



DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS – A MODEL

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a branch of Business/Commerce occupying the status of an Industry. Now Tourism is considered as a part of commerce and it is now rightly added to the long list of established industries. Further, Tourism offer ever- widening employment opportunities. Tourism brings and joins the people of different cultures, religions, languages, etc. Andaman and Nicobar Islands are located in the Bay of Bengal. People of all the states in India live in these Islands in harmony with their own culture. The natural beauty of the A & N Islands is very attractive. The green vegetation, the tropical forests, the sun-kissed sandy beaches, serpentine creeks, backwaters etc altogether make these islands most serene and enchanting. The industrial development in A & N islands has not been fast enough. Tourism is the only scope of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands for its economic development. The Tourism sector requires effective planning, and a detailed study on the available resources favourable to the tourism in this territory. Tourism problems are in three types namely, Problems Facing the Tourists, Problems Facing the Tourism Entrepreneurs and Problems Facing the Management. Tourism has excellent scope in these islands if it is properly managed with the qualified personnel. For the Tourism Development in A & N islands, a model has been suggested at the interest of the Nation. Once if a Strategy, Tourism Planning, and the Tourism Policy are formulated in the light of the suggestions given in the present work, and the same is implemented very carefully, it is strongly believed that the Tourism in Andaman and Nicobar Islands will be improved, the revenue from the Tourism will increase, the office and administrative expenses will be reduced and the surplus can be seen.

Tourism

The tourism is now rightly added to the long list of established industries. The tourism industry started to contribute to the regional development of the trade, commerce, manufacturing sectors, tax revenue to the government and the national income of the country as a whole. The employment opportunities tend to increase. It is mainly being a labour intensive industry, providing employment to the semi-skilled and the unskilled labourers. Besides generating income and employment opportunities, the development in tourism gives a strong social relationships both nationally and internationally and thereby it plays a positive role in the field of both Inter-state and international relationships. Tourism brings and joins the people of different cultures, religions, languages, etc.

Andaman And Nicobar Islands (A & N Islands)

Andaman and Nicobar Islands (A & N Islands) group of islands as a whole is one of the union territories of India and is located in the Bay of Bengal constitute the remotest region of our country. These islands were once coined as KALAPANI (the Black water) indicating the dreaded transportation, punishment of the British Government of India. "KALAPANI" is all that many have heard of a term that for centuries conjured up the dark vision of forbidden land surrounded by vast sheets of deep water, unapproachable and hostile. But due to the location of the small villages, inhabitants are cut-off from civilisation and from the source of supply of essential commodities. The towns and small villages have started flourishing only recently, because of the harbour facilities that have been provided in these islands and slow progress of shipping and other transport facilities.

These Islands are situated in the Bay of Bengal and it is located between 6 degree and 14 degree of North latitude and 92 degree and 94 degree of East longitude. This is surrounded by Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, constitutes the most isolated part of the Indian Union, stretching in a North-South direction, separated from the Mainland of India by vast stretches of sea. The southern most tip of the territory is Indira Point (previously named as Pygmalion Point). These islands comprise two separate groups, namely, the Andaman group of Islands and the Nicobar Group of islands. The Andaman group of islands is separated from Nicobar group of Islands by the boisterous 10-degree channel. The seat of Administration of Andaman & Nicobar Islands is at Port Blair the Capital of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, which is connected with Kolkatta

by a sea distance of 1225 Kms. and with Chennai by 1191 Kms. and with Vishakapatnam by 1200 Kms.

Population

As per the 2001 census, 38 islands of this territory were found inhabited. Out of these 38 islands, 25 islands are located in Andaman District and 13 in the Nicobar District. The population of these islands is a heterogeneous one, with a mixture of diverse communities from the mainland. So A&N Island is a miniature India. People of all the states in India live in these Islands in harmony with their own culture. The total population of A&N Islands as per 2001 census was 3,56,265 consisting of 1,92,985 males and 1,63,280 females and the same was as per 1991 census was 2,80,661 constituting 1,54,346 males and 1,26,292 females. As per 2001 Census, the literacy rate in Andaman and Nicobar Islands is 81.18%.

