

A Study on The Issues and Challenges for Sustainable Tourism Development with Special Reference to Srirangapatna of Karnataka

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Abstract— Sustainability means enduring capacity. It represents the toleration capacity of anything. Heritage tourism has become a buzz word now a days and governments are trying their best to improve the heritage tourism in historic places. But often we forget that developing heritage tourism comes with many challenges with respect to sustainability of the historic places itself. Development of tourism brings forth many challenges such as congestion, sudden increase in number of tourists visiting the historic place, increasing the tourist and resident ratio, can cause inflation, disturbance for local people, causing damage to the physical historic environment, wear and tear, increased number of tourist and rapid urbanization put lot of pressure on any historic destination. As tourism develops at heritage sites, serious damage may occur as a result of high tourist use, particularly at peak times. Tourist's behaviour and their numbers may gradually destroy the resources. Therefore, apart from developing heritage tourism, sustainable tourism development must be concentrated in all historic places, which requires a sound destination development plan and destination vision. Because as it is observed by Aylin Orbasli "Tourism and tourist developments are greedy consumers of the natural environment and of culture. Once it has become a tourist attraction, a small or fragile monument is often surrounded and overwhelmed by sign boards, parking facilities, souvenir shops, restaurants or cafes. Although a monument may be safeguarded, the surrounding environment is often not. The pressures of tourism on historic towns are two fold; the impact on the historic fabric and it's associated, comparatively fragile, environment, and pressures on the "living" urban environment. In the conservation and development process, not only do built and natural environments need to be safeguarded, but so do the communities which inhabit them. The historic town presents a great complexity of objective, and underlying tensions, where a delicate balance has to be sought between competing priorities, including between inside and outside, insider and outsider. Heritage management more frequently associated with historic monuments, takes on a notably different aspect in the urban situation, but the primary objective of enabling continuing appreciation of heritage and its safeguarding

and continuity for future generations, however, remains the same." Therefore, sustainable tourism must be given priority rather than unscrupulously developing heritage tourism and coming with visionless plans to develop historic tourist destinations. This paper attempts to list some of the major issue and challenges associated with sustainable tourism, with special reference to Srirangapatnam, a small Island formed by river Cauvery. This walled historic town has lot of potential for tourism, as this has many forts, temples, mosque, tomb of Tipu sultan and many historic events are connected to it and evidences of them could be traced even today.

Index Terms- Heritage Tourism, Sustainability, Limitations, Challenges, Opportunities.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is rightly said "Terrorism divides whereas Tourism unites". Tourism is one of the most dynamic industries. It has become one of the most important economic and social activities and the fastest growing industry of the World. As tourism has emerged as a key sector of the World economy, it has become a major force in global trade. Tourism sector is a major generator of employment. As a highly labour intensive activity, tourism and tourism support activities create a high proportion of employment and career opportunities for skilled, semi skilled and unskilled workers, particularly for poor, women and young workers. The tourism sector can be an important source of employment for many of the unemployed youth and consequently reduces the poverty in the society (UNCTAD, 2010). India is bestowed with a rich and diverse range of unique tangible and intangible cultural, natural and manmade tourism resources. From the point of view of tourism, India has a great competitive strength because of its ancient but yet living civilization. Tourism expenditure triggers a chain of reactions wherein the various related sectors

supply goods and services. Tourist expenditure leads to consumption demand. This creates more employment and generates a multiplier effect on the economy. Thus development of tourism sector can bring about large scale employment generation. It can also lead to poverty alleviation. With the growth of tourism a lot of benefits will flow into the economy. These benefits are mainly in the form of increased national and state revenues, business receipts, employment, wages and salary income, buoyancy in central, state and local tax receipts. All this leads to accelerated growth of economy and socio-economic development. Thus the vibrant tourism sector in India needs to be fully tapped and reaped to maximise its benefits.

