

BA (P) GEOGRAPHY DISCIPLINE

SEMESTER VI

GEOGRAPHY OF TOURISM

Unit 5: Tourism in India: Tourism Infrastructure; **Case Studies of Himalaya**, Desert and Coastal and Heritage; National Tourism Policy

Introduction

The Himalayas are the pride of the Asia Pacific region that is poised for a dramatic tourism growth. Himalayas are one of the youngest mountain ranges in the world evolving since the Jurassic Era (80 million years ago) and epitomise a civilisational identity that goes back to the dawn of history. If these majestic mountains were not there, the climate of the entire Indian subcontinent specifically and of Asia would have been entirely different

Himalayas -Geographical Division

Nanga Parbat in the west stretching for over 2,000-kilometers to the mountains bordering Sikkim and Bhutan in the east, divides the Main Himalayan mountain range from the Indian. The Western Himalayas forming part of this range divide Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh from Ladakh. Nun and Kun are the highest mountains of this part.

The North Sonamarg and Amarnath ranges form part of the Himalayas in Kashmir. Eastern Himalayas extends across the Baraiacha range in Himachal Pradesh before merging with the Parbati range to the east of Kullu valley. They extend across the Kinnar Kailash to the Swargarohini and Bandarpunch ranges in Uttarakhand defined by the snow capped Gangotri glacier and Nanda Devi, the highest mountain in the Indian Himalaya. Richly endowed by Nature these mountains are primarily responsible for evoking nature worship and the conservation ethic. Ironically today these abodes of divinity are seriously threatened by those very human beings who worshipped them in awe. The entire Himalayan range, with its high and unique biological diversity, is facing a deep crisis and is in the danger of being destroyed. It is being relentlessly exploited and denuded of its natural grandeur and beauty. Fortunately, this has led to some realisation, and now the beginnings of a new awakening about human responsibility towards nature are discernible.

Climatic Variation in the Himalayas

The Himalayan Alpine climate varies according to the elevation. Temperature and climatic changes in change very quickly. Although most tourist destinations of the Himalayas are considered natural health spas the intensity of monsoons, floods, high winds, snowstorms makes the climate unpredictable. The two major seasons of the Himalayan region are winter and summer. Summer is mild making hill stations good summer resorts. Most of the treks can be undertaken from June until middle of October. By September the conditions are ideal, and they normally remain so until late October even though night-time temperatures may fall below freezing. Most of the hill states of the West Himalayas including Kangra and Chamba, the Kullu valley, Shimla in Himachal and most regions of the Garhwal and Kumaon in Uttaranchal come under the influence of the Indian monsoon. Both Darjeeling and Sikkim are subject to the Indian monsoon that sweeps up from the Bay of Bengal, bringing heavy rainfall from early June until the end of September.

1.2.4 Biodiversity of the Himalayas

The bio-diversity of the Himalayas extend for over 2,250-km from the Namcha Barwa on the bend of the Tsang-po (Brahmaputra) to Nanga Parbat on the Indus. The average width of the Himalayas is about 200-km. Varying altitude, rainfall and latitude result in forests of Pine, Deodar, Fir, Oak, Rhododendron, Birch merge into rich alpine pastures. Ibex, the mountain goat, is native to this region. From these snow covered ranges with big glaciers, flow the great rivers that have made the Indo-Gangetic plain one of the most fertile in the world and the heartland of India.

Flora/ Fauna

Himalayan regions have a harsh environment therefore few animals and plants can survive over here. Plants like rhododendrons, the tea plant and shrubs survive by adapting to the freezing temperatures, high winds and to a short growing season growing low to the ground. The Hindustan-Tibet road now called National Highway No. 22 transcends the Himalayas from the plains along the Sutlej right through Shipkila on the Indo-Tibet border Overgrazing and assault on herbs is not only destroying the meadows and pastures. The absence of forests reduces precipitation in the form of rain and snow. This ecological damage, has begun to manifest in frequent flash floods like the 1995 havoc wrought by river Beas in Kullu and Manali. Other catastrophes like drought & forest fires have accelerated loss of rare biodiversity that is the mainstay of

most mountain tourism destinations. Devistotra, a Hindu Shastra, (500 BO) predicts:
"So long as this land will have mountains, forests and pastures that long the earth will survive, sustaining you and the coming generations."