A Green Paradise

A & N Island is rich in resources for tourism, which are found in abundance. The natural beauty of the A & N Islands is very attractive. Both the domestic and foreign tourists consider this territory as the Green Paradise in the Marigold sun. The author has written a separate book in the name of “Green Paradise on the Blue Surface”. The scenic beauty emerges like a beautiful green oasis in the Bay of Bengal. A most hospitable and cosmopolitan society, free from rigidity of caste, creed and religion, projecting Indian culture, unity in diversity is the A & N islands, today. The green vegetation, the tropical forests, the sun-kissed sandy beaches, serpentine creeks, backwaters etc altogether make the islands most serene and enchanting. The industrial development in A & N islands has not been fast enough. The industrial sector gives little scope for generation of employment and income opportunities. Hence the tourism industry along with the other allied activities like trade and commerce need attention of the A & N Administration, Planners, Policy Makers, Hoteliers, Economists, Researchers, Academicians, Tour operators, to find out ways and means to improve the tourism facilities.

Present Scenario

Tourism Education is a branch of Business/Commerce Education occupying the status of an Industry. Now Tourism is considered as a part of commerce. Further, trade, commerce and industry including Tourism

offer ever- widening employment opportunities. Tourism Industry is one of the best types of Business of our country. Economic development of any country depends greatly on the growth and development of its trade, commerce and industry. Trade and Commerce remove the hindrances of person, time, exchange and knowledge in connection with the distribution of goods till they reach the consumers and by doing so, it ensures a free and smooth flow of goods and services from producers to consumers. Industrial growth, in majority of cases, is the most potent dynamic factor in the process of accelerated economic development. Industry also plays an important role in the development of backward areas and in removing disparity. But in Andaman and Nicobar islands, all products, except a very few, are imported from the Mainland of India. Here in these Islands, Tourism is the only hope for the growth and development of the economy. But due to the lack of planning, absence of the clear-cut tourism policy, lack of proper model, lack of policy for the infrastructural development, it is not developed in these islands at least in a satisfactory level though it could be developed in a systematic way with the profit. So a study has been undertaken to trace the growth, to find out the Problems and to offer suitable suggestions in the form of a model for the tourism management in the A & N Islands.

Tourism Season

There are two monsoons namely South West and North East. So the best season for tourists to visit these islands (almost all the islands) is from October to May. The remaining period from May to September is also not a bad time to visit these islands. But generally tourists come less in number to these islands during this period. So the period between October and May is called as Tourist Season and the period between May and September is called as Off-Season. But the whole part of the year is the tourist season as far as these islands are concerned.

Growth Factors

The main favorable factors for the growth of tourism in A & N islands are:

1. The first and most factor is the introduction of cheaper fair air services between Andaman & Nicobar Islands and the Mainland. Increased transport facilities, not only between Mainland -Island but also between islands. Increased accommodation facilities for different class of people.

2. Never ending Natural Scenic Beauty of this Green Paradise. Pollution free natural way of valuable life, free from gundaism, riots, burglary and political evils and politics-free life.
3. A most hospitable and cosmopolitan society, free from the rigidities of caste, creed and religion, projecting Indian culture and unity in diversity in A & N islands is the plus point for the tourism
4. Selective publicity through the educational publishers like Manas Publishers who are showing keen interest in the development of these Mari Gold Islands.
5. The National Memorial Cellular Jail is situated in A & N Islands.

Growth

The growth speed of the Tourism in A & N Islands is below normal. The tourism growth can be discussed under the three-category namely Domestic Tourism, Foreign Tourism and the Total Tourism. The following table shows the number of tourists visited in these islands.

Table I
Number of Tourists Arrived in A & N Islands

(In Nos.)

Year	Domestic Tourists	Growth %	Foreign Tourists	Growth %	Total Tourists	Growth %
1980- 82	29779	-	4368	-	34147	-
1983- 85	50311	68.9	6233	42.7	56544	65.6
1986-88	87122	73.2	7539	20.9	94661	67.4
1989-91	99228	13.9	4337	46.4	110565	16.8
1992-94	121554	22.5	4853	4.6	133407	20.7
1995-97	206006	69.5	14369	21.2	220375	65.2
1998-00	233612	13.4	15634	8.8	249246	13.1
2001-03	270394	15.8	14237	8.9	284631	14.2
2004-06	271442*	NC	11719*	NC	283161*	NC

