

# Tourism Potentiality and Prosperity in Andhra Pradesh with Special Reference to Rayalaseema Region

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**Abstract** *Man's search for food and shelter and his curiosity for things around gave birth to travel. Travel led to tourism. Tourism is the activity of tourists and those who deal with them. Tourism is not a single industry, but an aggregate of many components. As a means of education and cultural exchange, tourism is an excellent instrument for the promotion of national integration and international understanding friendship and peace.*

*There are two regions in the state namely Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema and hence, the two regions are more often referred as Seemandhra by the media. There are 13 districts with 9 in Coastal Andhra and 4 in Rayalaseema. Visakhapatnam is the largest city and a commercial hub of the state with a GDP of \$26 billion followed by Vijayawada with a GDP of \$3 billion. Guntur, Nellore, Kurnool, Kadapa, Tirupati, Rajahmundry, Kakinada, Ongole and Eluru are other important cities.*

*In Consonance with the Government of India's National Tourist Action Plan of May, 1992, the Government of Andhra Pradesh formulated the first ever tourism policy of the state. According to their, the tourist places in the state were divided into three zones.*

- 1. Gateway (Tirupati Zone)*
- 2. The Sunny South (Visakhapatnam Zone)*
- 3. The Adventure Zone.*

*Finally my paper attempts Tourist Potentiality and Prosperity in the study area Rayalaseema, Assessing the existing infrastructure facilities, Perceptions and opinions of Tourists: Problems & Prospects, Suggestions, etc.,*

**Keywords:** *Tourism – Potentiality – Prosperity – Rayalaseema Region*

## Growth and Structure of Tourism in Andhra Pradesh

The growth of tourism is closely related to the age and speed of travel, economic growth and political developments. It grows gradually over the years as earlier and foster ways of travel became available.

The word Tourism is originated from the Latin word "Tornare". It could also have been derived from the Hebrew word "Tora", which means "studying or searching", implying the traveller's desire to discover something about a place. The International Dictionary of Tourism published in 1953 by the International Academy of Tourism points out the "Tour" in English and in French means a journey, a circulative trip.

Andhra Pradesh tourism resources are immense. Its historic and cultural mosaic is unique. The monuments, sculptures and paintings of Andhra Pradesh bear testimony to the national ethos for harmony and diversities to be reflected

in a composite whole. The geographical features of Andhra Pradesh are both colourful and varied.

Andhra Pradesh offers a homogenous blending of ancient and modern; northern and southern, multi-lingual cultures. The history of the State is as old as second century B.C. The Satavahanas established the first ever – independent Andhra kingdom. The Ikshvakus, the Pallavas, the Chalukyas, the Kakatiyas and Asafjahis enriched the Andhra history and culture with monuments, temple, mosque, arts, crafts, dance and customs.

Andhra Pradesh is popularly known as the granary of South India. The lush green fields naturally irrigated by 34 rivers both major and minor – the Krishna and the Godavari provide the scenic beauty while the centres of heritage entice the tourist to visit the state again and again. A single example is Tirupati, the abode of Lord Sri Venkateswara where pilgrims from all parts of the country throng for the glimpse of the Lord Venkateswara also known as Balaji. Vijayawada, the

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central place and nodal place in Andhra Pradesh culturally, is another famous tourist attraction. The north coastal region presents Vishakapatnam, popular for the Dolphins nose part a natural harbour.

## TOURISM PROFILE IN ANDHRA PRADESH

Andhra Pradesh is the 8th largest State in India, both in area and population. The State has the second longest coastline of 972 km (604 miles) among all the States of India, second only to Gujarat. It borders Telangana in the Northwest, Chhattisgarh in the North, Odisha in the Northeast, Karnataka in the West, Tamil Nadu in the South and the water body of Bay of Bengal in the East. A small enclave of 30 km<sup>2</sup> (12 sq mi) of Yanam, a district of Pondicherry lays South of Kakinada in the Godavari delta to the Northeast of the state. There are two regions in the state namely Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema and hence, the two regions are more often referred as Seemandhra by the media. There are 13 districts with 9 in Coastal Andhra and 4 in Rayalaseema. Visakhapatnam is the largest city and a commercial hub of the State with a GDP of \$26 billion followed by Vijayawada with a GDP of \$3 billion. Guntur, Nellore, Kurnool, Kadapa, Tirupati, Rajahmundry, Kakinada, Ongole and Eluru are other important cities.

The importance of tourism in Andhra Pradesh has been recognized very late and tourism was a part of the information and public relations dept. till May, 1974; when it was separated and established as Department of Tourism. In 1980, the State Travel & Tourism Development Corporation was unveiled. Tourism has become all officially recognised industry since 1985 and certain types of hotels have been extended concessions and subsidies. In 1990, a seventeen member tourism board was formed to advise the Government about the development of tourism in the State. In 1994, the Government of Andhra Pradesh announced its tourism policy declaring certain places special tourist centres.

### Tourism Policy (1992)

In Consonance with the Government of India's National Tourist Action Plan of May, 1992, the Government of Andhra Pradesh formulated the first ever tourism policy of the State. According to the policy, the tourist places in the State were divided into three zones.

1. Gateway (Tirupati Zone)
2. The Sunny South (Visakhapatnam Zone)
3. The Adventure Zone.

According to 2014 Tourism Policy, the tourist places in the State were divided into 4 zones.

