

ROHRU-The Tourist Destination of the Future

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Abstract- The tourist destination, one of the most important subsystems of tourism is also influenced by the evolution of society. People want to visit unknown places, interact with new races and have experiences, which were hitherto out of their reach. Mass tourism is slowly but surely decimating the natural beauty of popular tourist destinations and turning their once idyllic towns into urban nightmares. Alternate tourist destinations are coming into limelight in this ever changing world. Rohru, one of the promising tourist destinations of the future. Rich in untouched scenic beauty popular for its quality apple; also has many high snow belts like Chanshil Top (Rohru), Surachali Top(Rohru-jubbal). Khara-pathar (jubbal) Sungri etc. and several beautiful valleys like Hatkoti makes it an ideal destination for trekkers and adventure loving tourists.

I. INTRODUCTION

The tourist destination, one of the most important subsystems of tourism is also influenced by the evolution of society. By 2050 the world's population will reach 9.1 billion, 34 percent higher than today. Nearly all of this population increase will occur in developing countries. Urbanization will continue at an accelerated pace and about 70 percent of the world's population will be urban (compared to 49 percent today). There will be hike in income levels of what they are now; more urban and richer lonely population has an insatiable urge for travelling. People want to visit unknown places, interact with new races and have experiences, which were hitherto out of their reach. Travelling and exploring world is a natural tendency of all the human beings. Earliest ancestors were nomads and they tried to explore the world beyond the places of their habitats. Hence groups and individuals travelled far and wide. The civilizations of the world evolved through Stone Age, Bronze age, copper age, developed new tools, implements and invented wheel. Time changed so quickly and man developed modern tools and implements. After the medieval age, technology started taking a new course. Diesel engine, motor car, aircraft electricity were developed. After the Second World War, the concepts of travel and tours took off and scaled new peaks. Wild life tours, adventure tours and safaris were planned and executed in Africa. Europe remained the much sought after continent for tourism. The number of tourists or travelers increased and many professional organizations appeared on the global tourists map. In the last lap of the century, materialism and an urge to see the world, prompted many tourists to visit foreign lands. This trend generated an interest among youths for mountaineering, trekking and other excursions tours in the high – altitude regions of the world. Despite wars, political turmoil,

natural disasters, medical scares, terrorist attacks, or economic and energy crises in various parts of the world, international trade in tourism services has grown spectacularly since 70's. Travel & Tourism's total contribution to the global economy in 2014 was 9.8% of total GDP of world economy, generating more economic output than sectors like chemicals, manufacturing, agriculture, education, automotive manufacturing, and banking, according to WTTO (2015).

Travel & Tourism is one of the leading job creators in the world, with its 277 million jobs in 2014 worldwide. According to The Benchmarking Report 2015 (WTTO Press Releases, 2015) the global Travel & Tourism sector employs more people than automotive manufacturing, mining and financial services combined globally.

Total Travel & Tourism GDP is estimated to grow on average by 3.8% per year from 2015- 2025. It is expected that Travel & Tourism will provide a total of 72.9 million new jobs, 23.2 million of which will be provided directly within the sector. The contribution of total Travel & Tourism GDP to the wider economy is expected to rise from 9.8% in 2014 to 10.5% in 2025 and from 9.4% to 10.7% for employment (WTTC, 2015).

II. TOURISM IN INDIAN CONTEXT

The 'Incredible India' campaign, together with efforts taken by individual state tourism boards and facilities like augmenting tourism infrastructure, easing of visa regime, assurance of quality standards in services of tourism service providers, projecting the country as a 365 days' tourist destination, promoting tourism in a sustainable manner helped in increasing sustainable tourist footfall in the country. Tourism in India is the largest service industry with a contribution of 6.23% to the national GDP and 8.78% of the total employment in India. In 2013, total Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTA) in India were 6.97 million and India generated about 225 billion US dollars in 2013 and that is expected to increase to US\$ 375.5 billion by 2018 at a 9.4% annual growth rate. The majority of foreign tourists come from USA and UK. Number of domestic tourists in 2013 stands at 740 million.

