

CRUISE TOURISM: NAVIGATING NEW HORIZONS

India, with its vast coastline stretching over 7,500 kilometers and a rich cultural and historical heritage, is uniquely positioned to emerge as a global hub for cruise tourism.

Cruise tourism is not merely a luxury travel segment; it is a significant economic driver. It boosts local economies through job creation, port development, and increased spending by tourists in coastal cities.

India has seen a notable increase in cruise traffic in recent years. According to government data, cruise passenger numbers grew steadily before the COVID-19 pandemic, and with travel restrictions easing, a rebound is underway.

One of India's most promising cruise tourism avenues is river cruising. The mighty Ganges, Brahmaputra, and other rivers offer scenic and culturally immersive experiences.

However, despite the optimism, cruise tourism in India faces several hurdles. Port infrastructure, though improving, still lags behind international standards.

Another challenge is the lack of awareness and promotion. Cruise tourism is still perceived as an elite form of travel in India, and awareness among the middle class remains low.

Environmental concerns are also increasingly significant. Cruise ships have a considerable ecological footprint, and India must adopt sustainable practices as it expands this sector.

To make cruise tourism a cornerstone of India's tourism economy, a multi-pronged strategy is essential. Strengthening public-private partnerships, simplifying regulatory frameworks, offering fiscal incentives, and enhancing training in hospitality and cruise management can create a robust ecosystem.

INDIA stands at the cusp of a cruise tourism revolution. With its diverse coastal landscape, cultural richness, and policy support, the country has all the ingredients to become a major cruise destination.

The Skies of Jammu: Celebrating Tradition, Protecting Lives

On Raksha Bandhan and Krishna Jannashtami, Jammu's rooftops burst with energy. Children laugh, elders cheer, and colourful "Guddi" dot the sky as voices cry "Chal Gayi Aaa!"

This is more than a game; it is a cherished tradition woven into the city's cultural soul. But in recent years, a deadly shadow has threatened into this joy, the Gattu Door, a synthetic string coated with glass or metal.

Kite flying has been part of Jammu's identity for generations - a joyful thread that connects children to parents, elders to their youth, and neighbours to each other.

But no tradition, however beloved, should come at the price of a human life or the suffering of animals. The spirit of Patang Baazi lies in community, not in competition at any cost.

Every festive season, hospitals in Jammu and Udhampur treat motorcyclists, pedestrians, and even children injured by these near

invisible threads. Wildlife groups report that up to a third of bird rescues during North India's kite festivals involve injuries from such strings.

Legal Action & Why Stronger Laws Are Needed To curb the rising toll, the District Magistrate recently invoked Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, banning the sale, purchase, storage, and use of Gattu Door in the district.

Section 163 BNSS is a preventive tool designed for urgent situations, allowing swift, temporary restrictions without court delays when there is an imminent threat to life or safety.

It is valuable in emergencies like the festival season but is time-bound, requires renewal, and lacks the structured deterrence of a permanent statutory ban.

Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

By contrast, Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 offers a permanent and enforceable solution. It empowers the Central Government and, by delegated power, the State Government or authorised officers

to issue binding directions to close, prohibit, or regulate any harmful activity and stop the supply of electricity, water, or services; and regulate or mandate safe alternatives.

Crucially, such orders can be issued without waiting for a court order, enabling immediate preventive action.

When tackling Gattu Door, the government can ban it permanently, seize hazardous stock, enforce safe cotton strings, and coordinate between police, municipal bodies, and wildlife authorities.

Adding Section 15 of the EPA gives the law real teeth: violators can face up to Rs 1 lakh in fines and/or 5 years' imprisonment, creating strong deterrence for repeat offenders, suppliers, and black-market traders.

BNSS 163 is the quick shield; EPA 15 are the long-term armour that Jammu needs to reclaim its skies.

A Tradition Worth Saving

The choice now rests with us as citizens, parents, and neighbours. That means backing stronger laws like the EPA ban alongside quick DM orders, supporting consistent enforcement during festival seasons, and ensuring the market moves toward safe, eco-friendly alternatives.

Deplorable Position of Electricity in Jammu

The electricity in Jammu is playing hide and seek with the people and the position of electricity is most deplorable.

The electricity consumers are facing untold sufferings, inconveniences and hardships because of the sad condition of electricity in Jammu. The consumers by and large are paying electricity dues honestly.

In these days of heat wave, scorching heat, and extreme humidity the hardships of the people are compounded by the frequent electricity cuts both in metered areas and unmetered areas.

It is the responsibility and duty of the power Development Department/JKPDC to provide uninterrupted electricity to the consumers so that they may not suffer due to lack of adequate power.

