

TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world that makes it crucial to ensure that its development avoids as much damage as possible to the hosting destinations and is sustainable.

Tourists might be environmentally conscious throughout the holiday experience, starting from choosing destination to sharing experience and knowledge gained. They might also travel purely for recreational purposes with little other conscious thought, apart from recollecting the enjoyment of the last holiday and deciding on where to go the next time.

Depending on various scenarios, tourists may have different reasons that may influence their holiday choice such as beach, culture, health, nature-based tourism or many others.

This type of tourism attracts a particular market of visitors who desire to visit vulnerable destinations and who prefer or do not mind long-haul flights or high costs.

However as a trend it may appear to be a contradictory issue, since it can be relatively sustainable as well as unsustainable, depending on disappearing attraction, type of tourists, etc.

It could be argued that, the main negative impact is the publicity of disappearing destinations. While it may increase awareness and promote a more environmentally friendly way of living, it could also attract more visitors seeking to experience attractions, before they are gone forever (Burns et al, 2009 cited in Lemelina et al, 2010). This may further damage fragile environment and increase negative tourism impacts.

In addition, it could persuade undecided potential tourists to prioritise disappearing destinations, when selecting holidays.

It is clear that the main attraction is visiting endangered species of flora and fauna; and natural or social heritage that may disappear. It could also be a society or culture as a whole, in addition the meaning of heritage can be variously interpreted depending on person and his/her values.

It became clear that endangered species do attract additional tourists markets such as last-chance tourism and possibly dark tourism tourists.

In general, tourism is very beneficial for the Cuban economy and it is aiming to attract more environment conscious tourists, who are willing to spend longer vacations and pay premium prices.

Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability."

According to the concept it can be suggested that sustainable management can also be implemented in last-chance tourism.

From discussion above it can be concluded that last-chance tourism might be sustainable, depending on destination, its management, tourist type etc. In the future, the development of last-chance tourism trend is more likely to continue, due to at least one reason - climate change, which may increase the number of disappearing attractions. It is also likely that if no regulatory measures applied, tour operators may over-crowd the limited capacity of last-chance destinations and contribute to damage. Therefore, there might be a need to identify more last-chance destinations that meet interests of wider visitor market, spreading tourists according to their interests.

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Rich Jain Legacies

The script in which earliest Jain documents are found, is known to have existed for a very long time in the subcontinent, and its origins are not agreed on. It survived from ancient times, known as Brahmi, it is the earliest deciphered script found in the subcontinent.

The earliest epigraphic references to the Jains, such as the 7th pillar edict of Ashoka or the inscription at Hathigumpha are also in Brahmi.

Brahmi is primarily associated with the Prakrit languages. This is an important insight into ancient Indian society; those who wrote in Prakrits must have been witnessing and possibly influencing common society closely.

Classical scriptures in Sanskrit were orally taught and had to be memorised permanently; this took a long time. It resulted in them being limited to only those who dedicatedly learnt such material. By comparison, material written in a common language using a common script was easier to transmit. In this way, people who would otherwise be caught up in daily life, got access to philosophical literature easily, which in turn, had the effect of altering the way they lived.

In this light, the role of Mahavira, the Buddha, and Jains and Buddhists in general, becomes clearer: That the Jain and Buddhist ways of life took hold in the subcontinent is evident in the prominent threads of non-violence and systematic vegetarianism that India has today.

All contemporary Indic writing systems, as well as many other Asian writing systems are traced back to Brahmi. All these scripts and the languages written using them were nourished and patronised by Jain and Buddhist ascetics. The descendants of Brahmi include scripts used in Balinese, Javanese, Tibetan, Burmese, Prachalit Nepali, and Thai. The earliest writing system for Tamil, for example, is thought to be indicated in some Jain works as 'Damili'. Damili is thought to

be a reference to the Tamil-Brahmi system. Inscriptions found on cave-temples also indicated a close early relationship between Tamil-Brahmi, Jain religious writing, and proto-Tamil.

