

# Andhra Pradesh Tourism

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**Abstract**—Tourism is an important economic activity that contributes to trade and growth in both urban and rural areas. Sustainable tourism is broadly defined as all types of tourism that are compatible with, or contribute to, sustainable development. Globally, tourism accounts for about 5% of direct GDP. Andhra Pradesh, with more than 600 tourist destinations, attracts one of the largest numbers of tourists in India. The state receives over 7 million visitors annually and is often referred to as the “Koh-I-Noor of India.” The Government of Andhra Pradesh aims to transform the state into an eco-friendly tourism hub while ensuring that the benefits of tourism reach all citizens, particularly those in rural areas. Tourism also plays a crucial role as a foreign exchange earner for the country. In 2022, foreign exchange earnings (FEEs) from tourism amounted to US \$17.611 billion. The number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India during 2022 increased to 6.44 million. Domestic tourism has shown remarkable growth as well: in 2022, India recorded 1,731.01 million domestic tourist visits, an increase of 155.45% compared to 677.63 million in 2021. Similarly, foreign tourist visits rose by 714.26%, from 1.05 million in 2021 to 8.59 million in 2022. Andhra Pradesh retained the third position for the second consecutive year in terms of domestic tourist visits among the top 10 states in India, recording 192.72 million visits in 2023. Based on extensive secondary data, this paper proposes a framework of approaches to sustainable tourism adopted by the state of Andhra Pradesh as a tool for development. The framework includes the state’s tourism role, cultural and natural heritage (glory), administrative policies, planning, and strategic initiatives undertaken by the Department of Tourism, State Tourism Organization, and APTDC. It also highlights tourism types and the key challenges faced.

**Index Terms**— Tourism, Destination, Tourism Policy, Sustainable Development.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is significantly stronger than the industrial sector. Employment opportunities in the

industrial sector are limited to those with education and skills. In contrast, the tourism field offers job prospects for individuals from all walks of life. This inclusivity enables people from diverse backgrounds to contribute to and benefit from the growth of the tourism industry. Additionally, the tourism sector often nurtures a vibrant community, promoting local cultures and traditions while providing a stable income for many. Numerous countries depend primarily on tourism as their main source of income. Moreover, these trends are evolving into powerful economic forces that heavily rely on the tourism sector.

Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC) has built an impressive infrastructure: hotels, resorts, transport fleet and amenities to promote an array of tourist activity. Excellent facilities that offer value for money includes hotels and resorts, wayside amenities, transport, information & reservation centers/kiosks, culturally vibrant sound & light shows, leisure boating, pleasure cruises with facilities such as conferencing and catering, and above all a journey of heritage discovery.

The objectives of the paper are

- To highlight the glory and heritage of Andhra Pradesh.
- To study the current status of the tourism industry in Andhra Pradesh.
- To analyze the policies for sustainable tourism adopted by the Government.
- To elicit different tourism designations.
- To identify the challenges faced by the tourism industry in Andhra Pradesh.
- To examine the future prospects of the tourism industry in Andhra Pradesh.
- To identify the drawbacks of Andhra Pradesh tourism.
- To suggest steps for the development of Andhra Pradesh tourism.

- Methodology

The present study is based on the secondary data. The data have been collected from the reports of the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh Tourism Authority. Various journals, reports, bulletins, magazines and books have also been referred to the present study.

#### Need for the study

Many studies have been made in tourism sector, but to fulfill the gap of bringing awareness among the tourism sector, the Government policies and growth and how far the employment opportunity is being implemented.

#### Meaning of Tourism:

Tourism is the act and process of spending time away from home in search of recreation, relaxation, and pleasure while utilizing the commercial provision of services. It encompasses a broad array of services, businesses, and organizations that contribute to the planning, facilitation, and enjoyment of travel experiences.

Tourism is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon that involves the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. It serves as a growth engine, stimulating investment in infrastructure, promoting sustainable development, and fostering the conservation of cultural and natural heritage.

It creates jobs, strengthens the local economy, contributes to local infrastructure development, and can aid in conserving the natural environment and cultural assets and traditions, as well as reducing poverty and inequality.

## II. INDIAN TOURISM INDUSTRY

Travel and tourism are the largest service industries in India, catering to heritage, cultural, medical, business, and sports tourism. The primary objective of this sector is to develop and promote tourism, maintain India's competitiveness as a tourist destination, and enhance existing tourism products to ensure employment generation and economic growth. India attracts millions of tourists each year and is regarded as one of the most popular tourist

destinations globally. The country's natural beauty and cultural heritage draw these visitors. Foreign tourists differ significantly from Indian tourists; the former are more inclined to seek entertainment, while Indians prefer visiting spiritual centers. This disparity is a key reason the tourism sector in our country has not developed as anticipated. To stimulate growth in the tourism sector, we must implement measures that resonate with public sentiment. Given the strong interest among Indians in spiritual centers, it is essential for the tourism department to identify the most popular spiritual sites and create attractions around them. We should install extensive signage to inform tourists about these spiritual centers and the scenic spots nearby. Many people hold a vague understanding of tourism, which is misleading. The tourism sector is far more robust than the industrial sector. Employment opportunities in the industrial sector are primarily available to those with education and skills, whereas the tourism field offers opportunities for individuals from all backgrounds.