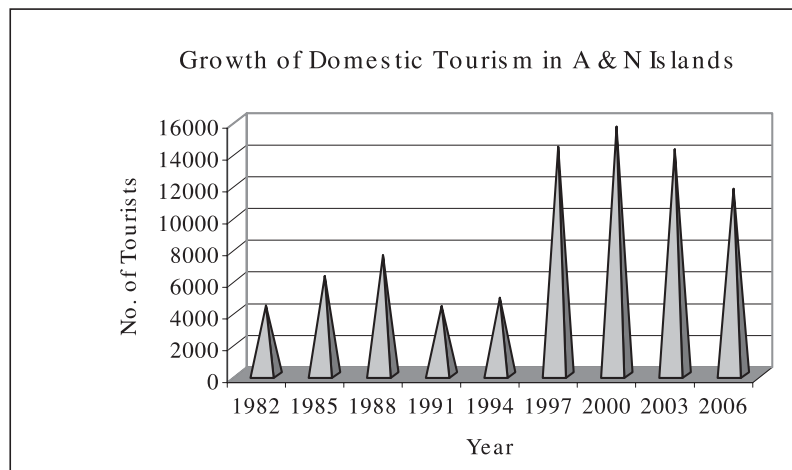
Source: Compiled from the data collected from the Tourism Department, Port Blair.

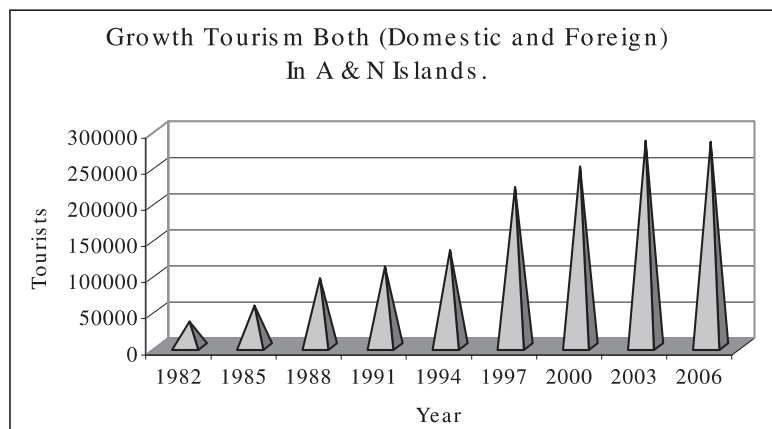
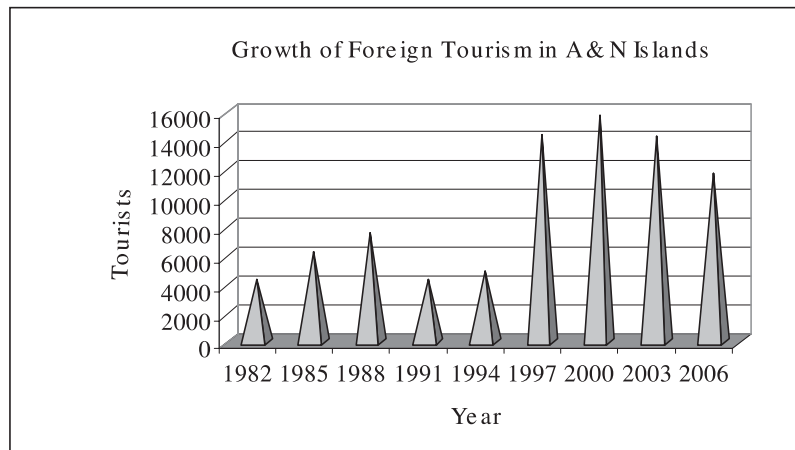
NC – Not Calculated since it is upto 1.1.06

The table reveals that the arrival of Domestic Tourists (DTs) has been increasing regularly. High rate of growth was recorded in the years 1983-85, 1986-88, 1992-94 and 1995-97. The main reason for this high rate of increase from the year 1980 onwards is the introduction of air service. The table also recorded a low growth rate of 13.4% and 15.8% in the year 1998-2000 and 2001-03 respectively. The reasons attributed to this are that during these years frequent cancellation of ships and flights, strikes etc. were going. However one can see the regular growth of number of tourists' arrival on these islands.

Next to the domestic tourism, foreign tourism plays an important role in the growth of economic development of A & N islands. It plays an important role both directly and indirectly in promoting the international trade in earning Foreign Exchange, settling of balance of payments position and in international understanding. From the table it is clear that the growth in arrival of FTs is not regular. This is because of the policy matters of the respective countries. However, the high rates of changes were recorded in the arrival of foreign tourists in the years 1983 -85, 1986-88, 1989-91, and 1995-97.