Similarly, some of the earliest preserved writing in Kannada are? Jain religious works. In parallel, the writing system in Kannada is derived from Brahmi. Moreover, most of early Kannada literature in general were composed by Jains. The three genres of Kannada poetry, Pampa, Ranna, and Ponna were all Jains.

Jain writing, however, does not exclude Sanskrit. One of the most important Jain documents, the Tattvartha Sutra is also the first Jain scripture to be written in Sanskrit. This is the most important scripture considered canon by all sects of Jains. Its author, Umasvati, is often described as the first Jain author in Sanskrit. However, anecdotes about later Jain authors such as Siddhasena Divakara reveal another side. In one such account, Siddhasena Divakara is either exiled or instructed to penance for 12 years for offering to translate all Jain literature to Sanskrit. This account is found much later after Siddhasena's time. The story may or may not have a basis in an actual event, but it does indicate that there existed at some point a marked difference and rivalry between the Sanskrit and Prakrit traditions.

In any case, Sanskrit eventually got integrated into the Jain sphere. As younger languages emerged, Jain thinkers pioneered them as well. For example, one Banarasidas has many works in one dialect of Hindi. These are considered to be among the important early works in the language. Hemachandra, an important Jain ascetic and teacher in the 12th century CE, is considered a seminal figure in the development of both the Rajasthani and Gujarati languages.

-Dhruva Ghosh

■ DR BANARSI LAL

Women farmers work hard to grow and process the food. In order to reduce the rural poverty and achieve the food and nutritional security, there is dire need to promote the gender equality and empower the rural women. The women farmers play the key role in achieving the sufficient food grain production. If women are empowered with the same opportunity as men have, then food security can significantly improve. It is a complex problem but with the comprehensive approach, it can be achieved. In agricultural sector diverse opportunities can be created to empower them. They have less access of land and machinery. They are heavily involved in the domestic activities which are hidden economically. Empowering women is key to food security. Empowering women by strengthening a range of assets is critical for enhancing their welfare and improving the status of future generations. There is need to enhance the land rights of women. India is predominantly an agrarian economy. Women are the backbone for the rural development and they are considered as the vital part of the Indian economy. Women farmers contribute enormously to the Indian agriculture and allied sectors such as livestock production, post-harvest operations, horticulture, fishery, forestry, sericulture etc. This has been proved by various studies. Women comprise the largest percentage of the workforce in the agricultural sector but they do not have control over all the land and productive resources.

Women constitute the 43 per cent of the world's agricultural labour force which increases to about 70-80 per cent in some countries like India. Women are the major producers of food in India. Around 70 per cent of the agricultural work is performed by the women. Women farmers contribute enormously to the Indian agriculture and allied sectors such as livestock production, post-harvest operations, horticulture, fishery, forestry, sericulture etc. Agricultural extension is one such effort taken by the government and non-government organisations that aims at reaching to farmers. The efforts include bringing about a positive change in knowledge, attitude and skills of the farmers by providing training and technical advice and also assisting them in taking decisions in adoption of new research results. Importantly, the clientele of such programmes and efforts is inclusive of both farmers and farm women. Managers of these programmes often consider men as farmers and women as farmer's wife thereby systematically