Ethnic Diversity of the Himalayas

The Hindu epics and Puranas refer to the original inhabitants of the Himalayas- the Kulinds, Kiratas and Kinnars. Later texts mention the Khasas and the Darads. Today Negroids, Mongoloids and Aryans ethnic types constitute the Himalayan population. Spiritual migrants into the Himalayas were a small minority. But more recent settlements and inroads by tourists have significantly changed the complexion of the local populace, in Himachal Pradesh, the descendants of these Khasas are known as "Kanets" and now claim Rajput status comprising a majority. Brahmins and Kshatriyas from the plains brought caste division with them and introduced new forms of social organization rooted in Hindu orthodoxy. In Kumaon and Garhwal, in the central Himalayas, Khasas and Doms were the original inhabitants, a west Central Asian nomadic tribe who entered through the northwest and spread from Kashmir to Assam, in contrast the Ladakhis are of ethnic stock different from that of the people of Kumaon and Garhwal. The Mons belonging to the Mongoloid stock, and who are now far more numerous there, seem to have migrated at a much later date.

The Bhutanese are Bhutiyas of Mongolian origins who refer to themselves as Drukpa inhabitants

of Druk Yul or the 'Land of the Thunder Dragon' following traditional Buddhism and still maintaining many aspects of their culture. Similarly the Sikkimese people broadly consist of three different groups - the Lepchas, the Bhutiyas and the Nepalis. in contrast the people of Nepal are a complex mix of racial patterns. The dominant Hindu castes consist of the Brahmin, Thakur and Chetri, along with Gurungs, Magars, Tamaings, Rais and Limbus who speak Nepali. The Sherpas of the Solo Khumbu region in the northeast of the country are among the many Bhutiya groups who speak the Tibetan dialect.

Most people in the Himalayas sustain themselves by a combination of agriculture and animal husbandry. Until very recently, those inhabiting the higher reaches migrated to lower altitudes during the winter months. Trade played an important role in the lives of the frontier villages in Ladakh, Himachal, Kumaon and Garhwal. Before the advent of the British, the contacts of Sikkim and Bhutan with Tibet were closer and more frequent,

Himalayas -Tourism importance

The Himalayan region has huge variation in people, wealth and economic growth, by and large poverty and population pressure characterizes the Asian landscape. Some 75 per cent of world poor live in Asia. Besides habitat fragmentation, this has forced people to move to the ecologically fragile areas while the number of landless people is ever increasing. Considered as a whole, habitat losses have been most conspicuous in Indian sub-continent, China, Vietnam and Thailand (UNEP 1999). Certainly tourism is not the only culprit.

Few countries in the Himalayan region exhibit such an amazing amalgam of history and heritage with wondrous cultural expression, thought, philosophy and religion and are home to numerous world heritage sites in their spectacular architecture, religious edifices & monuments constituting rare resources for tourism. The Himalayas are a human museum with mosaic of people of different ethnicity, manners and mores. The entire Himalayan region is rich in natural assets, particularly in bio-diversity with unique high altitude flora and fauna.

Each part of the Himalayas has important tourist destinations due to various reasons. Roads have been constructed for defence reasons, to access prominent pilgrimage places in the heart of the Himalayas, or to revel in the salubrious summers while partaking of the rich bio-diversity, mysticism, scenic beauty, adventure sports potential. Rohtang, Beas Kund, Yamunotri -the source of the Yamuna River, Gangotri - the source of the sacred river Ganges at the head of the Bhagirathi valley, Kedarnath at the head of the Mandakini valley, and Badrinath in the Alaknanda valley have numerous pilgrim footprints.

While assessing the tourism potentiality of the Himalayan region it is also imperative to take into account the fact that the urbanization process in Southeast Asia has been vigorous and concentrated in the highly industrialized capitals {ASEAN 1997}. South and Southeast Asia combined account for the one third of the developing world's urban population. The population of Asian mega-cities will rise to 126 m people in 1995 to 382 m in 2025. of the 20 megacities forecast for growth in Asia, 10 will be in Southeast Asia (Hall and Page 2000).

EASTERN HIMALAYAS

DARJEELING An interesting case of growing competition in tourist trade is provided by the Darjeeling-Sikkim Himalaya with Darjeeling in the former and Gangtok in the latter taking the burden of visitors. Making a beginning as a sanatorium sometime in the first half of the nineteenth century, Darjeeling became a popular tourist destination, with its bracing climate, pristine scenic beauty, the majestic view of the Kanchenjunga and the British influence.