It is clear from the above table that the number of tourists arrived into these islands has been increasing since 1980 onwards. Growth in total number of tourists arrived into these islands has been increasing. Low growth has been recorded in the year 1989-91, 1998-2000 and 2001-03. Declaration of Tourism as Industry in these islands by giving all benefits such as concessions, subsidies, incentives etc, by the A&N Administration





during the year 1987 was the main favourable reason for the growth of tourism particularly domestic tourism. A lot of hotels, restaurants, tourism facilities, lodges, tour operators, travel agents, transport came into existence only after the declaration of tourism as industry.

Problems

Tourism is the only scope of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands for its economic development. But it is still in infant stage. With the growing population, the tourism is the only solution to remove the unemployment problem. But this sector is also not free from the

Problems. However the problems are solvable with a number of solutions that can be carried out with proper management. The Tourism sector requires effective planning, and a detailed study on the available resources favourable to the tourism in this territory. Tourism problems may be classified into three types namely, Problems Facing the Tourists, Problems Facing the Tourism Entrepreneurs and Problems Facing the Management. No system is established till date to register, monitor, regulate and streamline the activities of the persons related to the tourism namely the tour operators, travel agents, hoteliers, boat operators, tourism traders or entrepreneurs etc.. Hence the units related to tourism industry are working in these islands as unregulated units without any guidance and responsibility. No Constructive Tourism Policy has been prepared for these islands till date.

Tourism Department

The Tourism Department has to have its office in many places in A & N islands. The personnel for the department is to be carefully selected with the principles of management. Authority and responsibilities are to be fixed in consultation with the Commerce and Management Experts and not by any other persons. This is at the interest of the Nation. A Model Chart has been shown. The required qualification for the personnel of the Tourism Department is also given for the proper productivity and the actual development. The hotels, restaurants, entrepreneurs, lodges, their return as is suggested in the Model, their activities, tourists' problems, regular inspection, infrastructural facilities, available resources, publication of the island tourism, management of tourism festivals, how to attract the tourists, management of accommodation owned both private and government, submission of their activity return, what is the Gross and Net Domestic Product and Gross and Net National Product of the Tourism Sector in A & N Islands, its calculation, etc., are the major areas to be allocated to the personnel of the tourism department. Qualifications are suggested for the different posts in the Tourism Department.

Qualifications

The qualifications for the different personnel in the Tourism Department for the actual growth and development after the careful analysis are recommended and suggested below at the interest of the Nation.

Director

Candidates with First Class /Division in M.Com, Ph.D. or M B A, Ph.D. or MTA, Ph.D. or any high level Diploma in Tourism Administration from the Indian Institutes are to be appointed for the post of Director. If the candidates do not possess these qualifications whatsoever be the cadre or any such thing should not be considered for the Post of Director.

Deputy Director

Candidates with Second Class /Division in M.Com, Ph.D. or M B A, Ph.D. or MTA, Ph.D. or any high level Diploma in Tourism Administration from the Indian Institutes are to be appointed for the post of Deputy Director. If the candidates do not possess these qualifications whatsoever be the cadre or any such thing should not be considered for the Post of Deputy Director.

Assistant Director & Tourism Promotion Officer

Candidates with First / Second Class /Division in M.Com, or M B A, or MTA, or any Diploma in Tourism Administration from the Indian Institutes are to be appointed for the post of Assistant Director. If the candidates do not possess these qualifications whatsoever be the cadre or any such thing should not be considered for the Post of Assistant Director.