marginalizing and underestimating women's productive role in agriculture. The agricultural extension service in India mainly focuses on male farmers and it has failed to tackle the great structural problem of invisibility of female farmers. Women farmers are bypassed by male extension workers. It would be correct to state that women farmers in India have failed to get their due share in extension services apropos their contribution to the Indian agriculture. Extension services in India need to be refined, modified and redesigned so as to reach farm women effectively. The purpose of agricultural extension services can be achieved for sustainable rural development only if sincere attempts are made to provide and improve farm women's access to the available extension services thereby leading to their technological empowerment. It has been observed from the last three decades that both the male and female labour force in agriculture is declining. The number of men in agriculture has decreased from 81 per cent to 63 per cent and women from 88 per cent to 79 per cent. The extension machinery in India can be classified in four heads namely (a) Extension services offered by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), (b) Extension services provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, (c) Extension services provided by the Ministry of Rural Development and (d) Extension services offered by Non-Government Organisations (NGOs). Out of four extension systems, training and visit is the major extension system operating in India under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare for more than 30 years. Although this programme is in operation for so long, it still lacks necessary inbuilt structural arrangements for reaching female farmers. Contact farmers involved in this very programme are mostly male farmers and the numbering of female farmers is very low. It was reported that the extension needs of women were often perceived by the extension agents to be in the disciplines of home science, nutrition, childcare, tailoring etc. The information regarding to new farm technologies was seldom passed on to them. Various rural development programmes were launched in India from community approach in 1950s to special target group approach in 1970s. None of these programmes addressed to the specific needs of women farmers and remain concentrated on male farmers. In 1980s integrated approach was started that attempt to integrate women in the mainstream of development by structurally making them bene-

ficiaries up to an extent of 40 per cent. A number of services supportive for women's socio-economic empowerment were implemented. These approaches were not directed towards fulfillment needs for agriculture-related services and concentrated mainly on the issue of employment and social empowerment. In 1993-94, a project aimed at gender-gap reduction among women farmers of the Northern India was launched by the government of India. The limited coverage of this project shortens its impact. Such programmes need to be appreciated for being the pioneering one in this regard. ICAR is another important system for transfer of farm technologies all over the country. This system has operated through various frontline extension programmes, all of which now have been merged with the Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) since April 1996. In KVKs, provision for special training programmes for women are made. These programmes restricted mainly in the areas like home economics and ignored women's productive role in agricultural operations. The efforts made so far in this direction appear to be localized and remain largely invisible. Involvement of women in agricultural development process by ICAR has been further strengthened when the concept of Farming Systems approach to research/extension was institutionalized by several ways including assessment and refinement of agricultural technologies through institutionalizing village linkage programme. Still these efforts are very limited to make a substantial dent on the overall agricultural scenario. From the very beginning Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) have involved women component in their mandate. They too have given more emphasis on issues related to social empowerment of women. They also have given little attention on women's role in agriculture. Therefore, all the major extension systems in India, the participation and benefits accrued to women farmers are minuscule.

There is a need to delineate and discuss the reasons attributable to poor access of farm women to extension services in India. The causative factors found were lack of approach of farm women to extension centres, less communication channel of farm women, less income to purchase farm inputs by farm women, lack of land, inconvenient time and location of meetings, gender biasness by extension staff, lack of gender-appropriate technology and lack of authority to them. The other factors were low farm women literacy, lack of tendency to innovate and make decisions in farming, less women workers in

extension services and lack of structural arrangements for women farmers in extension programmes. Indian women despite playing an important role in agricultural production, processing and storage, generally lack the right to property and the control of resources usually pass on from men to men keeping women out of the chain of inheritance. This makes them the largest group of landless labourers. Certain structural changes need to be done in the existing extension machinery of India. Changes in attitude of professionals towards women need to be done. In order to improve the access of farm women, it is prime importance to sensitize the concerned extension workers, extension managers, development administrators and policy makers with the realities of farm women, so that they can be considered as an equally strong force for agricultural and rural development on the same footing as men. Attitudinal changes of extension workers, extension managers and all other concerned with agricultural development efforts cannot be ruled out in order to bring significant improvement in the women's access to extension system in India. In India, where these functionaries are mostly males, gender sensitization training can be one of the methods to bring out these attitudinal changes. The efforts for improving the women's access to extension services need to be directed towards bringing out some institutional changes in the present machinery of extension in India. Farm women should be provided with greater access to credit facilities and other inputs by simplifying the existing procedures suiting to the educational levels of women folk. Flow of credit, inputs and marketing facilities to farm women can be done through women's cooperatives and Mahila Mandals. Different extension agencies are focusing on a limited scale to integrate farm women in mainstream of development efforts. The efforts of these agencies need to be managed more efficiently so as to have a synergistic effect to solve the problem of poor women access to extension services. The planners should give due recognition to women farmers in designing the development programmes. There is also the need to recruit more extension functionaries in all levels of agricultural extension system. Certain institutional adaptations in the present extension system should be made for a positive step in this direction.