Numerous countries depend solely on tourism as their main source of income. Moreover, these sectors are evolving into powerful economic forces that heavily rely on tourism.

## III. HISTORY OF INDIAN TOURISM SECTOR

Before the 19th century, tourism in India was primarily pilgrimage-based. Locations such as Varanasi, Haridwar, and Amritsar drew religious pilgrims, and ancient texts reference travelers like Fa-Hien and Hiuen Tsang, who visited India for spiritual and scholarly reasons. The Indian tourism industry began to develop in the 19th century when the Sir John Sargent Committee was established in 1945 to promote and enhance Indian tourism. In 1966, the ITDC (Indian Tourism Development Corporation) was founded and played a crucial role in the development, promotion, and growth of the country's tourism sector. However, the tourism industry did not gain momentum until the 1980s, when authorities made significant decisions. In 1982, the National Policy on Tourism was announced. A comprehensive plan for achieving sustainable tourism growth was proposed later in 1988 by the National Committee on Tourism. A National Action Plan was formulated in 1992, and the National Strategy for Tourism

Promotion was drafted in 1996. In 1997, the new Tourism Policy recognized the contributions of central and state governments, public sector initiatives, and the private sector to the growth of tourism. It was also acknowledged that improving tourism facilities requires the involvement of Panchayati Raj institutions, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, and the youth of the community.

#### IV. GROWTH OF TOURISM SECTOR IN INDIA

The growth of tourism in India has been significant over the past few decades, fueled by various factors including economic development, improved infrastructure, and government initiatives.

The tourism sector contributes around 7-8% to India's GDP. It is a major source of employment, providing jobs to millions directly and indirectly across various sectors. The tourism sector employs 40 million people in India, accounting for more than 7.7% of all Indian workers.

The anticipated yearly growth rate from 2014 to 2024 is 6.4%. Up until 2023, it is projected to have the third-fastest rate of growth among tourist destinations, with an average annual growth rate of 7.9%. In 2000, India received approximately 2.65 million foreign tourists. By 2019, this number surged to about 10.93 million, reflecting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of around 11% over nearly two decades.

Initiatives such as the e-Visa introduced in 2014 resulted in increased tourist arrivals. By 2019, around 2.89 million tourists used the e-Visa facility.

Tourism in India has grown from pilgrimage routes of ancient times to global branding with Incredible India. With strong government initiatives, modern infrastructure, niche segments (medical, eco, adventure tourism), and digitalization, tourism has become a pillar of India's economy and cultural diplomacy.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) published the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024 report, ranking India 39th out of 119 countries. The previous index from 2021 placed India at 54th.

#### V. ANDHRA PRADESH TOURISM SECTOR

On November 1, 1956, the state of Andhra Pradesh was established. The States Reorganization Act of 1956 divided the state of Hyderabad, merging its

Telugu-speaking districts (which form Telangana) with the Andhra state. In 2014, it was further divided into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Andhra Pradesh holds a unique position in India regarding tourism. Situated in the southeastern part of the country, it boasts a rich and diverse history reflected in its ancient architecture, vibrant cultural heritage, and stunning landscapes. Tourism in Andhra Pradesh has significantly contributed to its economy and has evolved over the years with various trends and developments. Our state is ideally positioned for the growth of the tourism sector, aligning with the diverse religious beliefs of our nation's population. No other state in India shares this distinction. The history of tourism in Andhra Pradesh dates back to when travelers from around the world visited the region for trade, cultural exchange, and spiritual enlightenment. Historical records from the Satavahana Dynasty period indicate the presence of trade and cultural relations with other regions. Due to its geographical location and rich cultural heritage, Andhra Pradesh has always been a melting pot of various cultures and traditions.

However, it was in the 20th century that tourism in Andhra Pradesh began to take a more structured form. Following India's independence in 1947, the state government recognized the potential of tourism as a catalyst for economic growth and began promoting various destinations within the state.

#### VI. ADMINISTRATIVE MECHANISM OF A.P TOURISM

The tourism sector in Andhra Pradesh functions under a well-defined administrative system to plan, promote, and regulate tourism activities. The mechanism involves both government departments and public sector undertakings, working in coordination with private stakeholders.

1. Administrative Head. The Minister for Tourism is the political head responsible for policy direction. The Principal Secretary / Secretary of Tourism is the administrative head, overseeing execution and inter-departmental coordination.
2. Promotional Wing (Andhra Pradesh Tourism Authority) - (APTA). Handles branding and international/domestic marketing. Organizes road shows, fairs, and tourism festivals. Manages

online portals, publicity campaigns, and social media promotion.

3. Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC) A government undertaking established in 1976. Works as the executive arm for tourism infrastructure development and service delivery.
4. District-Level Mechanism (District Tourism Officers) – DTO. Act as the nodal officers for implementing tourism schemes at district level. Coordinate with local administration, private operators, and NGOs. Monitor heritage site protection, tourism festivals, and publicity campaigns. District Collectors supervise major tourism projects and provide administrative support.

#### I. Andhra Pradesh Tourism Authority (Apta)

The Andhra Pradesh Tourism Authority (APTA) plays a vital role in promoting the state's tourism sector. Promotion of Tourism: APTA develops and implements strategies to attract tourists, both domestic and international. This includes marketing campaigns, participation in trade fairs, and collaborations with travel agencies.

