation (TTDC) has been the pioneer organisation in promoting tourism in Tamil Nadu by building up adequate tourism related infrastructure facilities on commercially viable basis. It owns the largest chain of 55 hotels in South India. The TTDC also provides facilities such as youth hostels, restaurants, boat houses, telescope Houses, lake park and other tourist attractions covering all the major tourist destinations in the State.

Objectives

The State aims to make Tamil Nadu the top destination in India for attracting domestic and foreign tourists by increasing the number of tourist arrivals, the length of stay and the average spending by foreign as well as domestic tourists per day.

Programmes

Promotion & Publicity

The publicity measures adopted in the State for promoting tourism are proposed to be continued. The brand slogan "*Enchanting Tamil Nadu - Experience Yourself*" will be given further publicity in domestic and international media.

Electronic / Print Media would be used for Massive Publicity, familiarization tours for tour operators, travel writers and tourist crew from India and abroad will be conducted periodically. An expenditure of Rs.11.69 crore was incurred for Promotion and Publicity during 2008-09 and an outlay of Rs.9.68 crore is proposed for Annual Plan 2009-10.

Infrastructure Development

The schemes such as Destination Development, Circuit Development, District Excursion Centres, Development of minor Waterfalls, Development of Dam Sites, Pilgrim Tourism, Heritage Tourism, Rural Tourism, Farm Tourism, Medical Tourism, Eco-Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Promotion of Museums Guide Training are proposed to be implemented during the Annual Plan 2009-10. An expenditure of Rs.8.57 crore was incurred for development of infrastructure facilities in 2008-09 and the same outlay of Rs.11.00 crore is proposed for 2009-10. In addition a sum of Rs.10.00 crore will be used for the improvement of access roads to important tourist centres for 2009-10.

Plan Outlay for 2009-10

An outlay of Rs.35.80 crore is approved for Annual Plan 2009-10 to implement various schemes for the development in Tourism sector.