II. PROFILE OF SRIRANGAPATNA

Srirangapatna town is located at a distance of 24 kilometers from the district head quarters Mandya. Here the sacred river Cauvery branches in to two and forms an egg shaped Island. The two branches of the river meet at a distance of 4 kms. Srirangapattana is a double walled fort town with moat. It was the centre of buzzing political activity in the 18th century. The area of the town is 8.6 sq. kms. In addition the town receives visitors because of its potential heritage attractions. This place has also been mentioned in the mythological accounts and has been referred to as Gautama kshetra. Srirangapattana came into prominence after it became the capital of Wodeyars. The history of Srirangapattana can be clearly understood from the early 17th century. The main sources for the study of Srirangapattana history are a large number of inscriptions, literary works and written records in the Mysore palace. A large number of inscriptions and monuments at Srirangapattana indicate that the place was ruled by Hoysalas, Vijayanagara kings, Mysore Wodeyars, Hyder Ali and Tipu sultan. The important literary works which can be used as supplement to understand the history of Srirangapattana are, Kantirava Narasaraja Vijayam, Chikkadevaraja binnapam, Chikkadevaraja vamshavali, Keladi nripavijayam, Apratima vira charitham, Saundara kanya etc., These literary sources are mainly in Kannada and Sanskrit. The historic town of Srirangapattana has got number of monuments. The monuments stand testimony to the role of various rulers. The palace, temples, fort, masjid, the gateways

attract the tourist to this town. It includes both secular and religious heritage. The history and Heritage of Srirangapattana is reflected in its great monuments. The monuments at Srirangapattana are protected by Archaeological survey of India and also by State Archaeology department as the monuments are of both National and state importance.

III. TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE OF SRIRANGAPATNA

Tourism infrastructure and super structure include water, waste disposal, good roads, air connectivity, railways, accommodation, good transport facilities, attractions, food and beverage outlets, shops etc., Tourism infrastructure plays an important role in the promotion of a destination. A destination which has good infrastructural facilities tends to become more popular. In any destination it is the duty of the government to provide basic infrastructural facilities, where as super structure such as accommodation, restaurants, catering, amusement parks etc., are provided by private sector.

The characteristics of a destination play an important role in attracting the tourists. There are five elements essential for destination development and sustainability. These five elements are identified as five 'A's' of tourism. They are:

1. Accessibility: It refers to transport and transport infrastructure to reach the destination and the local transport at the destination. Tourists prefer comfortable and hassle free travel. The other factors to be considered apart from comfort are cost, convenience, duration of travel, and safety. Many cities, towns or villages have become destinations mainly because of their accessibility and not only for their historic attractions.
2. Accommodation: Tourist destinations must offer accommodation facilities suiting the needs of all category of tourists. Hence it is necessary to have clean, hygienic well maintained accommodation facilities at the destination so that tourists can find a place for relaxation and stay. "Without suitable accommodation there would be no tourism as accommodation is the temporary home of the tourist at the destination and the base from which they pursue their activities.

3. Amenities: Facilities available at the destination which help in meeting the needs and wants of tourists. Tourist amenities include food and beverage facilities, drinking water, good communication network, local transport, automatic teller machines (ATM's), proper garbage and sewage disposal system, medical facilities etc., Electricity supply with minimum power cuts and adequate water supply are crucial facilities which must be available at the destination.

4. Attractions: A destination with potential attractions motivates tourists to visit it. Attractions can be natural, manmade or cultural.

5. Activities: Activities at the destination also pull the tourist towards it. A destination which provides various activities to suit different age groups apart from the attraction pulls more visitors because, tourist now-a-days take break from their routine not only to see the attractions at the tourist destination but also to indulge in various activities.