##### Infrastructure Development

The authority works to enhance tourism-related infrastructure, such as roads, accommodations, and transportation facilities, to improve the overall visitor experience.

##### Regulation of Tourism Activities

APTA regulates tourism operations within the state, ensuring compliance with laws and safety standards for both service providers and tourists.

##### Development of Tourist Attractions

It identifies, develops, and maintains key tourist sites and attractions, including cultural, historical, and natural locations Research and Planning. The authority conducts research to better understand tourism trends, visitor preferences, and potential markets. This data supports strategic planning and policy formulation.

##### Capacity Building

APTA organizes training programs and workshops for stakeholders in the tourism industry, including guides, hoteliers, and other service providers, to enhance their skills and service delivery.

##### Sustainable Tourism Development

Promoting eco-friendly and sustainable tourism practices to preserve the environment and local culture

while benefiting the local economy is a significant focus.

##### Collaboration with Stakeholders

APTA partners with other government departments, local communities, and the private sector to cultivate a cohesive approach to tourism development and marketing. Information

##### Dissemination

It offers information to tourists regarding various destinations, travel itineraries, and cultural attractions through brochures, websites, and customer service centers Cultural Promotion

APTA strives to promote the rich cultural heritage of Andhra Pradesh, including festivals, cuisine, and local arts, thereby enhancing the overall appeal of the state.

#### II. Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (Aptdc)

APTDC was established in 1976 as a public sector undertaking with the aim of promoting tourism in Andhra Pradesh and developing related infrastructure. The Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC) serves as a pivotal entity for promoting and developing tourism in Andhra Pradesh. Tourism Promotion: APTDC actively promotes Andhra Pradesh as a tourist destination through marketing campaigns, participation in travel fairs, and public relations activities. It aims to increase tourist arrivals by showcasing the state's cultural heritage, natural beauty, and attractions.

Development of Tourist Infrastructure: The Corporation is involved in the development and management of tourism-related infrastructure. This includes building hotels, resorts, and other accommodation facilities to enhance the overall tourist experience.

Conducting Tours and Packages: APTDC organizes and offers various tour packages, including day tours, pilgrimages, eco-tours, and adventure trips, catering to different interests and demographics.

Coordinating with Stakeholders: The Corporation collaborates with local governments, private sector players, and community organizations to ensure the sustainable development of tourism and to promote local culture and heritage.

Resource Management: APTDC is responsible for managing and maintaining tourist sites and attractions to ensure they are accessible, safe, and well-preserved.

#### Tourism Research and Development:

The Corporation conducts studies and research to monitor tourism trends, understand visitor preferences, and assess the impact of tourism on local communities and the environment. This information aids in strategic planning.

#### Training and Capacity Building

APTDC organizes training sessions for tourism service providers, such as hoteliers, tour operators, and guides, to improve service quality and enhance the overall experience for visitors.

#### Regulation and Quality Assurance

The Corporation ensures that tourism services meet certain standards and regulations, providing a framework for quality assurance in the tourism sector.

#### Development of Pilgrim Tourism

APTDC promotes pilgrim tourism by developing facilities and services around important religious sites in the state, catering especially to devotees visiting significant temples.

#### Sustainability Initiatives

APTDC promotes sustainable tourism practices aimed at minimizing environmental impact and enhancing the socio-economic benefits of tourism for local communities.

#### Guided Tours

The Corporation offers guided tours and services for tourists, ensuring they have knowledgeable assistance while exploring attractions.

#### Sustainable Tourism Initiatives

APTDC works towards sustainable tourism practices that aim to minimize environmental impact and promote responsible tourism.

#### Transaction Coordination

It also coordinates and facilitates transactions involving tour bookings, hotel reservations, and transportation for a seamless tourist experience

### III. Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation Board

The Board of Directors oversees APTDC's daily operations. The Chairman and Managing Director are in charge of management. The overall management of APTDC is vested with the Board of Directors, headed by the Chairman. The board delegated its powers suitably to the chairman and Managing Director for the smooth and efficient functioning of the organization. The other officers and employees carry

out their duties diligently. The chairman and managing director/board may delegate powers from time to time.

**Policy Formulation:** The Board is responsible for formulating policies and guidelines to promote tourism development in Andhra Pradesh, ensuring they align with government objectives and tourism trends.

#### Strategic Planning

The Board develops short-term and long-term strategies for promoting tourism, which includes identifying key areas for investment, potential markets, and new tourism products.

#### Approval of Projects

The Board reviews and approves various tourism projects and initiatives proposed by APTDC, ensuring that they contribute positively to the state's tourism landscape.

#### Financial Oversight

It monitors and approves the budget for APTDC ensuring financial resources are allocated effectively to various tourism projects and operational activities.

#### Performance Evaluation

The Board assesses the performance of APTDC in achieving its goals and objectives, evaluating progress through regular reports and metrics.

#### Stakeholder Engagement

Engaging with stakeholders, including other government departments, local businesses, and community organizations, to ensure a collaborative approach to tourism development.

**Promotion of Sustainable Practices:** The Board encourages the adoption of sustainable tourism practices within the organization and promotes initiatives that benefit local communities and preserve natural resources.

