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## Indian Perspective and Promotion of Cleanliness & Hygiene in Tourism

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### **Introduction**

Tourism is as old as man on earth. India is popular destination among tourists for its history, heritage, spiritualism, mountains, coastal areas, rivers, lakes, wildlife, culture, art and architecture. India has a significant place in South Asia in fast changing political and economic. Cleanliness has a significant role not only for an individual but also for community development. Tourism is not an exception to it. Tourism is a very sensitive industry. However, the tourism industry is one of the most vulnerable industries to critical situations, such as outbreaks, natural disasters, and terrorism issues (Hall, Timothy, and Timothy, 2003). These events and their impacts on the tourism industry are not new. However, the ability and capability of tourism management to deal with crises and complex situations are minimal (Santana, 2003). This paper examines the perspective of cleanliness in Indian tourism and initiatives of Indian government to achieve it.

### **Importance of Tourism in India**

According to World Tourism Organization (1993) 'tourism encompasses the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes'. As one of the world's most significant economic activities, tourism drives economic revenue, regional development, and employment (Qureshi et al., 2017). Tourism in India is economically important and is growing rapidly. The [World Travel & Tourism Council](#) calculated that tourism generated ₹14.02 lakh crore or 9.6% of the nation's GDP in 2016 and supported 40.343 million jobs, 9.3% of its total employment. The sector is predicted to grow at an annual rate of 6.8% to ₹28.49 lakh crore by 2027 (10% of GDP). In October 2015, [India's medical tourism sector](#) was estimated to be worth US\$3 billion. It is projected to grow to \$7–8 billion by 2020. The tourism industry in India generated about US\$100 billion in 2008 and that is expected to increase to US\$275.5 billion by 2018 at a 9.4% annual growth rate. The Ministry of Tourism is the nodal agency for the development and promotion of tourism in India and

maintains the "*Incredible India*" campaign. In terms of tourist arrivals, India touched the significant figure of 8.80 million of foreign tourists from just 2.37 million in 1997. There has been a significant increase of almost 20 percent growth in foreign tourists arrivals in India for last five consecutive years.

<b>Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India (1997-2016)</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Tourists (in millions)</b>
1997	2.37
2000	2.65
2005	3.92
2010	5.78
2015	8.03
2016	8.80

Source: India Tourism Statistics at a Glance, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India  
 According to World Travel and Tourism Council, India will be a tourism hotspot from 2009-2018, having the highest 10-year growth potential. As per the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2009 by the World Economic Forum, India is ranked 11th in the Asia Pacific region and 62nd overall, moving up three places on the list of the world's attractive destinations. It is ranked the 14th best tourist destination for its natural resources and 24th for its cultural resources, with many *World Heritage Sites*, both natural and cultural, rich fauna, and strong creative industries in the country. India also bagged 37th rank for its air transport network. The India travel and tourism industry ranked 5th in the long-term (10-year) growth

and is expected to be the second largest employer in the world by 2019. The 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi are expected to significantly boost tourism in India further.

### Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourism in India (1997-2016)

Year	Tourism Receipts (₹ crores)
1997	10,511
2000	15,626
2005	33,123
2010	64,889
2015	1,35,193
2016	1,54,146

Source: India Tourism Statistics at a Glance Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

### The Importance and Promotion of Cleanliness in Tourism: Indian Perspective

The importance of cleanliness is also highlighted in Vedas by the religious Gurus and Preachers. After the Independence, the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi said "Sanitation is more important than independence". He sought hygiene and sanitation an essential part of the Indian way of Living. He strongly believed that cleanliness is most important for physical and mental well-being and a healthy environment.