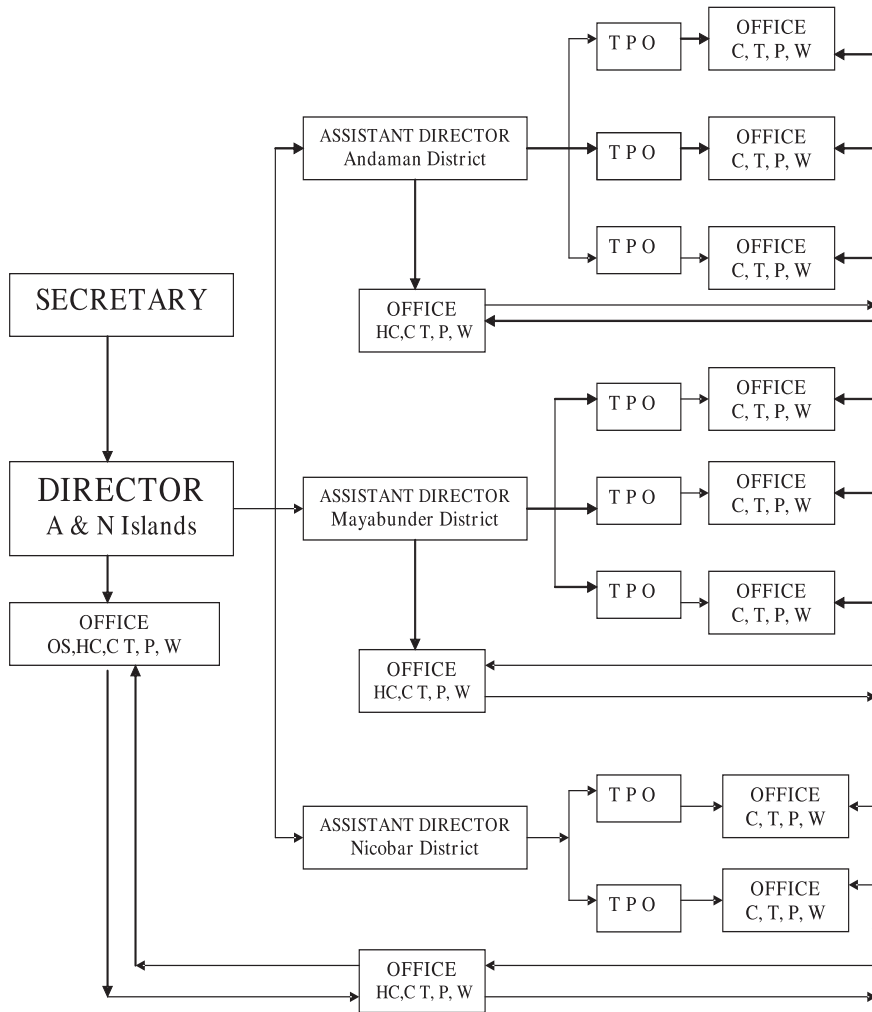
Office Superintendent & Head Clerk

Candidates with First Class /Division in B.Com or B B A, with a paper Office Management or any Diploma in Tourism Administration from the Indian Institutes are to be appointed for the post of Office Superintendent. If the candidates do not possess these qualifications whatsoever be the cadre or any such thing should not be considered for the Post of officer Superintendent.

Clerk

Candidates with First Class /Division in plus two course or second or third class B.Com, or B B A, or BTA, or any Certificate / Diploma course in Tourism Administration from the Indian Institutes are to be appointed for the post of clerk. If the candidates do not possess these qualifications whatsoever be the cadre or any such thing should not be considered for the Post of Clerk.

A Model Organisation Chart for the Tourism Department For the Proper Growth & Development



OS – Office Superintendent, **HC** – Head Clerk, **C**- Clerk, **T**- Typist, **P**- Peon, **W**- Watchman

Duties and Responsibilities are to be carefully drafted by the Secretary and Director in consultation with a Commerce/Management Expert preferably academician. **TPO** – Tourism Promotion Officer

How to develop tourism – a model

As is already mentioned that the tourism is the only scope economic development in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. There is a separate department functioning in these islands. But the net result is not even satisfactory. Tourists are still facing problems, though the number of flights have been introduced and started their operation, the tourists are missing their connectivity trains and flights in the mainland, they do not get proper accommodation, where to go, how to go and what to do are still like a examination to a student. What type of tourism is suitable and to be started in these islands, No water, No power, No guides etc. are slowly become the permanent features of these islands. If these situations persist, the healthy infant tourism will fall on sick, which cannot be repairable and cannot be treated. So a suitable model is suggested in form of suggestions.

1. As a First Step, the Department of Tourism must call for the Meeting with the Academicians, Researchers and others who have published their feelings and thinking on the development of Tourism in these islands. The issues, present problems, ways and means to develop are to be sincerely discussed by giving equal opportunities.
2. A clear-cut Tourism Policy and detailed Tourism Planning suitable for these islands are to be constructed by taking the eco-system of this territory. For this purpose, the experts from all departments by giving more weightage to the persons who have done research on tourism areas and an open door seminar is to be organised atleast in three rounds.
3. A & N Administration may immediately conduct an overall survey in order to fix the mile stones, concrete pillars, sign pillars and plates etc. Each road, street, lane, footpath, village etc. should be rightly and necessarily named. In some islands, places are termed as ‘Then Number’ & ‘Char Number’ etc. Such names may be replaced by some freedom fighters’ names. For every 3 Kms. tourist map, made out of concrete plates, of that or nearby locality should be fixed so that the tourists do not face any problem.
4. A & N islands is surrounded by Thailand, Burma, Vietnam, Comodia, Malaysia, Singapore etc. Air distance between A & N islands and the nearby countries is less. A tourist who wishes