#### Quality Assurance

Ensuring that the services and facilities developed or managed by APTDC meet quality standards to enhance the tourist experience.

#### Capacity Building Initiatives

Supporting training and development programs aimed at enhancing the skills of personnel engaged in tourism-related activities, including guides, hospitality staff, and local entrepreneurs.

#### Reporting and Accountability

The Board ensures that APTDC maintains transparency and accountability in its operations, preparing and presenting reports to the government

and stakeholders regarding its activities and financial performance.

These duties help APTDC effectively promote and develop tourism in Andhra Pradesh, fostering economic growth and cultural preservation in the state.

#### IV. The Governing Boards Of A.P Tourism

- Andhra Pradesh Tourism, Culture and Heritage Board (APTC&H Board)
- The State Tourism Promotion Board (STPB)
- State Tourism Promotion Committee (STPC)
- District Tourism Promotion Committee (DTPC)

#### Growth Of the Tourism Sector In Andhra Pradesh

‘The essence of incredible India’ is the tourism slogan of Andhra Pradesh. Recently, there has been a gradual shift in the mindset of people in our country. Indians are increasingly considering visiting spiritual centers alongside traditional tourist destinations. Thus, it is the right time to develop the tourism sector.

The tourism sector in Andhra Pradesh has witnessed remarkable growth in recent years, emerging as one of the leading contributors to the state’s economy. With its rich cultural heritage, spiritual centers, scenic landscapes, and long coastline, the state has become a major destination for both domestic and international travelers.

According to recent statistics, Andhra Pradesh recorded over 1.9 billion domestic tourist visits in 2022, securing the third position in India in terms of domestic tourist arrivals. This represented a strong recovery after the pandemic, with a growth rate of more than 100% compared to 2021. The state attracts nearly 11% of the total domestic tourists in India, highlighting its significance in the national tourism map.

Foreign tourist arrivals, though relatively smaller in comparison, are steadily recovering, with over 1.6 lakh visitors in 2022. Key destinations such as Tirupati, Araku Valley, Srisailam, Papikondalu, Amaravati, and Visakhapatnam continue to draw large numbers of visitors every year.

The state government has also taken proactive measures to boost tourism through new policies, infrastructure development, and public-private partnerships. The Tourism Policy 2024–29 aims to attract ₹25,000 crore in investments, enhance infrastructure, and increase tourism’s contribution to

the state’s GVA from 4.6% to 8%. With ambitious targets of achieving 20% annual growth, Andhra Pradesh is positioning itself as a premier tourism hub in South India.

#### Types Of Tourism In Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh, with its diverse geography, rich cultural heritage, and spiritual significance, holds immense potential for multiple forms of tourism. The state’s natural landscapes, historical sites, and vibrant traditions make it one of the most attractive destinations in India. To fully harness this potential, the following types of tourism are particularly suitable for development in Andhra Pradesh

##### 1. Religious and Pilgrimage Tourism

The state is home to world-renowned pilgrim centers such as Tirumala-Tirupati, Srisailam, Simhachalam, Annavaram, and Kanaka Durga Temple at Vijayawada.

Religious tourism remains the backbone of the sector and can be further strengthened with improved facilities and connectivity.

##### 2. Eco and Nature Tourism

With scenic locations such as Araku Valley, Lambasingi, Horsley Hills, and Papikondalu, the state is ideal for promoting eco-tourism.

Wildlife sanctuaries and national parks like Sri Venkateswara National Park and Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary also attract nature lovers.

##### 3. Beach and Coastal Tourism

Andhra Pradesh boasts a long coastline with beautiful beaches such as Rishikonda, Thamminapatnam, Parada, and Surya Lanka.

These locations are well-suited for beach resorts, water sports, and coastal recreation.

##### 4. Adventure Tourism

Hill ranges in Chittoor, Nallamala forests, and Eastern Ghats provide opportunities for trekking, rock climbing, camping, and paragliding.

Water-based activities like boating, kayaking, and rafting can also be promoted in suitable reservoirs and rivers.

##### 5. Heritage and Cultural Tourism

The state has rich historical and cultural landmarks such as Lepakshi, Amaravati, Chandragiri Fort, and Buddhist sites at Nagarjuna Konda.

Festivals, art forms like Kuchipudi, and traditional crafts further enhance cultural tourism potential

6. **Wellness and Ayurveda Tourism**  
With growing interest in holistic health, Andhra Pradesh can promote Ayurveda, naturopathy, yoga, and meditation centers, especially around Tirupathi and coastal regions
7. **Rural and Agricultural Tourism**  
The state's vibrant rural life, mango and spice plantations, and traditional farming practices can be showcased through farm tourism, offering visitors authentic village experiences
8. **Medical Tourism**  
Cities like Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, and Tirupathi are emerging as healthcare hubs, with well-equipped hospitals that can attract domestic and international patients.

**Areas For Development In Andhra Pradesh Tourism**  
Andhra Pradesh, with its diverse natural and cultural resources, has immense potential to become a leading tourism destination in India. However, several areas require focused development to fully harness this potential.