Tourists flock also to towards small peripheral nodes like Phalut, Sandakphu, Kali Pokhri, Gairibans and Rimbik. But in premonsoon and the post monsoon peak touhst season Darjeeling reels from tourist influx sometimes with tourists living in the open. Yet the numbers increased undaunted by infra structural constraints. Urban tourism in the Darjeeling is shared partly by Kalimpong and Mirik, Despite Mirik mushrooming lately the attraction for Kalimpong with its British history only seems to increase. Further, there are quite a few spots like Lava, Mongpu, Algara, Munsung Pedong around Kalimpong offering the serenity of the misty mountains.

SIKKIM -Tourism in Sikkim reveals similar characteristics, being confined mainly to the town of Gangtok preferred by foreigners over the crowded Darjeeling. The growing attraction of Sikkim is clearly revealed in the volume of tourist flow in recent years which has almost steadily increased both for the domestic & foreign arrivals. Either the growing pressure of increasing tourists on the limited resources of Gangtok needs to be curtailed or sufficient infrastructure needs to be provided at alternative sites. The problem is more acute due to its administrative character as the capital of the State. The flow of tourists in Sikkim is not only urban oriented but it Is also virtually Gangtok centric. Absence of adequate facilities in the smaller centers or surrounding tourist spots discourages dispersal/ decongestion of Gangtok.

Tourism in the Indian Himalayas

Tourist movement in the Indian Himalaya has progressed from the classic tradition of pilgrimage, hill-stations of the Raj days to mass tourism of the post independent India. Tourist enclaves in the middle Himalaya have long lost thresholds, and tourism has taken a leap into the higher Himalayan zones of limited carrying capacity.

Table 1.7 Tourist arrival at Himalayan States of India from 2001 to 2006 and percentage.

States	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		2006		2007	
	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F
HP	5211772	135700	4958917	144383	5543414	167902	6345069	204443	6927742	207790	5544414	167955	8481958	339409
JK	9551665	44429	10605504	45070	10835241	55228	0	0	14215570	75995	16686525	85285	18603280	95976
ASM	1010651	8171	1953915	6409	2156675	6610	2288093	7285	2467652	10782	2768824	10374	3436833	12899
AP	6349	323	4372	187	2195	123	39768	321	50560	313	80137	607	91100	2212
J&K	5246948	21298	4570583	7821	5748846	24330	0	0	7239481	44345	7646274	46087	7915271	52754
MNP	78527	183	89633	221	92923	257	93476	249	94299	316	116984	295	101484	396
MGH	0	0	0	0	0	0	433495	12407	379901	5099	401529	4248	457685	5267
MIZ	28771	152	29417	259	35129	279	38555	326	44715	273	50987	436	43161	669
NAG	9948	920	14263	657	5605	743	10056	1084	17470	883	15850	426	22085	936
SJK	203306	31028	159342	8566	179661	11966	230719	14640	251744	16523	292486	18058	320075	17468
TRI	254912	1512	260586	2602	257331	3196	265907	3171	216330	2077	230456	3245	244795	3181
Total	3148833	241778	3284733	216175	34837025	276834	9740118	247932	31901484	364996	3590486	316884	48925717	511197

States	Total			State wise %age of Gross domestic and foreign		
	D	F	GT	Gross D	Gross F	T
HP	43013316	1367642	44380958	22.93	62.01	23.39
JK	81678789	401983	82080772	43.55	18.22	43.25
ASM	16082643	60530	16143173	8.57	2.74	8.51
AP	274481	4086	278567	0.15	0.19	0.15
J&K	38367403	196635	38564038	20.46	8.91	20.32
MNP	665326	1917	667243	0.35	0.09	0.35
MGH	1688610	27021	1695631	0.89	1.23	0.89
MIZ	270775	2394	273169	0.14	0.11	0.14
NAG	95977	569	100926	0.05	0.26	0.05
SJK	1646333	118253	1764586	0.88	5.36	0.93
TRI	3801317	19584	3820901	2.01	0.89	2.01
Total	187564278	2205694	189769964	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: HP Tourism website and Ministry of Tourism Govt. of India.

India was recently recognized as the second fastest growing tourist destination worldwide, and was voted the 7th most desired destination in a recent poll conducted with Conde Nast readers despite attracting only 1% of the world's travelers. This significant gap, along with a 25% annual increase in arrivals over the last 3 years, indicates the dramatic potential for growth as it spans a formidable variety of the sun, sea and sand tourism destinations.

