PROTECTION OF TOURISTS IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Since safety and security play a major role in destination selection, they have always been essential conditions for travel and tourism. The importance of safety and security has increased significantly in recent years as a result of global events such as terrorist attacks, pandemics, diseases, natural catastrophes, and local conflicts. Given that the tourist business spans several sectors, it is unable to overlook the adverse effects and aftermaths of such occurrences. This fact makes the study of safety and security-related issues in tourism necessary.

During natural disasters, very few visitors cancel their trip to India for reasons related to safety and security. After analyzing the data, it was discovered that extremely few instances have been reported of severe problems including sexual harassment and attempted murder. Nevertheless, a few travelers encountered some security problems, such as service manipulation, dishonesty, or theft. The lack of really major problems demonstrates the government's competence to enforce safety and security.

Keywords: Safety, Security, Tourism

1. Introduction:

India's largest service industry, which contributes about 4.6% Gross Domestic Product of the country, is the Tourism Industry[1]. Around 92,36,108 foreign tourists arrived in India between January to December 2023. Delhi (30.29%), Mumbai (15.08%), Haridaspur (10.14%), Chennai (8.34%), and Bangalore (6.06%) are the top ports with the highest percentage share of Foreign Tourist Arrivals[2].

In 2022, approximately 147 different crimes and offenses took place against foreigners in our country. Karnataka was on the top of the lift with 28 cases which was followed by Himachal Pradesh and Maharashtra with 21 cases in each state along with 16 cases each in Goa and Haryana. Recently, in March 2024, a female tourist from Spain was allegedly gang raped in Jharkhand. One of the most frequently committed crimes in India against foreign nations is Theft.

Overview With nearly 80 million jobs and 9.2% of India's GDP coming from tourism, the industry plays a major role in the nation's economy.

India is a sizable travel and tourist market. It provides a wide range of specialized travel goods, including cruises, outdoor activities, wellness, medical, sports, MICE, eco-tourism, movies, and rural, and religious travel. Both local and foreign travelers have acknowledged India as a spiritual tourism destination. In the World Economic Forum's 2019 Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report, India came in at number 34.

Travelers are drawn to India by its welcoming people, varied environment, and rich cultural legacy. However, despite its enormous potential, the tourist sector in India confronts a number of obstacles that limit its ability to expand.

The rural tourism industry, particularly for international tourists, remains untapped due to the government's lack of systematic efforts to attract them. The tourism industry This burgeoning industry has the ability to significantly impact a country's economic growth. The civil industry is significant, accounting for around 10% of the global GNP.

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[1] https://www.india.gov.in/topics/travel-tourism
[2] Ministry of Tourism-Monthly Tourism Statistics December 2023

2. Objective of study

1.   To know how much India is a safer destination for foreign tourists.

2.   To know the behavior of foreign tourists towards safety and security.

3.   To examine the problems which have been faced by travelers.

A sizable portion of the population exclusively makes money from tourism. Therefore, it is crucial to allow the number of foreign visitors to grow at a geometric pace, aiding in the growth of the country. As a result, the government's concern for the well-being of its international visitors in India has grown.

3. ISSUES FACED BY THE INDIAN TOURIST INDUSTRY

Inaccessibility:- Human Resources & Planning: A vital component of the tourist industry is held by exceptionally talented and capable men and women. Thus, there is a labor shortage in the hospitality and tourist industries at the moment.

Human Resources & Planning:- Highly skillful and potential men or women hold an inevitable part of the tourism sector. So currently, there is a lack of workforce in both the hospitality and tourism sectors.

Lack of Proper Infrastructure:- Numerous components make up the foundation's built framework. stability, adequate healthcare facilities, and transportation infrastructure. For tourism to continue, additional human resources and unbroken connectivity are also essential.

Tax concerns about Indian tourism: the manufacture of hotels, tour operators, and airline amenities is subject to hefty taxes. They are rather pricey. That constitutes the primary cause of tourism losses to other nations with lower costs.

Inadequate Digital Promotion and Marketing: A country's travel business can not flourish without significant digital marketing support and grand promotion. The Indian tourism sector is still in the early stages of its digital marketing campaign.

One of the biggest problems is; **Security concerns**: One of the main obstacles to Indian tourism is security. Theft, credit card fraud, and female sexual abuse are all on the rise among

international visitors. Additionally, there is a significant impact of public violence on Indian tourism.

Travel encourages travelers to explore the many locations in India that they would be inclined to travel to. Since every visitor is now aware of the safety problem, the negative effects would be a significant setback for the tourism sector. In actuality, a few of the occurrences render tourism defenseless on a national and worldwide scale. Travelers are now more aware of the destination thanks to a number of industry-sponsored ads, and as a result, both inbound and outbound travel has increased recently. India, which is renowned for its vibrant culture, food, customs, and upheld traditions, is one of the most desirable travel destinations in the world.

4. SUGGESTIONS

1. To determine how the media portrays the destination house, different research has to be conducted. Longitudinal surveys may be used in conjunction with this research to assess how closely the visitor followed the improvement in perception.