- First, infrastructure up gradation is essential, including improved roads, way-side amenities, accommodation facilities, and digital booking systems.
- Second, heritage and cultural preservation need more attention, as many temples, forts, and historical monuments require restoration and better interpretation for visitors.
- Third, eco and adventure tourism remain largely untapped; scenic locations like Lambasingi, Horsley Hills, and Papikondalu can be developed with trekking trails, camping facilities, and water sports.
- Fourth, the state's long coastline and beaches offer great scope for resorts, cruise tourism, and international-standard recreational facilities. Additionally, emerging fields such as wellness tourism, medical tourism, and rural/agri-tourism can be promoted with strategic investments and public-private partnerships.

By addressing these areas through planned interventions, Andhra Pradesh can enhance its competitiveness, create employment opportunities,

and significantly increase its share in both domestic and international tourism markets.

**Opportunities In Seaplane & Scenic Flight Tourism In A.P**

- Seaplane Tourism = Adventure + Accessibility to remote water-linked destinations
- Scenic Plane Tourism = Aerial sightseeing from land-based airports

Seaplanes and scenic flights are related concepts, yet they refer to different aspects of aviation. Seaplanes denote the type of aircraft designed for water take-offs and landings, while scenic flights pertain to the experience of flying specifically to view beautiful landscapes. The Andhra Pradesh government has shown interest in promoting tourism through innovative means, including seaplane services. If this initiative develops, Vijayawada could emerge as a key point for tourists seeking to explore the region's rich cultural and natural heritage from the air. Suitable

**Locations for Seaplane Tourism in Andhra Pradesh**  
Andhra Pradesh boasts several beautiful spots ideal for seaplane tourism, merging scenic views with unique water-based experiences. Here are a few notable locations:

**Visakhapatnam (Vizag)**

Renowned for its stunning coastline and beaches, Vizag is a popular destination. The aerial views of the Bay of Bengal can be breathtaking, and visitors might also explore nearby attractions like the Eastern Naval Command and the picturesque Araku Valley

**Vijayawada (Bezwada)**

Situated on the banks of the Krishna River, Vijayawada is an emerging hub for tourism and could be considered a potential site for seaplane operations. The Krishna River offers a scenic backdrop for seaplane tours, with flights providing stunning aerial views of the river, its banks, and the surrounding landscapes.

**Krishna River and Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary**

Taking a seaplane ride over the Krishna River and its surroundings showcases the rich biodiversity and picturesque landscapes. The wildlife sanctuary is home to a variety of flora and fauna.

**Kakinada**

This port city offers excellent seaplane experiences, especially with its nearby serene beaches and estuaries. The ride combines views of the coastal landscape and bustling port activities.

#### Godavari River Delta:

Exploring the delta via seaplane provides a unique vantage point of the lush greenery, rich agricultural lands, and winding river paths.

#### Peddaganjamvaram Lake

Near Amaravati, this tranquil lake is an ideal spot for scenic seaplane tours, featuring lush landscapes and peaceful waters.

#### Visakhapatnam to Bhimili beach

A short seaplane trip from Vizag to Bhimili offers tourists a scenic view of the coastline and a glimpse of historic Portuguese architecture.

#### Nellore

The area around Nellore boasts natural beauty with a range of water bodies and offers interesting seaplane routes.

Seaplane tourism is still developing in many parts of India, including Andhra Pradesh, so it's advisable to check for current availability and specific tour operators that provide these services.

#### Suitable Places for Scenic Flight Tourism In Andhra Pradesh

##### Visakhapatnam (Vizag)

Nestled between the Eastern Ghats and the Bay of Bengal, Vizag boasts beautiful beaches, rugged hills, and natural landscapes. Fly over popular spots like Rishikonda Beach, Yarada Beach, and the picturesque coastal line, as well as the scenic hills of the Araku Valley nearby

##### Araku Valley

Known for its lush greenery, coffee plantations, and picturesque landscapes, Araku is a popular hill station. A scenic flight can showcase the cascading waterfalls, rolling hills, and expansive coffee gardens. The views of the valley itself from above are breathtaking.

##### Horsley Hills

A tranquil hill station located in the Nallamala Hills, offering views of dense forests and stunning natural beauty. Scenic flights can highlight the valleys and dense forests surrounding the hills, along with the beautiful terrains.

##### Nallamala Forest

This forest area features rich biodiversity, including wildlife like deer, leopards, and various bird species. Scenic flights can offer views of the dense forest canopy, valleys, and wildlife habitats, providing excellent opportunities for nature photography.

##### Kakinada and Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary

Kakinada is a port city known for its backwaters, while the Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary is home to mangrove forests and diverse wildlife. A scenic aerial route can include views of the backwaters, estuaries, and the unique mangrove ecosystems along the coast. These locations in Andhra Pradesh provide a mix of coastal, urban, and mountainous landscapes that can be beautifully showcased through scenic flights

#### Suitable Destinations in A.P. For Seaplane Operations & Scenic Flights

1. Vijayawada to Tirupathi via Srisailem (SEAPLANES)
2. Araku Valley to Horsley Hills (SCENIC FLIGHTS)

### VI. SEAPLANES

#### Vijayawada To Tirupathi Via Srisailem (Seaplanes)

Taking a seaplane from Vijayawada to Tirupathi via Srisailem is an exhilarating option, as it offers a unique aerial perspective of the region. The aerial distance from Vijayawada to Srisailem is roughly 100 km, and from Srisailem to Tirupathi, it's about 170 km. A seaplane could cover these distances relatively swiftly, likely in around 30–45 minutes for each leg, though schedules may vary depending on the operator. A seaplane trip provides breathtaking views of the Krishna River, the forests surrounding Srisailem, and the hilly terrain leading up to Tirumala. Some packages might also include sightseeing stops, which can enhance the overall experience by allowing travellers to explore key attractions along the way. Furthermore, passengers can relish the thrill of flying low over picturesque landscapes, transforming the journey into not just a means of transportation but a memorable adventure in itself.