Tourism in Himachal Pradesh:-

Three prime movers of mountain economies are horticulture and select agriculture, hydro- electricity and tourism. At the moment, only 7% of Himachal's GDP comes from tourism. Yet, it is estimated to be much higher as there is substantial income generation even in the non-organised sector. For example, it is estimated that at least Rs. 150 crores is earned per annum by the hospitality sector, another Rs. 100 crores are earned by food and

bar sales. Shopping by tourists ploughs about Rs. 150 crores into the State's economy. Transport generates another estimated Rs. 100 crores, and ancillary services provided by porters, guides etc. generate at least another Rs. 20 crores. It is estimated that a million rupees invested in tourism creates 47.5 new jobs. This compares favourably with other sectors including traditional sectors like agriculture, where a similar investment yields only 44.7 new jobs. The role that tourism can play in a land-locked state with a hill terrain like Himachal is considerable. Job opportunities are limited since the economy is basically agrarian and the scope for industrialisation is limited due to geographical and ecological reasons. (Sharma Manoj, 2007)

At present, there are two broad heads of the tourism product — natural and manmade heritage. Then there is the substantial but more intangible tourism segment that comes from pilgrims to the many religious places in the State. Himachal has been generously endowed by nature. Its forests have the uniqueness of being temperate to alpine ones in what is otherwise a tropical zone. These forests still have a substantial amount of wildlife and the area covered by sanctuaries and National Parks is over seven thousand square kilometers. There are 32 Sanctuaries, 2 National Parks and 3 Game Reserves. The sanctuaries include Simbalwara (Sirmour), Churdhar, Chail (Solan), Maharana Pratap Sagar (Kangra) Manali (Kullu), Kanwar (Kullu), Kalatop Khajjiar (Chamba), Daranghati (Shimla). The National Parks are Pin Valley National Park, Spiti and the Great Himalayan National Park, Kullu, the Nature parks are at Kufri (Shimla), Manali (Kullu) and Gopalpur (Kangra).

The major rivers of the State are the Yamuna, the Satluj, the Beas, the Ravi and the Chenab. There are several lakes all over the state and water in some form or the other, covers over 1% of the State land area. Many of these lakes are home to a variety of aquatic and avian life, for example, the Maharana Pratap Sagar (formerly known as the Pong Dam Reservoir) is a declared bird sanctuary and over 220 species belonging to 54 families have been sighted. These include black-headed gulls, plovers, terns, ducks, water-fowl and egrets. The lake's location at the head of the Indian plains has made it a suitable habitat and stopover for migratory birds that enter India from Central Asia. Twenty-seven species and sub-species of fish belonging to six families have been recorded in these waters. Some of the important commercial varieties are - *Labeo dero* (Gid), *Labeo rohita*, *Labeo calbasu*, *Tor putitora* (Mahsir), and *Mystus seenghala* (Singhara). (Jan, 2004).

The State has several ancient Hindu temples and places of pilgrimage. Himachal is home to many of the 'Shaktipeeths' revered by Hindus. These are at Kangra (Vajreshwari Devi), Chintapurni (Chinmastika Devi), Jwalaji (Jwalamukhi), Naina Devi and Sarahan (Bhimakali). There are other shrines that draw thousands of pilgrims like Chamunda Devi, Deot Sidh, Baba Balak Nath and Trilokpur. Centres of Sikh pilgrimage are at Manikaran, Paonta Sahib, Baba Barbhag Singh and Rewalsar. Many of the towns have charming churches and these are at Shimla, Dagshai, Kotgarh, Kasauli, Palampur, Dharamsala, Dalhousie and Chamba. Practically every village has its own deities housed in temples that speak eloquently of local building skills and refined aesthetics

There are several Buddhist sites in Himachal. With dozens of old and new, large and small monasteries, Buddhism has a powerful presence in the State - which is also home to His

Holiness —the Dalai Lama and his followers. Mc-Leodganj, the seat of the Dalai Lama attracts several visitors from overseas. Tabo monastery in Spiti dates back to 996 AD and in terms of sanctity for Trans Himalayan Buddhism, this is considered only second to the Tholing monastery in Tibet.

Himachal's attractions include the unique 'hill stations' that were built by the British. These include the State Capital, Shimla, which was the 'summer capital' of British India and from where one-fifth of the human race was ruled for a century. These towns hold excellent examples of colonial architecture and provide a window to a by-gone age. Other smaller towns that were developed by the British are Kasauli, Kullu, Dalhousie, Palampur and Dharamsala. There is the dramatic landscape and unique culture of the Trans Himalayan districts of Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti. A portion of the district of Kinnaur lies south of the Greater Himalaya and the remainder lies across the mountains. The district of Lahaul-Spiti lies wholly in the Trans-Himalaya. This is a unique part of the world where thick forests steadily give way to the almost lunar-like landscape of the cold desert.