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Are we a puppet for politicians?

■ MAHADEEP SINGH JAMWAL

We are seized of the facts that in Democracy people themselves elect and select their representatives. A society and a system can be called democratic only when the democratic and socio-economical aspirations of the people are met. Indian politics is dangerous. More than you and I can think. It is the politics, where politicians can't see the differences between a "need" and a "want", but the politics that separates people on the basis of their religion, caste, color and creed and unifies them as a "vote bank". The politicians make a brow ha-ha of their words without any correct statistics, just to fool the people out there. What are the major problems in India and what's the root cause for those problems, we never think of it and politicians believe in blame games only. Some of the root problems, we can list as: Corruption, poverty, unemployment, irresponsible politicians, selfish people like us (we never question our representatives). Our constitution does not suggest any measures to tackle it. Advantages are personal, most of the politicians are corrupted, and disadvantages are that most of the politicians are very little educated. Their mindsets are backdated. There are various ethical and strategic concerns in Indian politics which hinder the developmental process. Not much emphasis on the "Objective Plan", the ruling party is concerned only on its propagation plan which has different goals from the previous ruling party and this leads to deviations from the "Objective Plan". Ethical concerns like corruption, Bank frauds and biases in decision making due to vested interests is a cancer to the country's economy because the same capital on which tax evasion occurs is

used for investment in India again and it goes on. The fact that no party is corruption free is disheartening. Parties need to think above political interests and for the development of the country. If we compare the quality of sessions of Lok Sabha in present time and at the time of Independence, we will find the lack of rationality and tolerance/convergence which was present earlier. Public opinion turns into votes after every election and we call it democracy. Since public opinion can inform and affect the vote, politicians keep careful tabs on 'public opinion'. Indian Politics has been influenced to a great extent by social media after 2014. A single post, be it fake or true, might influence the perspective of an ordinary person. Social media supplements a wave. Over the course of years, electronic media emerged immensely and started serving us political news in the decorated form. TRP of a channel is based on how much a channel can politicize an issue. More is the 'Political Masala', more is the TRP. Analytical ability of people has been impacted. People started showing interest to go after a wave. They are ready to elect even an incompetent person to represent their constituencies. They have become more interested in the paramount leader; it is a good thing, but electing local legislators blindly is against the spirit of democracy. A party is continuously taking advantage of the situation of another party which is almost lacking good leadership. A color looks extra bright when there is no color around. Influence of religion has grown in politics in last few years. Courtesy and decency have rarely found any space in politics. Throwing verbal garbage has become a tendency of political speakers. Making accusing statements against their

opposing leaders is only aim to earn claps and whistles from managed gatherings and an attempt to convert them to votes. If people can give votes in return for free water; free electricity, free laptops, free wifi, and then what is the need for politicians to make an effort to improve the education system, health facilities, if people want to hear that I will give you free ration, electricity, free cash installments then why the hell politicians will say that I will increase the earning capacity of common man. If people want to hear that Main 'Shamshan Ghat' banaunga, then what is the need to say main school, college aur hospital banaunga. As simple as that! When you try to analyze the politics of India, you may get a bit disheartened upon realizing the fact that all political parties in India are more or less same in their motives and keep the vote-bank politics in mind. All they care for is votes and power. They just aim for more and more accumulation of power. It's a harsh reality that no political party or no any leader in India feels the need to prioritize development and eradication of social and economical problems above anything else but minting ideas on how to keep common man involved in controversial issues rather than the burning issues of the country. If we find a political party raising their voices for Hindu, it's not that they are concerned for them, if we find a political party raising their voice for Minorities; it's not that they are concerned for them. This is a very harsh reality that whatever any political party in power does, it does so by keeping the vote-bank politics in mind. All they care for is votes and power, and just show off of the concern of people. The politicians use people as a puppet.