2. Since locals' behavior and attitudes might affect how outsiders see them, residents' perceptions can also be considered in the study.

3. A different investigation might be carried out to evaluate the level of collaboration between the different law enforcement and security organizations and how it affects visitors' perceptions.

4. With all the factors under control and every safety measure taken to reduce the impact, how much has perception changed?

5. Research on the connection between travel decisions, expectations, and perceptions of the location can also be attempted.

6. Research that compares different locations with comparable conditions can be conducted.

5. IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY AND SECURITY IN TOURISM

One of the most important requirements for the long-term, sustainable expansion of this

industry is the safety and security of the tourism industry. When traveling, staying, and visiting tourist places, travelers' concerns about safety and security become top priorities. The Indian government's Ministry of Tourism guarantees the security and safety of overseas visitors. There is also a discussion of the state government's responsibility for the security of visitors and the operation of diverse tourist police programs in the various states and union territories.

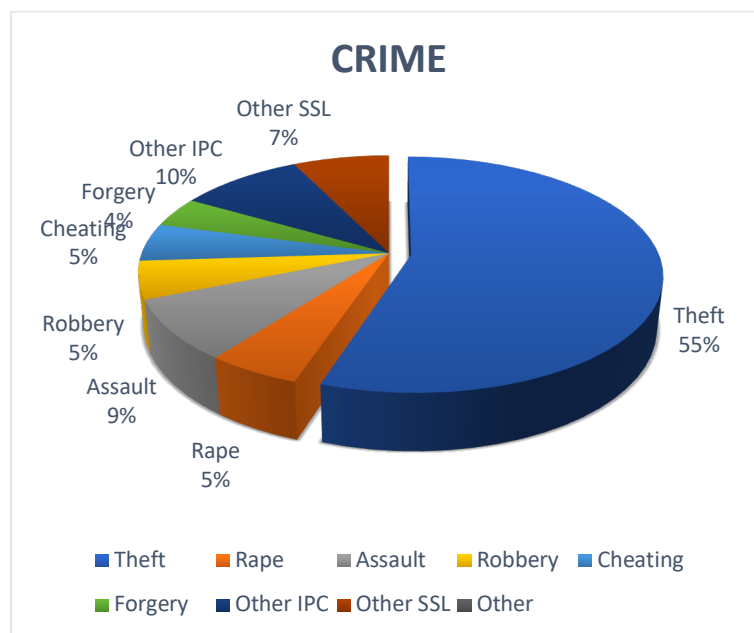## NUMBER OF CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST FOREIGNERS IN INDIA TILL 2023

Figure 01[3]

Of all the crimes against foreigners that have been registered in the nation up till 2023, the majority have occurred in Delhi and include rape (8 out of 22 instances), theft (116 out of 260 cases), assaults on women intended to insult their modesty (10 out of 39 incidents), and cheating (9 out of 22 instances) were recorded in Delhi alone, making up 44.6%, 25.6%, 36.4%, and 40.9% of the total cases.

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[3] NCRB Crime in India 2023