In the century-old Kalka Shimla Railway line and in the Kangra Valley railway, Himachal has two of the country's five heritage railway lines. Also in the last few decades, a range of activities have grown in Himachal Pradesh. Much of this is nature and outdoor related and the State is rapidly becoming a focus for adventure sport. This is the only place in India that hosts heli-skiing. Activities already available and which are likely to grow in the coming years are trekking and camping, skiing, para-sailing and para-gliding, water-sports and white-water rafting, ballooning, ice-skating, mountain cycling, vehicle safaris, mountaineering and rock climbing, golf and angling. Many of these come under the broad head of 'eco-tourism'.

Himachal's built heritage includes age-old forts and palaces, its remarkable wood and stone 'towers', the architecture of the colonial towns — and practically every village is a picture of pastoral perfection. There are the remarkable wall and miniature paintings of the Kangra region, Buddhist *thangkas* and a wealth of folk carving in wood. Culturally, the State is rich in its folk lore, costumes, shawls, jewellery, dance forms and the 'karali' dance-dramas. 'Health tourism' is likely to grow rapidly in the coming years. The clean and invigorating environment, the substantial forest cover and the number of herbs that grow in the State, provide a natural setting for this.

III. PROBLEMS OF MASS TOURISM

Mass tourism is slowly but surely decimating the natural beauty of popular tourist destinations and turning their once idyllic towns into urban nightmares. It is also imposing an unbearable burden on its infrastructure—roads, water supply, transport, waste disposal systems — thereby degrading the quality of life of its permanent residents. The state govt. so far has been going on an unplanned expansion mode. It has done little to regulate or guide this human tsunami; to the contrary, by misconceived and populist moves such as regularisation of illegal constructions, it is only encouraging mindless concretisation of the state. It is time for it to sit back, take a hard look at the damage being caused and take some remedial measures to limit the adverse effects of this model of tourism which may be acceptable in the plains but is totally unsuited for a mountain state like Himachal. The mass-tourism

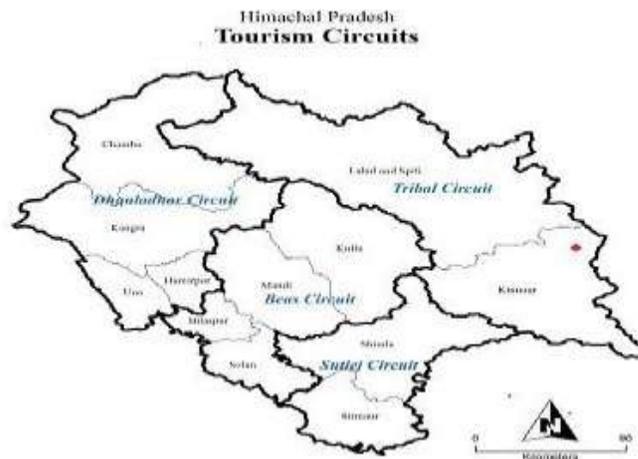
model is gradually getting discredited throughout the world and citizens/residents (if not yet governments) have begun to oppose it precisely because of its adverse cultural, landscape and infrastructural impacts. World has seen large scale protests by local populations, as reported in recent times in Barcelona, Venice, Thailand, even Nepal and Bhutan (which has imposed a cap on the number of tourists). We need to learn from this and accept that Tourism too is an Industry and, like all industries, the

—Chalta hail attitude will no longer do. We do not need any more evidence of the damage being caused by the existing form of tourism in the state: the condition of Shimla, Manali and Dharamshala; the traffic jams on Rohtang; the desecration of Khajjiar and Triund; the mounds of plastic on the railway tracks between Kalka and Solan; the road in Kufri ankle deep in horse dung ; Lakhs of —shradhalusl defecating all the way to Manimahesh lake, the regular hours- long traffic jams on all major highways are the evidence that a state is collapsing under the weight of unplanned tourism. Its only answer is to build or widen even more highways (the Parwanoo-Shimla and Kiratpur-Manali National Highways being prime examples of this myopic vision: all they will do is increase traffic exponentially and destabilise the hills in next few decade promising landslides on the highways). The numbers tell their own story. The state was visited by 17.53 million tourists in 2015- almost three times its own population! & the figure is growing by 7.5 % per annum, thanks largely to the