1. The purity and cleanliness of the environment and tourist destination is most pre-requisite of a tourist destination. Finland, Iceland, Sweden, Denmark, Slovenia, Spain, Malta, France

are some countries which are ranked as cleanest countries in the world. A clean place instantly looks attractive. Cleanliness increases the attractiveness even of a simple place. Abroad the tourist attraction are kept neat, clean and tidy, therefore look appealing to the foreigners. Imagine how Taj Mahal and Nainital lake in Nainital will look if there were plastic bags, bottles or other waste material all around? Swachh Bharat- Swachh Smarak is an initiative for a cleaner India for protecting and preserving the sanctity of monuments of national heritage. The Ministry of Tourism launched a special e-poster with Prime Minister's message requesting the tourists and the people of the nation to wholeheartedly engage themselves in the cleanliness of their surroundings. In 2016, all 3,686 monuments of national importance and under the protection of the archeological Survey of India (ASI) were declared polythene free zones to reduce waste disposal at such sites. (Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India)

2. Tourist prefer to visit those places where the possibility of acquiring any disease is minimal. In order to avoid any potential crisis and to sustain tourism growth, ensuring amenities and access to adequate public facilities is imperative. Therefore, one of the essential facilities that should be considered to support tourism development is sanitation services (Ali et al., 2018). No tourist would like spend the vacations at such a place where there is risk of a health hazard. Hence keeping a place clean will easily lure more tourists and make tourism a booming industry. Tourist places like Indore, Bhopal and Chandigarh which are among the cleanest cities in India, are luring a large number of travelers every year. The improvement in India's rankings in Travel and Tourism Competitive Index can also be attributed to how increased focus on cleanliness in tourist spaces has resulted in cleaner tourist spots across India under the Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) initiative. The Union Government has also undertaken a drive to clean 20 iconic tourist spots across India in two phases, including Taj Mahal, Vaishno Devi and Ajmer Sharif. (Source : Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Government of India)

3. Sanitation and cleanliness reflects the prosperity of a culture and its pride. Therefore, the tourists have a great influence by the discipline, manners at a tourist destination. The aesthetics of a place raises when it is kept clean and neat. Cleanliness is a community character trait, which cannot be forcefully taught. Keeping the environment clean goes a great way in keeping one's life healthy.. The cleaning up of river Ganga which is considered life-line of India and Government 's plan to connect all major rivers of India shows the strength of Indian character and nation building for cleanliness. . **Swachh Bharat - Swachh Paryatan' campaign of** Ministry of Tourism has requested all States/UTs to assess the requirement of toilet facilities at all popular tourist sites, provide a list of existing non-functional toilets already constructed, frame specific project proposals for toilets to be considered for release of grant under CFA, identify an agency for construction and maintenance and follow the standardized model on the lines of Build and Operate pattern for construction of wayside amenities. Meetings were held with representatives & founder of Sulabh International to discuss the pattern and modalities for construction of wayside amenities at tourist centres in the country. (Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India)

4. The cleanliness avoids exploitation of natural resources. The garbage like paper, plastic, broken glasses can create exploitation of rivers, mountains, lakes. It also spoils the ecosystems of deserts, forests, wetlands and other nature based bodies. . Garbage serves as perfect breeding spot for pathogens and germs and cause the spread of all transmissible

diseases. Ministry of Tourism has requested all industry associations to motivate their members to install the ‘Organic waste to Compost’ Machines, which convert organic waste in to compost in just 24 hours in their premises. Further, Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance to States/UTs for wayside amenities, garbage bins, storm water treatment facilities sewerage/ effluent disposal, under its plan schemes of Swadesh Darshan and PRASAD.(Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India)

## **Conclusion**

India needs to increase & develop the clean public utilities , safe food & water, preserving the environment and creating a dignity and quality of life for the cleaning staff and their families. As the tourism industry is very sensitive to perceptions or images (ADB, 2014), hence, if the visiting tourists are dissatisfied with sanitation facilities in a country, they are likely not to visit again and discourage other potential tourists as well. To make the ‘Clean India’ drive successful & sustainable, role and contribution of every citizen is very essential.

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