The people of Jammu are facing electricity crisis of the worst order in these hot summer days when the humidity has also increased and people need adequate electricity. But adequate electricity is conspicuous by its absence and due to the apathetic condition of electricity; people are reeling under electricity crisis which is unprecedented in nature.

The government has installed smart meters in major portion of Jammu and it was expected that the woes of power consumers will come to an end. But the woes of the electricity consumers did not cease but continued and even were compounded due to lack luster approach of the PDD/JKPDC.

ory and papers but in actual world there is no respite from the scheduled and unscheduled electric cuts which compounds the difficulties of the Jammuites who continue to suffer a lot despite the installation of smart meters.

It seems to be the fait accompli of the people of Jammu to face the power woes of the worst order. It is pertinent to note that in most areas of Jammu, the electricity during the night is for the names sake and the people are facing uneasy nights due to the lack of adequate electricity.

In Talab Tillo area and in Govind Nagar of Gole Gujral area the electricity is playing the hide and seek with the residents of these areas and the PDD is in deep slumber and has no time to attend towards the woes of the consumers and mitigate these woes or at least to lessen it.

The fact is that the demand of the electricity increases manifold in hot summers and the PDD should plan in advance how to deal with the increasing demand of the electricity.

The government should purchase its deficit electricity from the neighbouring states to tide over the power crisis and it cannot let its people to suffer due to the lack of electricity.

PDD/JKPDC the brain child of PDD seems to be busy and interested only in collecting the bills and fares of electricity and showing inflated bills to the poor consumers who are faced to pay these hefty electricity bills.

But in return they are not getting proper and adequate electricity supply that too in these hot summer and humid days thus compounding the woes of the people.

The government should wake from the deep slumber and take concrete steps to augment electricity supply in most of the areas of Jammu as all these areas are facing electricity crisis and people are suffering from the want of adequate elec-

tricity. The tall claims of the PDD that the position of electricity will get improved at least in smart metered areas but nothing of the sort happened and there is totally no improvement in metered areas and the power consumers are suffering despite paying hefty electricity bill and that too on time.

The government should wake up and recognize its duty and responsibility and provide adequate electricity to people especially during nights as it is most difficult to pass on the nights with so meager electricity.

The crux of this write up is this that the people of Jammu are suffering most in these days of scorching heat and humidity and their problem gets compounded due to the lack of adequate electricity supply.

The government should wake up and pay urgent attention towards addressing of the electricity woes of the consumers who pay electric bills as honest consumers and in return they only get neglect and apathy of the PDD.

Thus, the government should pay top most attention towards the woes of the power consumers and honestly and seriously try and strive to mitigate the woes of the power consumers so that some relief is provided to them and they pass on their life easily and without any difficulty.

The government should understand its duty and responsibility and rescue the people of Jammu from the woes of electricity. Thus something on war footing needs to be done to augment the power position and supply adequate electricity to people so that some relief is provided to them and they pass on days in these summers.

Government has no inborn right to show hefty electricity bills to consumers if they cannot provide uninterrupted power supply to them. So the government should at the earliest take steps to augment the power position and supply and pro-

vide electricity to consumers without any cuts. The PDD/JKPDC should prepare a due schedule of power curtailment for both the metered and unmetered areas and stick and implement it strictly so that consumers will have a sigh of relief.

The PDD should do away with its bad practice of imposing unscheduled power cuts so that consumers will feel some relief. Moreover during nights in these hot days, there should be no unscheduled power cuts which compound the woes of the power consumers.

The government should immediately procure electricity from other states to tide over the power crisis in Jammu and Kashmir. The JKPDC has dispensed the noble practice of issuing monthly electricity bills to consumers.

In the absence of proper manual bills, it becomes difficult for the consumers especially uneducated consumers to know the electricity charges in the absence of the paper bills. Moreover, inflated bills are charged online which is total injustice with the honest consumers of electricity.

Seventeen Goals, One Mission: A Better World by 2030



Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, held at the UN Headquarters from September 25-27, 2015 in New York City.

of 193 UN member states to end poverty, ensure prosperity, protect planet, improve health, education, gender Equality, living standards, clean water, clean energy, life on land, life below water, sanitation, peace, justice and strong institutions ...etc.. Though seventeen goals were set up in September 2015 but these SDGs were launched universally on January 01, 2016 all across developed and developing countries with a target deadline of 2030 for all these seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In India, several initiatives have been taken like MNRGA (rural employment), PMAY (housing for all), PMKY (income support for farmers) and Jan Dhan Yojna (financial inclusion). These programs have improved livelihoods for millions but these initiatives are not sufficient and may fall short of target set for 2030 in India and most of the countries of the world, owing to climate related disruptions, income inequality, unprecedented epidemic like corona, inclusive and sustainable growth, that is, growth that benefits everyone and protects the environment too.

