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An overview of policies & schemes of Govt. of India to promote rural sector & tourism

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Abstract

India is a country of villages & showcasing the rich rural life art, culture & heritage in villages in responsible manner would be mutually beneficial since tourism & conservation complemented each other. Tourism growth potential can be harnessed as a strategy for Rural Development. The development of a strong platform around the concept of rural tourism is definitely useful for a country like India, where almost 74% of the population resides in its 7 million villages.

After independence, for the development of rural society, particularly to develop the socio-economic life of the rural poor, many schemes and programs were launched from time to time. Rural tourism schemes in India envisage encouraging & promoting the villages that have inherent strength in art, craft, handloom & textiles. The main purpose is too beneficial the local community economically & socially, diversifying the local development opportunities as well as enable interaction between tourists & local population for a mutually enriching experience. The promotion of rural tourism is also aimed to reduce the migration from rural to urban areas. The main focus of Research paper is to present different schemes of Department of Rural Development, State Governments and other concerned Departments of the Government of India.

Keywords: Rural, Tourism, Programs, Culture, Community

Introduction

Tourism growth potential can be harnessed as a strategy for rural development. The development of a strong platform around the concept of rural tourism is definitely useful a country like India where rural population (% of total population) in India was last measured at 67.97 in 2013, according to the World Bank. Rural population refers to people living in rural areas as defined by national statistical offices. It is calculated as the difference between total population and urban population.

Rural tourism has great potential due to a wide variety of nature, culture & special interest activities. It is a very active sector. Rural development is a process integrated with economic and social objectives, which must seek to transform rural society and provide a better and more secure livelihood for rural people. Rural development, therefore, is a process of analysis, problem identification and the proposal of relevant solutions. This process is usually encompassed within a programme or a project which seeks to tackle the problem identified.

Rural development strategies usually take the form of programmes which implement projects in a specific rural area. Such programmes form the basis of most government and non-government efforts to assist rural areas, and they include both agricultural and non-agricultural projects, e.g., maternal and child health programmes. Specialized staff supply the expertise required, and ministerial or other institutional budgets provide the necessary financial resources. External aid is also usually channeled into such programmes in the rural areas.

Concepts of rural tourism

the concept of rural tourism has a noble cause, it is another kind of sustainable tourism that exploits resources in: rural region causes little or no harmful impact, and generates increasing benefits to rural areas in terms of rural productivity, employment, improved distribution of wealth, conservation of rural environment and culture, local people's involvement and a suitable way of adapting traditional beliefs and value to modern times.

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Meaning & definition of Rural Tourism

To understand the rural tourism, we have to divided rural tourism in two category

Rural: National Sample survey Organisation (NSSO) Defines Rural Are follows

- An area with a population density of up to 400 per square km.
- A minimum of 75% of male working population involved in agriculture.
- Villages with clear surved boundries but not municipal board

Tourism

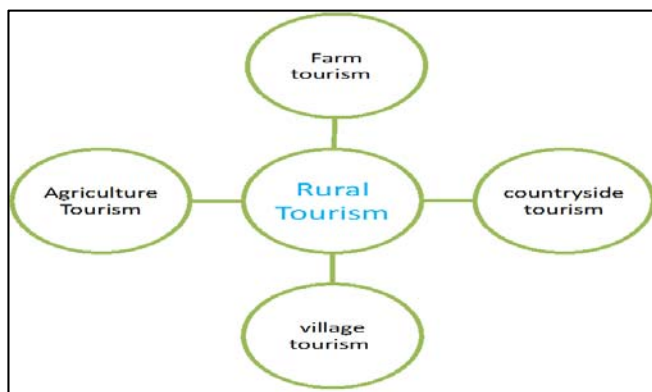
- visit to places of interest
- Travel for recreation, leisure, religious or family for a limited duration.

Definitions of Rural Tourism

- It is done in rural areas, meaning the environment consisting of natural landscapes, mainly agriculture in nature
- Rural tourism brings of people of different culture, faith, language and life style close to one another.
- Rural tourism provides peace, relaxation and absolute rest.
- The tourism serves to get away from hectic and stressful life in the big city where you can enjoy the vacation.