unrest in Kashmir. It is an important contributor to the economy of the state, providing 400,000 jobs and generating about Rs. 1200 crores, which is between 8% to 10% of the state's GDP. But there is a hidden story beneath these numbers. First, only some parts of the state benefit, not the entire state. Almost 50% of these tourists visit only three locations: Kullu (33.15 lakhs), Shimla (32.65 lakhs) and Kangra (24 lakhs). The tribal districts of Kinnaur (1.80 lakhs) and Lahaul Spiti (1.76 lakhs) are badly neglected. The implications of these figures are twofold: not only are the monetary benefits of tourism badly skewed, the three favoured towns/districts.

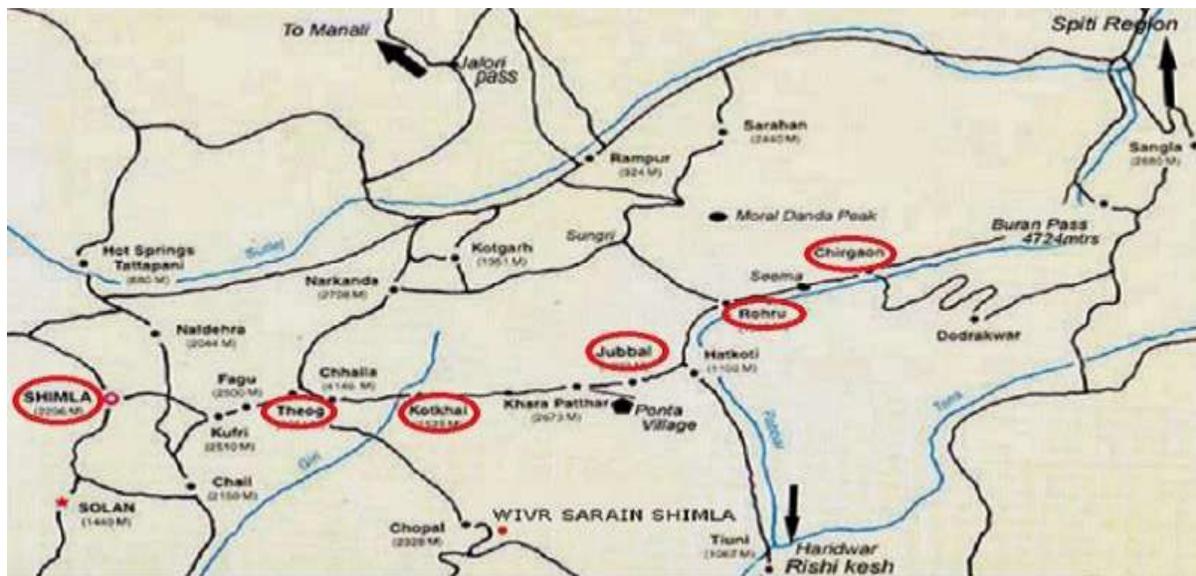
What is now required is a paradigm change of the very model of tourism, not just tinkering around to urgent and innovative, out-of-the-box ideas are needed to control numbers and shift the trajectory to high-end, quality tourism to divert the flow to smaller towns; provide special incentives and concessions (like those made available for eco-tourism and home-stay units) for alternative tourist circuits to encourage visitors to venture these tourist destinations.

IV. ROHRU- AN ALTERNATIVE TOURIST DESTINATION



Rohru is a town and a municipal committee in Shimla district situated at 31.202°N 77.7519°E at an altitude of about 1525 m above sea level in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. It is a town located at the bank of Pabbar River and it is about 115

kilometres away from Shimla city. The city was developed by Raja Bajrang Bhadur Singh, who was fond of this place and turned it into an ideal fishing zone for mahseer and trout fishing.