1. Gateway of Andhra Pradesh –Tirupati Zone;

2. Mantralayam – Srisailam Circuit.
3. Sunny South
4. Buddhist Trail.

Besides, an action plan to organize different types of tourist festivals in different parts of the state was also worked out. It was also decided to develop Nagarjuna Sagar as a place of Buddhist worship. In accordance with the rulers and regulations of the State and Central Government, concession and incentives are being extended for establishing new hotels and motels at specified tourist places, so as to properly utilize these opportunities.

## NEED OF THE STUDY

Nowadays, Union Government and Government of Andhra Pradesh are showing much interest towards tourism by taking many projects for the development and imitation to tourism. Tourism has been recognized as smokeless industry pertaining to people, transporting them to a designated place, putting them comfortably as their pocket permits, entertaining them and sending them back with sweet memories. This problem has been chosen with view to study tourism development in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh.

For the State of Andhra Pradesh, the following three circuits have been identified for integrated development.

Circuit 1 Visakhapatnam - Vizianagaram – Srikakulam

Circuit 2 Chittoor - Nellore - Kadapa - Anantapur

Circuit 3 East Godavari - West Godavari – Krishna – Guntur

## Objectives of Study

1. To identify the potential tourist circuits/destinations in the Study area of Andhra Pradesh.
2. To analyse the potential and carrying capacity of the identified tourist circuits/destinations and priorities the same.
3. Assess the existing infrastructure – basic and tourism related for the circuits/destinations.
4. Perceptions and opinions of Tourists: Problems & Prospects
5. Identify infrastructural projects to be initiated by Centre/State/Private sector

## Methodology and Data Sources

1. The process of evaluation has been attempted through scientifically prepared questionnaires and conducting interviews.

2. The researcher to be visit numerous tourist centres, studied the working nature and collecting information from the concerned about particular problem if any.
3. Information regarding the tourist activities of the past in the Rayalaseema region were gathered mainly from the various gazetteers issued from time to time, the annual administration reports of the Tourism Development of Andhra Pradesh. The annual reports, newspapers, articles and various tourism newsletters, brochures of the district, were also used for the present investigation and study.

#### Tourist Potentiality and Prosperity in the study area Rayalaseema

1. Temple Tourism: Tirupati, Srisailam, Ahobilam, Lepakshi, Gudimallam Temple and Hemavathi Temple.
2. Buddhist sites: Nandalur.
3. Jaina sites : Konakondla, Danavulapadu.
4. Forts of Rayalaseema: Penugonda fort – Anantapur; Chandragiri Fort – Tirupati; Gooty Fort – Anantapur; Gurrarakonda Fort – near Madanapalle.
5. Museums and Galleries:
  - I) Anantapur- Sri KSR. District Archaeological Museum.
  - II) Chandragiri – Archaeological Museum, Rajamahala.
  - III) Kadapa – Bhagavan Mahavir Museum.
  - IV) Kurnool – District Archaeological Museum.
  - V) Mylavaram – Archaeological site Museum, Mylavaram dam, Jammalamadugu.
  - VI) Tirupati – Regional Science centre; TTD Museum.
6. Fairs and Festivals: Uravakonda Jatara; Gangamma Jatara – Tirupati.
7. Handicrafts : Kalamkari – Srikalahasthi; Madhavamala wooden crafts; Settigunta wooden crafts; Glass bangles – Papanaidu pet; Brass metal craft – Dornakambala, etc.,
8. Handlooms: Pullampeta, Venkatagiri, etc.

#### Assessing the Existing Infrastructure Facilities

Following infrastructure has been examined to assess the requirements and deficiencies:

1. Modes of Transport- airways, roadways and railways and access thereto
2. Road Network
3. Utilities: power, water facility, etc
4. Accommodation
5. Way side amenities

6. Maintenance and management of built heritage/tourist attractions

On the basis of reconnaissance survey, discussions with local community and other stakeholders, gaps have been identified. Based on these gaps as well as site potential, sustainable projects have been proposed along with the indicative block costs.

These projects proposed are intended achieve the following two objectives:

1. Products and activities proposed will attract the tourist inflow and will hold the tourists in the circuits which will provide socio-economic benefits at a larger level.
2. Sustainable projects will attract different investors and private players to participate in infrastructure development which will benefit both, Government as well as private sector.

## PERCEPTIONS AND OPINIONS OF TOURISTS, PROBLEMS & PROSPECTS

### Perceptions and Opinions

- Eco-tourism is gaining popularity
- A lot of unidentified tourist attractions
- Long beach to develop beach resorts
- Increasing the middle class peoples income
- Rural tourism is developing by giving priority for handicrafts and its marketing, for this the Shilpharamams are well suited for its marketing.

### Problems

- Lack of administration in the tourism department
- In sufficient of transport facilities
- Lack of funds for its developments
- Lack of information about some tourist attractions
- In adequacy of marketing, in one word, we can say zero marketing
- In sufficient infrastructure
- In ability staff/ contract system in the recruitment of employees they will not feel responsibility on their duties
- Overcrowding tourists inflow in famous tourist attractions

## Suggestions

Niche tourism products are to be promoted. Services of professional agencies are to be utilized for Media Planning, Production of creative and Publicity material. Road Shows should to be organized in other states in collaboration with the stakeholders, showcasing the potential of the state. Participation in Travel Marts and Exhibitions in the country promotion of tourism. Organization of important events like State Tourism Awards, workshops, seminars, etc. on various tourism related themes.

Organizing evening programmes of Andhra's unique art and music in major cities. Tourism is primarily driven by the private sector, with a multiplicity of stakeholders whose size range from microenterprises to large trans-national corporations. The actions of these players, along with those of tourists and the local communities determine the overall

impact of tourism on the environment. Hence the local communities must be active involved in promoting tourism, so that the visitors leave with memorable experience.

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