We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone

■ VINOD CHANDRASHEKHAR DIXIT

To promote kindness throughout the world and 13th November is observed as World Kindness Day. The world we live in today has been through a lot of things from world wars to epidemics, but one thing which remained constant throughout was resilience and kindness. Kindness is basically being polite, compassionate and thoughtful. Every religion and faith teaches its followers to be kind. Even nature has its own way of showing kindness. For instance, the trees grow fruits for us and provide us with shade. One must not see kindness as a core value but as a fundamental behavioural element. There is no doubt that kindness always wins and it has been proven time and again by people. Kindness has a lot of benefits which includes increased happiness and a healthy heart. It slows down the ageing process and also enhances relationships and connections, which will indirectly boost your health. Kindness is spreading happiness to make other's day better and by making them smile.

People who do not know you will begin to like you right away. Kindness is the most valuable characteristic that comes at no cost. Even someone who has no money and wears only a rag on his body might be generous to others.

Everyone should be kind to others. Kindness encompasses a wide range of behaviours. Integrity, empathy, respect, and decency are all essential components. Being modest shows your humility and lays the groundwork for kindness. Generally, kind people are described as those who respect their elderly and younger people, who are soft spoken and when they make big mistakes, they forgive people very easily. If a person finds a kind person, then he should respect him as if he respects his parents or other loved ones. Kindness gives us lot of benefits in life. Kindness can bring good health for you because doctors have approved that showing kindness towards everyone can help someone survive for many years without any disease. It can reduce the problem of stress, depression or any other anxiety which you may have, because kindness will make people happy and they will be happy, you will be automatically happy that your stress and many others will reduce problems. Kindness can also bring us a good amount from customers. It is very clear that when an investor wants, he should be kind and this is what the investor gets affected and provides his money to your business. There are many reasons why kindness is important. First, it creates a positive ripple effect. When we are kind to others, they are more likely to be kind to

us. Second, it builds strong relationships. When we show kindness to others, they feel appreciated and valued. This can lead to deeper and more meaningful relationships.

It is often called the golden rule because it asks us to treat others the way we want to be treated. Kindness is about helping others, even if there is nothing in it for us. It can make someone's day, and it doesn't cost a thing. There is a story on Love of Mother Bird. There used to be a bird named Suruli on the mango tree. She had built a beautiful nest. In which her children lived together. Those children did not know how to fly yet, that's why Suruli used to bring food to all of them and feed them. One day when it was raining heavily. Then Suruli's children started feeling hungry. The children started crying very loudly. It didn't feel good for her children to cry with melody. She was silencing them, but the children were suffering from hunger; so they were not keeping quiet. The melodious got into thinking, from where will I get food in such heavy rain. But if you do not bring food, how will the children's hunger be satisfied? After thinking for a long time, Suruli took a long flight and reached farmer's house. The farmer had kept the rice, and fruits found in the courtyard. The bird saw it and put a lot of rice in its mouth for the children. And quickly flew away from

there. After reaching the nest, the bird fed rice grains to all the children. The children were full, they all became silent and started playing amongst themselves. From the story it reveals the fact that there is no match for mother's love in the world, even after putting her life in calamity, she works in the interest of her children.

Kindness is defined as the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate. It is a basic good moral that we should all live by. Unfortunately, in today's society, kindness seems to be in short supply. With all the violence, greed, and selfishness that we see on the news, it can be easy to forget that there are still good people in the world. It is essential for all of us to understand the value of kindness. Kindness affects our mentality and gives us internal peace. It reduces all stresses of life and brings smiles to our faces. Showing kindness and respect to others for a minute can keep you in the hearts of everyone for the rest of your life. Always remember; it does not cost anything to be kind. We must treat others with kindness without expecting reciprocation. It is important to be kind because it makes one feel good about oneself. When you do things for other people and help them with anything, it makes you feel warm and that you have accomplished something.