MAP OF PABBAR VALLEY (HIMACHAL PRADESH)

Rohru can stopover at nearby attractions like the Shikru Devta Temple, Chirgaon, and Dodra, and the Chanshal Range. In addition to this, Hatkoti, which is also situated on the banks of the river Pabbar, is a renowned tourist destination. This place rests at the meeting point of three water streams, known as the 'sangam', which is a pilgrimage spot for Hindus. According to a legend, Hatkoti is the site where the Hindu deity Shiva and Goddess Parvati, had a duel against each other. Rohru is popular for its quality apple; Rich Red and the Royal Delicious are two of the most famous varieties of apples found in the region. The Nazeru devta's temple is situated at Shakli, 15 km upstream of Rohru town. Rohru is very popular for highly dense Forests ranges. The temperature here remains around 10-15 degree with fog covering the area most of the time throughout the year. Rohru also has many high snow belts like Chanshil Top (Rohru), Surachali Top (Rohru-jubbal). Khara-pathar (jubbal) Sungri etc. and several beautiful valleys like Hatkoti as well. Khara pathar, Chanshil Top and Surachali Top Untapu (Arhal-Batari) and Sungri are popular for record snow in winters. Throughout the year the climate and the weather conditions are perfect for to welcome the visitors. Himachal is Popularly known as "Dev Bhoomi Himachal" means land full of Devi's and Devta's. Some temples situated in or near by Rohru.

1. Mata Hateshwari Temple:-This temple is situated in Hatkoti which is on the way to Rohru from Shimla and it's nearly 11 Kms from Rohru. The people of Rohru believe that the temple established by Guru Adi Shankracharya. Some people also believe that the temple was built somewhere in Gupta era.
2. Devta Morish Temple:-This temple is situated in Rantari Village of Rohru. It's nearly 15 Kms from Rohru at the height of 8000 feet. The temple is surrounded by mountains and it is believed that Devta "Morish" was found by a member of pandit family nearly 100 years back in a nearby river side. It's a nice place to plan out for picnic. A famous festival of Devta Ji's is called "Shant Mahayagya" which comes once after 15 years and in this festival nearly Devta's from different villages come with round about 3,000 people to meet Morish devta.

1. Shikru Devta Temple:-This temple is situated in heart of Rohru. The temple is beautiful to see and it is believed that who so ever comes here with wishes and true heart gets what he/she has prayed from Devta ji. Temple is having a very old history with it. Shikru devta was found in Chandernahan lake in Chirgaon village which is 15Kms from Rohru and a very beautiful lake to see. Annual fair is celebrated during the month of April every year.
 2. Bakralu Devta Temple:- This temple is situated in Dalgaon village near Rohru at a distance of about 20 Kms. A very famous Devta Ji's festival is celebrated here in this village named as "Bhunda Mahayagya" It is Believed that in year when this festival is celebrated it brings a healthy crop of Apple which is main source of income here. Festival comes once nearly after every 10 or 12 years. This temple is located in very beautiful location surrounded by dense forests.
 3. Lankra Veer Temple: - This temple is situated at Hatkoti. Temple is built at top of the Hill from where you will see heart throbbing view of surroundings.
 4. Giri Ganga Temple:-This temple is situated in Kharapathar, It is temple of mata Kalli located between dense forest of Deodhar tree. It is nearly at the height of 10000 feet from sea level and a very cold region..
- Chandernahan Lake:-This lake is situated in between beautiful snowy mountains at the height of 4,000 meters (approximately) from sea level in Rohru tehsil of Shimla district. To reach Chandernahan lake from Rohru there is a road facility to village Tangnu & village Janglikh. From the village Tangnu it takes nearly 8 hours trek to complete your journey to Chandernahan lake. While doing trekking you will reach Litham Thach in between nearly after a trek of 3 or 4 hours. The word "Thach" means the a large plane area in hilly areas where goats and other animals used to eat grass. In this beautiful thach you will definately get the feel of heaven. The river Pabbar originates from here, which cultivates a large area of Rohru. There is a water fall of about 30 meters before it converts in to regular flowing water of river Pabbar. It is the birth place of Devta Shikru. Kewar valley is situated in back side of chanshal peak is Dodra Kewar. It is

believed that if you walk without wearing shoes on grass at Chanshal peak, it acts as medicine for blood pressure, heart problems etc. On the way to dodra kewar, you will definitely feel like you are in Heaven, completely surrounded by snowy white mountains and green mountains. The village is at the height of 2450 mts from sea level. People here believe in Devta "JAKHII.

V. CONCLUSION

To counter the devil of mass tourism and keeping pace with the tourism growth, alternate tourist destinations like —Rohrul has to be brought on the tourist map.

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