- Landing sites for seaplanes in the above destinations

#### Vijayawada

The Prakasam Barrage, a significant structure spanning the Krishna River, has been identified as a potential site for seaplane operations due to its water body. Discussions have been held regarding the establishment of a seaplane terminal or pads at this location to facilitate tourist flights. These developments could greatly enhance the tourism experience in the region, offering visitors unique aerial views of the picturesque surroundings. If

implemented, the seaplane service would not only boost the local economy but also attract adventure seekers eager to explore the beauty of the Krishna River from above.

#### Srisailam

The Srisailam Reservoir, one of the largest in India and located between the Nallamala Hills, is a prime candidate for seaplane operations due to its vast water area, potentially allowing for scenic flights. These flights could enhance the overall tourism appeal, providing unforgettable vistas that showcase the lush greenery and rugged terrain of the region. Additionally, the introduction of seaplane services may encourage the development of nearby infrastructure, such as hotels and restaurants, further benefiting the local community.

#### Tirupathi

The Kalyani Dam near Tirupathi is a significant water body considered for potential seaplane operations. The water depth and conditions are suitable for safe landings and takeoffs. Tourism authorities can transport passengers from Kalyani Dam to Tirumala via bus or van on the road. This seamless connection between Kalyani Dam and the sacred site of Tirumala could enhance the overall travel experience for visitors. Furthermore, the introduction of seaplane operations could significantly reduce travel time, attracting more tourists to this picturesque region.

#### Note

Proposing a seaplane trip that connects the prominent temples of Sri Durga in Vijayawada, Sri Mallikarjuna Swami in Srisailam, and Sri Venkateswara Swamy in Tirumala is an exciting concept that could enhance the pilgrimage experience and boost tourism in Andhra Pradesh. The goal is to promote religious tourism and offer a unique seaplane travel experience among three significant pilgrimage sites in Andhra Pradesh: Sri Kanaka Durga Temple in Vijayawada, Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple in Srisailam, and Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple in Tirumala

### VII. SCENICFLIGHTS

#### Araku Valley To Horsley Hills (Scenic Flights)

Scenic flights have gained popularity as a distinctive way to experience stunning landscapes from the sky. These aerial tours are designed to highlight specific landmarks, natural wonders, or picturesque vistas, typically conducted in aircraft such as helicopters,

small planes, or seaplanes. Scenic flight tourism from Araku Valley to Horsley Hills in Andhra Pradesh offers an exciting opportunity for visitors seeking to enjoy scenic aerial views of the region. Both Araku Valley and Horsley Hills are renowned for their breathtaking landscapes. lush forests, rolling hills, and captivating views. This form of travel could position Andhra Pradesh as a hub for adventure tourism, attracting thrill-seekers and nature enthusiasts.

The approximate air distance between Araku Valley and Horsley Hills is around 115 to 130 kilometers (about 71 to 81 miles). The ideal route would involve flying over the verdant forests and hills of Andhra Pradesh, which could take approximately 30–45 minutes. This represents a significant reduction in travel time compared to road travel, which can take several hours. A scenic flight would offer a unique perspective of these stunning terrains. This innovative mode of transport not only enhances convenience but also allows travelers to appreciate the natural beauty from above. As passengers soar through the sky, they can capture unforgettable moments and truly immerse themselves in the breathtaking vistas that characterize this enchanting part of Andhra Pradesh.

### VIII. INAUGURATION OF SEAPLANE AT VIJAYAWADA

On November 9, 2024, Andhra Pradesh made history as the first state in India to launch seaplane tourism, inaugurating a trial flight between Vijayawada and Srisailam.





#### IX. HOW TO CREATE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE YOUTH OF ANDHRA PRADESH THROUGH THE TOURISM SECTOR

If developed systematically, the tourism sector in Andhra Pradesh can provide employment to thousands of young people in diverse areas such as hospitality, transport, guiding, adventure activities, handicrafts, and digital platforms. This not only generates income for the youth but also promotes regional development and cultural pride.

The following areas are to be developed by the tourism department to create jobs for our youth

1. **Development of Tourist Infrastructure.** Construct and enhance roads, transport, accommodations, and communication facilities around tourist destinations. These projects generate direct employment in construction, maintenance, and local services.
2. **Promotion of Hospitality and Service Industry.** Encourage the establishment of hotels, restaurants, resorts, and home stays. Youth can job as managers, chefs, guides, drivers, and service staff.
3. **Skill Development and Training Programs.** Establish training centers for hospitality, tour guiding, language skills, and customer service.