Tourism In the Himalayas is the pride of South Asia. But analysis reveals considerable difference in intensity, forms and traditions of tourism as well in origin and activities of tourists. While in Nepal tourism is a recent phenomenon, it has historical roots in the Indian Himalaya. In Garhwal, for example, pilgrimage to the sanctuaries in the high mountains dates back to prehistoric time. During the 19th the British adopted mountain resorts for recreation due to their European climate. The pioneers of this recent influx were mainly foreigners from Europe and North America: mountain expeditioners were followed by adventure lovers, trekkers, sightseers, hippies and by package tourists. The invasion of mass tourism was inevitable. Foreign pioneers in the Himalayas were soon followed by Indian mountaineers and trekkers. Thus traditional forms of pilgrimage and health tourism were supplanted by new activities. Since 1950 tourism has emerged as a major growth industry in the Himalayas.

Modern tourism has penetrated the mountain valleys since 1974 when defence restrictions on visitors were lifted in vast parts of the Indian Himalaya. The main preconditions for

diffusion were the new roads that had been built after the Chinese aggression of 1962. Although primarily of strategic importance this liberal regime literally paved the way for tourists. Nearly 1 million visitors come to the Himalayas each year for mountain trekking, wildlife viewing, and pilgrimages to major Hindu and Buddhist sacred places.

A recent study by PHD chamber of commerce and Industry reveals that the Indian Northern Region has seen a drastic fall in share of tourist arrivals from 70% in 1980s to 39% in the North in the 2004-06 period. Tourist arrivals to Southern India have been increasing at 14% from 2004-07. As per 2007, statistics Northern region has 20094, South has 30117, West has 30861 and East has 5867 hotel rooms available. Himalayan Tourism can collude by Integrating its unique synergies through collaborative tourism and open up valleys in hill states by providing helicopter services that promote lesser known destinations in a less invasive form. The states could Identify and link villages, market distinct folk arts, cuisine and heritage helping develop rural tourism that integrates seamlessly with the livelihoods and resources prevailing in the region.

Yet it is impossible to accurately quantify the volume of tourism in the Himalayas, as India has neither complete nor regionally differentiated tourism statistics specific to mountain areas. Generally the number of domestic tourists is many times higher than that of foreign travelers. The number of foreign visitors has increased in recent years, as organized treks to the icy summits of the Great Himalayas have become popular. While tourism is important to the local economy, it has had an adverse impact on regions where tourist numbers exceed the capacity of recreational areas.

1.4.1 Natural resources of the Himachal Range

In Himachal Pradesh the main passes are the such which links the Ravi and the Chandra valleys, and the Rohtang, which links the Beas and Kullu valleys with the upper Chandra valley and Lahaul. A 12km long tunnel to link Solang valey of Manali with Lahaul for an all weather defence route is likely to throw open the hitherto unexplored Lahaul region and its crucial passage to Kashmir. Accessibility is being provided through roads and helipads which have been constructed in these areas.

The Rohtang pass, Sach pass, the Kugti, Kalicho and Chobia passes between the Ravi valley and Lahaul, and the Hampta pass linking the Kullu valley with Lahaul have emerged as favorite tourist destinations for adventure sports lovers. The Dhaula Dhar range south of the Pir Panjal behind Dharamsala forms the divide between the Ravi and the Beas valleys. To the west it divides the Chenab valley below Kishtwar and the Tawi valley which twists south to Jammu. This range is crossed by road at Patnitop on the Jammu-Srinagar

highway. To the east it extends across Himachal Pradesh forming the high ridges of the Larji gorge extending south of the Pin Parvati valley before forming the impressive ridgeline east of the Sutlej River. Thereon it forms the snow capped divide between the Sangia valley and upper Tons catchment area in Uttaranchal, including the Har Ki Dun Valley. Beyond the Bhagirathi River it forms the range between Gangotri and Kedarnath before merging with the main Himalaya at the head of the Gangotri glacier. Many attractive tourist destinations are located in and around these ranges. These include Dharamshala allowing access to the Indrahra Pass North of Dharamshala: Kalpa, Tapri, Pooh, and Sangia Kinnaur where the Borasu pass links the Sangia valley to Har-ki-Dun in Uttaranchal.