IV. THREATS TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AT SRIRANGAPATNA

Despite the advantages of being developed into a major tourist attraction because of its merits, Srirangapatna faces several challenges in the process of developing sustainable tourism. Some of them are: Bio and non bio gradable materials are thrown by visitors and locals. Polythene bags, bottles, pack of eatables can be seen thrown. It may be attributed to lack of civic sense among the visitors, sometimes due to apathy of local administrators. The local administration do not provide dustbins or proper cleaning facilities. Cleanliness is a major issue in Srirangapattana especially near certain monuments and areas. The surroundings of the armouries are not maintained neatly. It is not possible to enter the armouries because of the garbage and staunch smell. Garbage is found dumped on the area surrounding the rocket court.

The bathing ghat is not maintained properly. Solid waste is thrown on the banks. Many rituals are conducted on the bathing ghat and the area is not cleaned properly. Though the Town Municipal Council collects a fee from those who conduct rituals here, the area is not maintained cleanly. Many pilgrims take bath in the rivers and they leave back the old clothes on the banks of the river. Sangama and Gosai

Ghat are excellent natural attractions but they are not maintained cleanly. It was also observed that people dump the building waste into the moat area of the fort at certain points.

Taking holy dip in the river is considered sacred. Rivers are worshiped and special poojas are conducted and it is part and parcel of the Indian culture. At Paschima Vahini near Srirangapatna the river takes a bend and flows west wards. West ward flow of river is considered sacred and at this place various rituals like performing obsequies to the departed souls, immersing the ashes of the dead, etc., are performed. On an average about 1500 people visit these places for performing various rituals. These people immerse ashes, clay pots, garbage, banana, coconuts, photos of deities and other materials used in the rituals. Piles of garlands, polythene covers, plantain leaves, leftover food, flowers, clothes and other pooja materials are seen on the banks of the river. Though the Srirangapattana Town Municipal Council collects a fee for performing various rituals on the river bank, effective measures are not in place for waste disposal and control of water pollution. Many devotees who visit Srirangapattana temple take a holy dip in the river before entering the temple. Many such pilgrims leave their clothes in the river with a belief that the river will wash off their sins. Piles of such discarded clothes can be seen on the banks of the river as well. It was observed that these places lack dust bins. The religious activities are not the only reason for water pollution. The sewage water from the town is let in to the river. The locals take bath, wash clothes, bathe animals in the river. All these activities has led to pollution of the river.

In heritage tourism 'Tour Guides' play an important role. The role of the qualified tour guide is to facilitate cultural understanding of the host culture by visitors. The main intention of tourist in heritage tourism is to understand the culture and heritage of the host community. Tourist guiding has an important and multifaceted role in contemporary tourism. A safe and quality experience offered by a guided tour involves the guide tourists and the environment, and is fulfilled when all the three components interact at the same point in space and time. What guides present and interpret takes effect on the way in which their customers experience a place or attraction,

understanding local culture, engage in local activities and how they behave on the spot. As front line professionals, information givers and interpreters, guides act as destination's representatives and ambassadors in the eyes of the tourists. Srirangapattana can be made better understood and appreciated by the tourist by way of making trained and licensed guides available at the destination.

To make tourism successful at heritage destinations it is necessary to involve the local community and to create awareness about the importance of heritage and its conservation. Lack of heritage awareness and non involvement of people in heritage conservation can be attributed as basic causes for damage to built heritage. The local community lacks heritage awareness as is evident from the encroachment, lack of cleanliness, lack of heritage management. Better information and awareness leads to appreciation of the heritage value of the site by the local people and it is the fundamental step for a sustainable heritage tourism management at Srirangapattana.

Tourists travel to destinations for leisure and enjoyment. Safety and security criterion has become important in tourism as no tourist would like to visit a place which is unsecure. Accidents and injuries may be caused to tourists by the absence of safety precautions at the destinations. Many cases of drowning have been reported from river Cauvery at Srirangapattana. Many tourists have died while venturing into the water. Some of the tourists died in the course of performing rituals in the river water. Some of them have died while trying to swim in the river water.

The menace of beggary at tourist destinations spoil the image of destination as tourists are inconvenienced by the chasing of beggars. Begging is a perennial phenomenon which exists in many historical cities concentrated by tourists.