SDG2 targets zero hunger by ensuring food security and promoting sustainable agriculture. SDG 3 ensures good health and well-being for all ages. SDG 4 promotes inclusive and quality education, enabling lifelong learning. SDG 5 seeks gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. SDG 6 focuses on providing clean water and sanitation for all.

However, sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 7 to 17 are build on the strong foundation set by the first six goals and focus on broad-



er systems that support human development, environmental protection, peace, and partnership.

SDG7 aims to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all. It promotes the use of renewable energy sources like solar and wind to improve energy efficiency. It also supports expanding energy infrastructure in developing regions, helping to reduce energy poverty and protect the environment.

SDG 8 promotes decent work and economic growth. It aims to create sustainable, inclusive employment, reduce unemployment, and ensure safe working conditions for all. The goal supports innovation, entrepreneurship, equal pay and encouraging economic growth that benefits everyone while protecting labour rights and promoting productivity & decent work worldwide.

SDG 9 focuses on building resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable industrialization and encouraging innovation. It supports technological advancement, increased access to finance &

markets and inclusive growth. This goal is vital for boosting productivity, creating jobs, and driving economic development especially in developing countries aiming for long-term sustainability.

SDG 10 aims to reduce inequalities within and among countries by promoting social, economic and political inclusion for all regardless of age, gender, disability, or background. It supports equal opportunities, fair policies and reducing disparities in income, access to services and representation across all groups.

SDG 11 aims to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. It focuses on improving affordable housing, public transport, urban planning, green spaces and disaster risk management to ensure better living conditions and sustainability for growing urban populations especially in developing regions.

SDG 12 promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, aiming to reduce waste, increase recycling, and encourage eco-friendly consumption. It focuses on making production and supply

chains more efficient, raising awareness among consumers, and supporting policies that minimize environmental impact to ensure long-term sustainability for people and the planet.

SDG13 calls for urgent action to combat climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting climate resilience and integrating climate-related measures into national policies. It emphasizes early warning systems, disaster risk reduction and international cooperation to protect ecosystems, economies and communities from the escalating impacts of global warming.

SDG 14 aims to protect the world's oceans, seas, and marine life by reducing pollution, preventing overfishing, and preserving coastal and marine ecosystems. It encourages sustainable fishing practices, conservation efforts and international collaboration to maintain the health of marine environments which are vital for global food security and climate stability.

SDG 15 focuses on protecting, restoring and

promoting the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems. It works to combat deforestation, halt biodiversity loss and prevent desertification. The goal supports the conservation of forests, wildlife and natural habitats which are crucial for ecosystem balance, climate regulation and human well-being.

SDG 16 promotes peaceful and inclusive societies by ensuring access to justice for all and building accountable as well as transparent institutions. It targets the reduction of violence, corruption and abuse of power while strengthening the rule of law, human rights and participatory decision-making bodies at all levels of governance.

SDG 17 emphasizes the importance of global partnerships among governments, businesses and civil society to achieve all SDGs. It focuses on mobilizing financial resources, sharing technology and enhancing capacity-building especially in developing countries to foster inclusive growth and sustainable development through international cooperation and shared responsibility.

In Gist, SDGs are deeply interconnected. SDG 1 (No Poverty) cannot be achieved without addressing SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 3 (Good Health) and SDG 4 (Education). Basically, it is the poverty that often limits access to food / good food, healthcare and learning.

Achieving gender equality (SDG 5) boosts economic growth (SDG 8) and reduces inequalities (SDG 10). Clean water (SDG 6) is essential for good health (SDG 3) while affordable energy (SDG 7) - powers homes, hospitals, and schools. Climate action (SDG 13) and environmental sustainability (SDGs 14 and 15) are vital for food, water, and livelihood security. Lastly, strong institutions (SDG 16) and global cooperation (SDG 17) are essential for everlasting progress. Together, all seventeen SDGs form a unified blueprint for a sustainable and equitable world as well as nation too. So it becomes our moral duty to sincerely contribute SDGs and boost the system to reach at logical conclusion along with other countries of the world by 2030. It is imperative to mention here that Finland topped the SDG Index followed by Sweden and Denmark while countries facing conflict or instability such as Yemen, Somalia and Chad are at the bottom of SDGs index with India scored 99th position thereby marking its first entry in top 100's with a score of 67 out of 100 point scale.

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