SAFETY AND SECURITY AT A DESTINATION FOR MAKING TRAVEL CHOICE
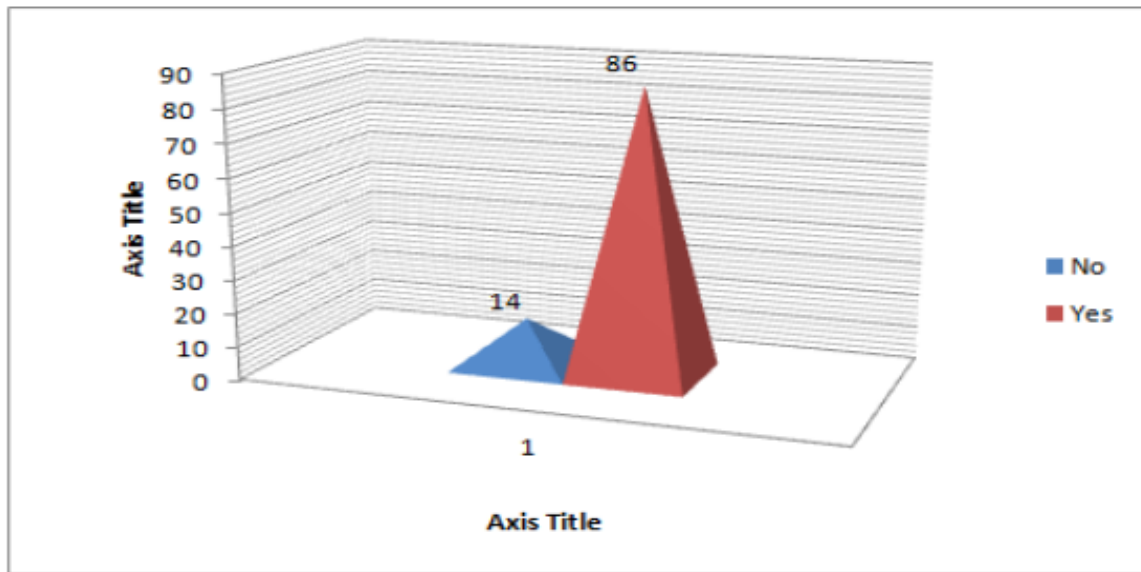

Figure 02

The degree to which safety and security influence travel decisions is displayed in the table and graph above. When selecting a tourism site, 86.0% of travelers believe that security should come first.
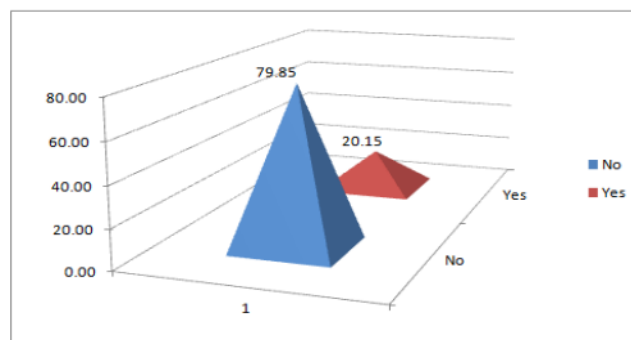
CANCELLED TOUR DUE TO SECURITY REASONS

Figure 03[4]

Merely 20.15 percent of travelers canceled their booked tours for security-related concerns, as seen by the table and graph above.

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[4] NCRB Report 2023

Several Initiatives Taken to Ensure The Safety and Security of Tourists:

The Ministry of Tourism has taken several initiatives to ensure the safety and security of tourists which are as follows:[5]

i. Launched the 24x7 Toll-Free Multilingual Tourist Info-Helpline on 1800111363 or 1363 in 12 Languages to provide support service in terms of information relating to Travel in India and also offer appropriate guidance to tourists in distress while traveling in India.

ii. A Welcome card with "Tips to enjoy your stay" is being handed over to foreign tourists on arrival to give tourists a memorable experience.

iii.The State Governments/Union Territory Administrations of Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha have deployed Tourist Police, in one form or the other.

 iv. Launched Social Awareness Media Campaigns with the objective of sensitizing stakeholders in the tourism industry as well as the general public about the importance of good conduct and behavior towards tourists and reinforcing the spirit of 'Atithidevo Bhava'.

v. Issued the Guidelines on Safety and Security of Tourists for States/UTs and Tips for Travellers to stress the importance of safety and risk management, assist in identifying best practices, and encourage closer cooperation to ensure a pleasant experience for the tourists.

vi. Conducts a constant dialogue with States/UTs, various tourism-related institutions, and stakeholders for drawing up strategies for the development and promotion of tourism including safe and honorable Tourism.

vii. Issued advisories to States/UTs with advice to mark the Selfie Danger Zone at tourist places.

Further, the Ministry of Tourism has posted an advisory on the website https://www.incredibleindia.org/ indicating that India remains a safe destination for

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[5] https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=177412 Several Initiatives Taken to Ensure The Safety and Security of Tourists: Tourism Minister

international visitors.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Nearly every state has a policing system in place to guarantee visitors' safety and security, either in the form of a dedicated pool or a rotating pool. To offer tourists the finest services possible, some states have implemented tourist police systems. The investigation reveals that along with the lack of efficient tourist policing systems, crime is also correlated with the amount of FTV broadcast in various states around the nation. Given the amount of foreign tourists that visit the states, it is advised in this context that state governments plan for the deployment of tourist police at various tourist attractions.

Tourists are vulnerable to exploitation at state entry/exit points such as airports, train stations, and bus terminals. Additionally, a sizable portion of visitors encounter issues because of touts. Therefore, it is advised that police officers be stationed primarily in these locations around the clock.

The majority of visitors are unaware of the law enforcement agencies that are available in the nation or states to address concerns pertaining to safety and security that affect visitors. Therefore, it is advised that information about these groups be made public through internet as well as printed marketing collateral.

As the service providers, tourist police stress that the things that contribute to the prompt resolution of visitor complaints are conduct, attitude, and awareness-raising skills. As a middleman, tour operators argue that the police's capacity to coordinate with other agencies is counterproductive to problem-solving. Therefore, it is advised that a system be created to provide the Tourist Police with the tools they need to handle complaints.

7. CONCLUSION

The study suggests that one of the sectors with the quickest rate of growth is tourism, which supports both inbound and outbound travel. Since the number of international visitors to India is increasing, there is a need for increased safety and security at the destination in order to make visitors feel more secure and encourage them to visit that specific location. Since tourism is one of the ways that local people thrive and find work, places like India require more safety

and security measures for international visitors. India has to do better when it comes to providing facilities for the protection of independent women tourists who come to visit the stunning country.

When traveling to different parts of India, travelers also adhere to some standards in order to prevent mishaps at their destinations. Additionally, foreign cash is brought into India by the entry of international visitors, which boosts India's GDP. The safety of the visitor should be taken into account in order to enhance the number of international visitors arriving. The Ministry of Tourism could take a few additional efforts to ensure safety and security, such as providing adequate lodging and acting quickly to address issues raised by travelers with regard to safety precautions.