V. DEALING WITH CHALLENGES TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Tourism has the potential to contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction, in particular in low income developing countries. The sector's capacity to generate employment and income owing to its

backward and forward linkages makes it important for economic diversification and economic growth. At the same time, however, the negative impact it can inflict on the environment and culture cannot be overlooked. To ensure that tourism provides employment and income opportunities in the long run and contributes to sustainable development, its operations, including the activities that are linked with it, must be sustainable.

“A sustainable approach to tourism development and management is all about planning for the long term, working together, checking on outcomes and adapting to change. Effective communication is fundamental to this. Policies and instruments will not work unless they are put across in the right way. Governments should make sure that all relevant stakeholders know what is expected of them. The sustainable tourism strategy and policies should be clearly disseminated.

Making how best and effectively, the local communities could be made part of and involved in planning process spell success. Many governments do not know how to initiate action or whom to approach for assistance.

An interpretation centre at Srirangapattana can provide the necessary information about the destination, its history, its attractions through suitable interpretation equipments and tools. Interpretation centre should be suitably located. It is always preferred to have the interpretation centre at the entrance of the town. Interpretation can play an important role in sustainable tourism by two ways. It can create economic sustainability by enhancing the quality of experience for visitors and by encouraging continued visitor interest in the activity. Secondly it can also assist in the management of visitors and their impacts. Physical and intellectual access by the public to cultural heritage sites should be facilitated by interpretation and presentation programmes. Effective interpretation and presentation should enhance personal experience, increase public respect and understanding and communicate the importance of the conservation of cultural heritage sites. Interpretation and presentation programmes should identify and assess their audiences demographically and culturally. There is a need to train the tourist guides at Srirangapattana. The trained guides can be issued with

license. After the training there has to be an exam. Those who pursue such tourist guide training programme should also attend an examination. Successful candidates can be issued with certificates and license. They must be registered with the tourism department. There are different categories of tourist guides and Srirangapattana requires a destination guide, who is highly knowledgeable about local culture, history, architectural details. The interpretation of the destination by the guide is important in heritage tourism. It is not only sufficient to have the knowledge, but tourist guides must also develop the skills of guiding.

The local bodies and town planning authorities need to integrate tourism in town planning. The town municipal council at Srirangapattana should also include tourism in its master plan. Top priority must be given to maintain the cleanliness of the place and inclusive growth or bottom top approach of planning will help the place in maintaining its integrity and historical significance.

A heritage trail is a designated journey which makes the trail explorer learn more about a place's history, culture, architecture, flora and fauna through visiting historical sites and buildings. The journey can be covered by walking, cycling, bus rides etc., or even a combination of any modes of transportation. Introducing heritage trail at heritage destinations will have number of benefits like bringing history alive, providing information on a destination in an informal and fun way, allowing recreational activities, allowing one to appreciate the natural surroundings, architecture and culture of a country, promotes and encourages skills such as observation and recording, map and plan reading etc.,

Information and Communication Technology can be used at Srirangapattana for the interpretation of the heritage. An interpretation centre should be established. Information and Communication Technology based tools like multimedia presentations can be used for educating and interpreting the heritage. A dedicated website for Srirangapattana tourism can be planned by the government. The website should include information provided by historians as articles. Due to interest revolution, many tourists are dependent on the information provided in the internet.

CONCLUSION

Tourism is a multi sectoral activity. For the success of tourism at any place a concerted effort between various sectors and stakeholders is essential. In the development of tourism destination both public as well as private sector play important role. The public sector is concerned with planning and policy formulation and setting standards related to facilities, services and other areas. The private sector also plays an important role in tourism development. The functions of private sector, is to provide accommodation, food and beverage shopping entertainment and others. The public sector provide incentives to encourage the private sector to invest in tourism related activities and products at the destination. There has to be a good collaboration between public and private sectors for the success of tourism at any destination. The role of other stakeholders in sustainable tourism development cannot be undermined.

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