Tourism Scenario in Himachal Pradesh

The Shiwalik Hills to the south of the Dhaula Dhar (1,500 to 2,000m) are the first range of hills en route from the plains geologically separate from the Himalayas having many important tourist destinations like Shimla, Kasauli, Nahan, Solan, Kangra.

Table 1.8 Foreigners visiting Himachal Pradesh [Move page controls out of](#)

Country	Year 2003		Year 2004		Year 2005		Year 2006	
	visitors	Bed nights	visitors	Bed nights	visitors	Bed nights	visitors	Bed nights spent
U.K.	23881	43986	28496	40956	33286	37854	45039	51294
France	15155	26910	16182	23716	14883	17610	20155	23286
Italy	5857	10574	11500	16260	8192	9762	11091	13237
Canada	4377	7660	5734	8645	5241	6492	7093	8802
UAE	155	283	180	280	25	31	33	43
Pakistan	241	541	155	241	1089	1355	1463	1820
USA	10584	19935	12001	17231	13524	16076	18325	21755
Germany	12311	21809	12955	18158	11789	14345	15960	19425
Malaysia	1884	3542	2031	3171	1569	1846	2139	2448
Australia	6463	11558	7831	11857	8913	10879	12076	14726
Switzerland	4956	7700	4239	6345	2374	2893	3209	3904
Bangladesh	1599	3012	890	1348	1083	1321	1463	1787
Sri Lanka	73	126	346	542	432	577	591	987
Japan	5015	9122	4457	6426	5558	6930	7516	9398
Saudi Arabia	119	187	315	492	111	155	149	208
Singapore	954	1834	1136	1776	1499	1885	2026	258
Iran	258	499	322	525	147	203	199	258
Others	74020	159583	95574	144088	98075	114088	132972	154411
Total	167902	328861	204344	302067	207790	244282	281499	330930

They include Jammu hills and Vaishno Devi extending to Kangra and further east to the range south of Mandi. In **Uttaranchal**, they extend from Dehradun to Almora before heading across the southern borders of Nepal.

In Himachal, during the year 2006, tourist arrivals in the state were about 8.0 million, of which 2.80 lacs were foreigners. Reflecting the nation-wide data, there is a similar profile of foreign tourists to the State and visitors from the U.K. dominate the list of foreign arrivals. Historically, *Himachal* has been one of earliest tourist' destinations in our country yet it attracts hardly 1.8% of Indian tourism. This started from the sages and pilgrims of

yore and arrived at the 'hill stations' of the nineteenth century - which became retreats for a section of colonial and Indian society. Tourism in the post-Independence era continued to stem from pilgrimage and the old hill stations - and only gradually stepped into fresh areas like adventure, trekking, camping and sport. Yet, it is only in the last few decades that both the positive and negative the impacts of tourism have been felt in the State. These impacts have been markedly visible on the economy and in employment - as well as on the built and natural environment of the State and certainly to a degree, on the cultural fabric. Today, Himachal Pradesh is an important tourist destinations in incredible India due to its natural, built and cultural environment. Hotels or services have essentially capitalized on this product transforming it into an employment and revenue generator. The diversity offered by the State's tourism product can only be assessed by seeing the spectrum of **natural and manmade heritage** on offer as detailed in chapter 4 that has promoted pilgrim, adventure, health, leisure and corporate tourism with employment opportunity. The substantial but more intangible pilgrim segment flocks to the many religious places in the State linked closely to the Shiv Parvati cult. **Five distinct seasons** of the year - spring, summer, monsoon, autumn and winter contribute *to* a variety of flora, fauna and ambience making Himachal, especially Manali, an year round tourist destination.

Table 1.9 Direct Employment Position in HP Tourism Sector (2005)

District	Employees Hotel/Guest House	Employees in Bar & Restaurants	Guides	Travel Agent	Photographers	Total
Bilaspur	109	38	5	6	1	159
Chamba	704	95	6	65	52	922
Hamirpur	84	8	0	0	0	92
Kangra	1275	110	27	162	23	1597
Kinnaur	168	18	6	9	0	201
Kullu	4874	224	71	1049	242	6460
Lahaul & Spiti	166	1	0	30	0	197
Mandi	332	86	2	31	1	454
Shimla	3268	348	270	208	257	4351
Sirmaur	348	49	0	2	0	399
Solan	914	168	0	11	0	1093
Una	175	14	0	4	0	197
Total	12417	1161	387	1577	576	16118

Source: Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Himachal Pradesh, 2005.