New Trends in Rural Tourism

Rural tourism has great potential due to a wide variety of nature, cultural & special interest activities. It is a very active sector. It has many new forms which are in trends are follows:



Objectives

- To make clear the concept of “Rural Tourism
- Provide more jobs in rural sector.
- Development of the rural areas infrastructure etc.
- Enhancement in the standard of living of the people in rural areas.
- To study Govt. projects, schemes and programs of rural tourism & Rural Development.

Role and function of the Government

The Government's policy and programmes have laid emphasis on poverty alleviation, generation of employment and income opportunities and provision of infrastructure and basic facilities to meet the needs of rural poor. The Ministry of Rural Development in India is the apex body for formulating policies, regulations and acts pertaining to the development of the rural sector. Agriculture, handicrafts,

fisheries, poultry, and diary are the primary contributors to the rural business and economy. The introduction of Bharat Nirman, a project by the Government of India in collaboration

The main objective of rural development has been to remove poverty of the people and fill the widened gap between the rich and the poor. This has been also vocalized in the policy of the government which says: said, ‘Rural poverty alleviation has been the primary concern in the economic planning and development process of the country ... rural development which encompasses the entire gamut of improvement in the overall quality of life in the rural areas can be achieved through eradication of poverty in rural areas’.

Keeping in view the planning policy in mind, various schemes of development, especially the development of agriculture, the main occupation of the rural people, have been introduced.

A. Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojna

On August 28, 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana. This scheme was announced when he gave his first Independence Day speech on August 15, 2014. This is a prestigious financial inclusion programme.

B. Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

On 24 September 2014, Prime Minister approved the Swachh Bharat campaign, which was a modification of the Nirmal Bharat Programme, launched by the previous Government. The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was launched formally on October 2, 2014, the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The objective is to make India a clean India by 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The plan is to provide toilet and sanitation facilities in all rural and remote areas, to create public awareness of cleanliness, to clean roads, streets, encroachments and make India one of the cleanest countries of the world.

C. Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojna

On October 11, 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana. According to this Yojana, each MP will take the responsibility of developing three villages by 2019. The idea is to make India's villages to be fully developed with physical and institutional infrastructure. There are certain guidelines for this scheme, which has been formulated by the Department of Rural Development. The Prime Minister released the guidelines on October 11, 2014 and requested all MPs to develop one model village by year 2016 in their constituency and two more by 2019.

Schemes and Policies for development of Rural Sector

(A) 20-Point Programme

This has been a major programme of rural development encompassing various aspects of rural people. This programme is associated with former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who introduced it in July 1975 for reducing poverty and economic exploitation and for the uplift of weaker sections of society. She gave the slogan ‘Garibi Hatao’ during parliamentary elections.

The important goals of this programme were:

1. Welfare of the rural masses.
2. Increase in rural employment.

3. Minimum wages to landless labourers.
4. Uplift of the SC and ST people.
5. Growth of housing facilities.
6. New programmes of family planning.
7. Extension of primary health facilities.
8. Making primary education more effective.
9. Welfare of women and children.
10. Some other programmes—drinking water facilities, public distribution system, increasing power production etc.

(B) Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)

The programme was launched by the Centre in March 1976 as a major instrument of the government to alleviate poverty. Its main feature was to enable selected families to cross the poverty line in a given time-frame by taking up self-employment in various activities like agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, weaving and handicrafts and services and business activities.

(C) Training Rural Youths for Self-Employment (TRYSEM)

This scheme was launched in 1979 to provide technical skills (training) to rural youths (between 18-35 years) living below the poverty line, to enable them to seek employment in fields of agriculture, industry, services and business activities.

(D) Food for Work Programme (FWP)

This programme was introduced in 1977 by the then Janata government with the objective to provide employment to the unemployed/underemployed village persons during the slack season. The wages paid to the workers were in kind, i.e., food grains.

