EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Title of the project: ROLE OF TOURISM AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF BACKWARD AREAS: A CASE STUDY OF CHICKMAGALUR DISTRICT IN KARNATAKA

Tourism has been regarded as one of the rapidly growing industries. The role of tourism in accelerating the economic development of a country has been widely recognized. It plays an important role in the economic, cultural, social and educational field and it is considered as the second largest economic activity in many countries for earning foreign exchange. Tourism is not a single industry but it is an aggregate of many components viz., capital investments in hotels, airways, roadways, railways, shopping centers, resorts and handicraft which amounts to billions of dollars and millions of people earn their livelihood from direct and indirect employment in tourism industry.

Though tourism earnings constitute more than one fourth of India’s foreign exchange reserves; India is among the last in the list of leading tourist countries in the world. An unfortunate thing causing concern is that though India is gifted with historical monuments, temples, Beaches, Wildlife sanctuaries and Cultural Tradition she has yet to become a desired destination for a large number of foreigners. If the figure of tourist arrivals in India presented as a fraction of world tourism arrivals the percentage becomes insignificant exclusive of the visitors from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India’s share of international tourism in terms of arrivals grew by 11 per cent (3.9 per cent in real terms) in the year 2011 which rose from 0.19 percent in 1961 and 0.3 percent in 1989 and to 0.56 percent in 2007. Thus India’s position is still less than 4 percent in world tourist arrivals.

Chickmagalur, one of the most important tourist destinations also remains backward in Karnataka. It is unique not only as world’s largest nature beauty but also for various additional facilities, rivers, mineral resources and its ever green forests. It is also the hub of greenery, scenery, beauty and home for many wild animals.

The present study encompasses a micro problem area by choosing one backward district in the state viz., Chickmagalur belonging to Malnad region of Karnataka, a major constituent state of Indian union. The study is explorative in character as it seeks to make an in-depth as well as extensive study of the various facets of tourism and the impact of the tourism upon national and regional development and also its efficiency in removing backwardness of the region. This study is significant compared to earlier studies as it follows a new methodology and approach in extracting problems of tourism in
Chickmagalur district and also it offers constructive suggestions for the development of tourism opportunities, because Chickmagalur district is a nature’s heaven at the same time it is backward. Through Tourism it can be developed to the great extent, since the district has great potential to attract large number of tourists from various parts of the country and the world. The study while revealing the capabilities of Chickmagalur District in tourism development to bring forth several weaknesses, that exists in the strategy for tourism development in this district.

The present study also gives the direction at the macro level in which expansion of India’s foreign exchange is possible and the role of tourism industry as the main torchbearer in this regard. The study also helps to show the way in which regional imbalance can be corrected through tourism development, which in turn provides a direct stimulus for the socio-economic development of backward areas in the country. Thus, tourism becomes an economic weapon to push up the country towards prosperity and achieve balanced regional development. The present work takes clues from the earlier works and also the day to day happenings in the area of development of backward areas through Tourism sector and makes an attempt to project the impending problems with some pertinent solutions

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