4. **Encouraging Local Handicrafts and Arts.** Tourism hubs can promote local crafts, textiles, and souvenirs. This creates entrepreneurial opportunities for rural youth and artisans.
5. **Promotion of Eco-Tourism and Adventure Tourism.** The forests, hills, rivers, and beaches of A.P. can be developed for trekking, boating, camping, and eco-tourism. This provides opportunities for guides, adventure trainers, and local vendors.
6. **Digital and Startup Opportunities.** Youth can create apps/websites for tourism services (ticket booking, hotel reservations, and virtual tours). Startups in travel tech, photography, and cultural promotion can foster self-employment.
7. **Event and Cultural Tourism.** Organizing festivals, fairs, cultural shows, and food tourism generates seasonal jobs. Local youth can engage as performers, coordinators, event managers, and volunteers.
8. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in Tourism.** By inviting private investment in resorts, amusement parks, water sports, and heritage hotels, large-scale job creation becomes feasible.

#### X. GENERATING REVENUE FOR THE GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE TOURISM SECTOR

Tourism is one of the most dynamic engines of economic growth, offering immense potential for government revenue generation. The government can earn substantial income from tourism through entry fees at heritage sites, national parks, and museums, as well as taxes on hospitality services, transportation, and entertainment activities. Development of eco-parks, boating facilities, ropeways, adventure sports, and wellness centers not only attracts more tourists but also creates direct revenue streams through ticketing, rentals, and concessions. Additionally, public-private partnerships (PPPs) in developing resorts, theme parks, and convention centers can bring in investments while providing the government with lease charges and service taxes. Promotion of handicrafts, local cuisine, and cultural festivals generates sales revenue and GST collections, while home stays and rural tourism initiatives bring taxes from the unorganized

sector into the formal economy. With effective branding, improved infrastructure, and digital ticketing systems, tourism becomes a sustainable source of government income while simultaneously boosting employment and local livelihoods.

## XI. CHALLENGES IN ANDHRA PRADESH TOURISM

The tourism sector in Andhra Pradesh faces several challenges that can impact its growth and overall effectiveness. Here are some key challenges and recommendations shown below

### 1. Lack of Infrastructure Facilities

The Andhra Pradesh Tourism Department continues to face significant challenges due to inadequate infrastructure for tourists. While the government has been allocating substantial funds for infrastructure development, the progress on the ground remains insufficient. Essential facilities such as roads, signage, accommodation, rest areas, and connectivity to tourist destinations are still lacking in many areas.

#### Recommendations:

The state government should ensure effective utilization of sanctioned funds for tourism infrastructure projects.

Additional financial support should be sought from the Central Government under various tourism schemes and packages.

Priority must be given to creating modern facilities, including tourist information centers, hygienic amenities, and transport facilities at major destinations.

### 2. Lack of Regular Staff

A major drawback in the development of tourism in Andhra Pradesh is the shortage of regular employees in the Tourism Department. Currently, a large portion of the workforce is on deputation, which affects the efficiency and professionalism of the department. Many deputed staff members lack basic knowledge of tourism management, and in some cases, deputation is treated as a rehabilitation posting rather than a professional responsibility.

#### Recommendations:

The government should immediately appoint qualified and permanent staff in key positions across all sections of the department.

Specialized training programs should be conducted to improve the skills and professionalism of existing employees.

Recruitment policies must focus on hiring individuals with expertise in tourism, hospitality, marketing, and cultural heritage management.

### 3. Lack of Tourism Promotion

Tourism promotion in Andhra Pradesh is inadequate, which significantly hinders the sector's growth. Many people are not aware of the facilities and opportunities provided by different sections of the Tourism Department. The main reason is the lack of proper and wide publicity about the tourism services available, including accommodation, hotels, resorts, and tour packages.

#### Recommendations:

Launch large-scale publicity campaigns through print, electronic, and digital media. Develop promotional materials such as brochures, tourism guides, and mobile applications.

Collaborate with travel agencies, online platforms, and international tourism fairs to improve visibility.

Highlight unique attractions like heritage sites, beaches, temples, and eco-tourism destinations to create a strong brand image

### 4. Improper Maintenance of Tourism Assets

Though the Government of Andhra Pradesh has invested heavily in infrastructure and tourism-related assets, proper maintenance remains a major issue. Many government-run hotels, resorts, and other facilities are poorly maintained, which discourages tourists from using them for accommodation, food, and leisure.

#### Recommendations

Establish regular monitoring and maintenance mechanisms for all tourism assets.

Adopt public-private partnership (PPP) models for the management of hotels, resorts, and recreational facilities. Introduce quality standards and periodic audits to ensure cleanliness, safety, and service quality. Encourage professional hospitality management practices to enhance tourist satisfaction.

#### 5. Lack of Coordination among Departments

Tourism development in Andhra Pradesh is closely linked with multiple departments such as Archaeology, Endowments, and Forests. However, poor coordination among these departments creates hurdles in providing integrated facilities to tourists. This lack of synergy affects planning, infrastructure, and service delivery.

##### Recommendations:

Establish an Inter-Departmental Coordination Committee to streamline decision-making and joint initiatives.

Promote collaborative projects that integrate heritage conservation, pilgrimage facilities, and eco-tourism.

Conduct joint training and awareness programs to ensure uniform service standards across departments.

Implement a single-window clearance system for tourism-related proposals to avoid bureaucratic delays.