(E) National Rural Employment Programme (NREP)

This is redesigned programme of FWP, planned for creating additional employment opportunities in the rural areas with the help of surplus food grains. It was started in 1980 as a part of the Sixth Plan (1980-85). This programme was especially for those rural people who largely depended on wage employment but had no source of income during lean agricultural period. PRIs were actively involved in this programme.

(F) Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP)

Special schemes were formulated by some states such as Maharashtra and Gujarat to provide increasing employment opportunities to rural people, especially landless people. Maharashtra started the Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS) for the unemployed in rural areas. The Gujarat government's scheme provided for unskilled jobs to the unemployed workers on different projects. This scheme was later on merged into JRY along with NREP.

(G) Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY)

This programme came into existence in April 1989 with the merger of the NREP and the RLEGP. Under this scheme, it was expected to provide at least one member of each poor family (BPL family) an employment for 50 to 100 days in a year at a work near his/her residence. About 30 per cent of the jobs under this programme were reserved for women. The scheme was implemented through Village Panchayats.

(H) Antyodaya Yojana

The Hindi word 'Antyodaya' is a combination of two words—ant meaning end or bottom level and udaya meaning development. Thus, as a whole, it implies the development or welfare of a person standing at the end of the queue (lowest level), that is, the poorest of the poor.

(I) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS)

It was estimated about 70 per cent of rural population was still deprived of the basic necessities of life. For the purpose of extending the benefits to rural people, a new scheme was launched and legislation was enacted under the name 'National Rural Employment Guarantee Act' (NREGA).

This scheme was initially started in 200 districts of the country from February 2006 and from April 2008, it has been extended to cover all the districts of the country. The main objective of the scheme is to provide 100 days employment to rural unemployed people. In this scheme, employment to women is also provided.

New Policies of Govt. of India

- Atal Pension Yojna (APY)
- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)
- Pradhan Mantri Jeewan Jyoti Beema Yojana (PMJJB)
- Pradhan Mantri Surksha Beema Yojana (PMSBY)
- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)
- Mudra Bank Yojana
- Garib Kalyan Yojana

Some Other Development Schemes

1. Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Sadak Yojana (PMAGSY)

It focuses on integrated development of 100 villages with a 50 per cent population of SCs.

2. Bharat Nirman Yojana

It was launched in 2005 for building infrastructure and basic amenities in rural areas. It comprises of six components—rural housing, irrigation, drinking water, rural roads, electrification and rural telephony.

3. Indira Awas Yojana

It is one of the six components of Bharat Nirman Yojana. It was introduced in 1985-86. It aims to help built or upgrade the households of people living under BPL.

4. Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)

It was launched on 3rd December, 2005. The main objective of this scheme was fast track development of cities across the country. It was focused especially on developing efficient urban infrastructure service delivery mechanism, community participation and accountability of urban local bodies and other agencies towards citizen.

5. Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY)

This programme was announced in June 2009 with an objective to make the country slum-free.

6. National Rural Health Mission

It was launched to make basic health care facilities accessible to the rural people.

7. National Rural Livelihood Mission

It is meant to eradicate poverty by 2014-15.

8. National Food Security Scheme

On the pattern of MNREGS, the central government is trying hard to bring a bill in the monsoon session (2013) to provide guarantee for food to the poor people, although it has already issued an ordinance in this regard.

Conclusion

Rural India has much to offer to the world rich in tradition of arts, crafts, and culture. Rural India can emerge as important rural tourist destination. The most important purpose of rural tourism development is economic and social development of the rural areas.

The above initiatives of the Indian Government have been designed to facilitate the farmer to think beyond his fields and farms. Although, the policies have been formulated taking into consideration the rural scene in India, the pertinent question that remains is – Is rural India aware of these policies?

In India, the Ministry of Rural Development (MORD) has been implementing a wide spectrum of programmes which are aimed at poverty alleviation, employment generation, infrastructure development and social security. MoRD programmes have significant potential for both at the local and global levels. Integrated development of rural areas is one of the abiding tasks before the Government of India. Addressing the challenge of unemployment in the rural areas of the country is central to the development of rural sector for ameliorating the economic condition of the people.

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