#### 6. Political Involvement

The functioning of the Tourism Department in Andhra Pradesh is often influenced by political involvement. Political leaders exert pressure on departmental officers, which sometimes restricts their ability to work independently. This hampers decision-making and affects the smooth implementation of tourism projects.

##### Recommendations:

Ensure transparency and accountability in decision-making through clearly defined policies.

Minimize political interference by strengthening administrative autonomy in the Tourism Department.

Establish an independent monitoring body to oversee tourism development projects.

#### 7. Lack of Public Involvement

Tourism in Andhra Pradesh suffers from limited public participation. The local population shows little interest in the tourism sector, and as a result, they fail to utilize the facilities provided by the department. Lack of awareness about the economic and cultural benefits of tourism prevents the community from actively contributing.

##### Recommendations:

Organize awareness campaigns to highlight the importance of tourism for local development.

Encourage community-based tourism initiatives, where locals participate in home stays, handicrafts, cultural performances, and eco-tourism activities.

Provide incentives for local entrepreneurs to start tourism-related businesses.

#### 8. Lack of Awareness of the Tourism Sector's Importance

A major drawback in Andhra Pradesh is that unemployed youth are largely unaware of the opportunities available in the tourism sector. With proper knowledge and guidance, they could gain self-employment in areas such as hospitality, guiding, transport services, and food businesses. Beyond employment, tourism also provides recreation and lifestyle benefits that remain underutilized.

##### Recommendations:

Conduct training and skill development programs focused on tourism and hospitality for unemployed youth.

Establish career counseling centers to educate students and graduates about self-employment opportunities in tourism.

Partner with universities, colleges, and skill development centers to integrate tourism studies into academic curricula.

Promote entrepreneurship in tourism through financial support, subsidies, and startup incubation.

#### 9. Loss in APTDC Buses

The Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC) operates buses to various tourist and pilgrim destinations across the state. However, in recent years, these services have been incurring significant financial losses. One of the primary reasons is the underutilization of buses, as many trips are not running with full ticket occupancy. In addition to this, the corporation bears heavy operational costs such as bus maintenance, driver salaries, and honorarium payments to tour guides. These factors together have created a considerable financial burden on the corporation.

To address this challenge, it is advisable that APTDC collaborates with the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC). By entering into a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the maintenance and operation of buses can be entrusted to APSRTC, which already has established expertise

and infrastructure in this domain. This arrangement would not only reduce the operational burden on APTDC but also ensure better resource utilization and service efficiency.

Recommendations:

MoU between APTDC and APSRTC A formal agreement should be signed, clearly outlining responsibilities regarding bus operations, revenue sharing, and service quality.

Shared Revenue Model Ticket revenue can be shared between APTDC and APSRTC in a mutually beneficial ratio to ensure sustainability.

Improved Marketing & Promotions Joint promotional campaigns should be launched to increase tourist awareness and improve occupancy levels.

Flexible Bus Scheduling Introduce seasonal and demand-based scheduling to avoid underutilization of buses.

Integration of Online Booking Systems Synchronize APSRTC's ticketing system with APTDC's tourism packages for convenience to travelers.

10. Competition with Neighboring States and the Way Forward

The Andhra Pradesh Tourism sector is facing stiff competition from neighboring states such as Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra. Among them, Tamil Nadu has emerged as a leading destination, offering high-quality services, well-developed infrastructure, and effective promotional strategies, thereby attracting a large share of both domestic and international tourists. In comparison, Andhra Pradesh has not been able to match this level of service delivery and marketing, which has resulted in a competitive disadvantage.

To address this challenge, it is essential for Andhra Pradesh Tourism to upgrade its facilities, adopt modern practices, and bring in reforms in its administrative approach. The time has come to redefine strategies and adopt innovative measures to strengthen the state's tourism brand and ensure sustainable growth in the sector.

Recommendations:

Infrastructure Up gradation Improve roads, accommodation, way-side amenities, and connectivity to major tourist destinations to match the standards of neighboring states.

Service Quality Enhancement Provide professional training to guides, hospitality staff, and tourism officials to ensure world-class service delivery.

Policy and Administrative Reforms Simplify procedures, adopt transparent systems, and introduce public-private partnership (PPP) models to enhance efficiency.

Aggressive Marketing & Branding Launch large-scale domestic and international promotional campaigns highlighting Andhra Pradesh's unique attractions such as Tirupathi, Araku Valley, Horsley Hills, and heritage sites.

Cross-State Collaboration Organize joint tourism circuits with neighboring states to attract more visitors through integrated packages.

Digital Integration – Upgrade online booking, virtual tours, and mobile-friendly platforms to improve accessibility and tourist convenience.

## XII. CONCLUSION

Andhra Pradesh holds immense potential to emerge as a leading tourism hub in India, with its rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and diverse attractions. However, realizing this potential requires a sustainable, inclusive, and well-structured approach. By adopting best practices in sustainable tourism, addressing institutional challenges, and empowering employees with skills and resources, the state can overcome existing barriers and accelerate progress. If guided by strong leadership, collaboration, and accountability, the tourism sector can surpass other public sector organizations in its impact, becoming a pillar of economic growth, cultural preservation, and community empowerment. With the right reforms, Andhra Pradesh can not only compete with but also surpass neighboring states, ensuring that tourism becomes a true driver of prosperity for present and future generations.

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