to visit the lush green paradise has to travel a long route or distance by adopting different formalities of international rules. For example, a tourist from Bangkok wishes to visit A & N islands, he has to travel from Bangkok to Calcutta/Chennai and from Calcutta/Chennai to A & N islands. That is he has to travel nearby about 3500 Kms. to reach these islands whereas the distance between Bangkok and Port Blair is just 544 Kms. The tourist has to spend for airfare to travel 6000-7000Kms. for to and fro. If there is a direct route to A & N islands, he travels only about 1000 Kms. for to and fro and so the expenses come down. In the same manner, a tourist from Japan, has to come to Delhi and from Delhi to Calcutta/Chennai and from Calcutta/Chennai to A & N islands. If there is a direct route to Andaman from Japan, from Bangkok and so on, the tourists particularly the foreign tourists find it very easy to come to Andaman by saving a lot of amount. So it is suggested to open international tourist route.

5. An enumeration work is to be undertaken to find out the number of shops, commercial establishments, offices both in government sector, private sector, and corporate sector, under various classifications like registered and unregistered, localized and mainland based etc.
6. The present department must immediately issue a circular to all the tourism related traders and entrepreneurs including the auto, taxi, tourist car, bus etc., to register their names with the tourism department. If they do not register within the stipulated time, their permit and license are to be cancelled and should not be allowed to run the business.
7. All the tourism related entrepreneurs and businessmen must submit the “Activities Return” to the Tourism Department. Every once in a year, every tourism related entrepreneurs must submit the Return of Actual Income (RAI) to the Tourism Department.
8. The unproductive activity of allotting the sheds and shops to the government department during the Andaman Tourism Festival and the government functions by allotting the funds to the department is to be totally avoided along with the unhealthy arguments in favour of such unproductive activity or activities.
9. Private Traders are to be encouraged and invited to participate in

the Island Tourism Festivals with the moderate Tariff which will be the income to the government. Here there are plenty of benefits. The unproductive wages paid to the government departments including the pilferages are saved and the government is going to get Spot Tariff Income and Tax Revenue from the private sector.

10. For the Water Supply, the government must identify the places for the bore well, which gives good result in different parts of these islands. The local administration must think the process of conversion of the seawater into drinking water as a major project.
11. By avoiding the wastages of the funds, many more Power Projects are to be introduced in the different places of these islands for the uninterrupted power supply. Seminars, Group Discussions, Articles and writings on development of tourism in these islands are to be encouraged.
12. The road tax and the license to the commercial vehicles should not be issued without the copy of certificate of registration with the tourism department. A minimum qualification is to be fixed for the drivers who are going to engage their vehicle for the tourism purpose. The minimum qualification for the same is recommended as a Degree.
13. At least once in a six months, the owners of the vehicles which are put for the tourism purposes, the drivers, the hotel owners, the tour and travel agents, boat operators, the related tourism officers etc. are to be given an orientation programme at various levels.
14. The Study on the Resource Availability, possibilities of opening the islands for the tourism purposes, possibilities of developing the islands for the tourism purposes, possibilities of inviting the problem free private entrepreneurs in the whole islands are to be conducted and the outcomes are to be seriously analysed by keeping the developmental aspects at the interest of the Nation in the mind by the officers.
15. All Infrastructural facilities for the tourism development must be provided by the local government. Water, Security, Power, Cheap Transport, Welfare facilities, Guides, roads, lights on the roads,

mile stones, direction stones, guest houses with reduced tariff etc. are some of the infrastructural facilities immediately needed for the development of tourism in these islands.

16. Soft water is another major problem in this territory. Water for drinking is a vital important resource. At present the water is supplied once in four days. Growing necessity of water, due to the increase in population, for drinking purpose compels the Administration to find out different means for the storage of rain water.
17. The places like Chidiatappu, Wandoor etc. are the fine beaches. But they are shrouded by the fallen trees. They have a good quality of soil but with the hidden timber nails of fallen trees hinder the free walk of the tourists on beaches. These beaches are not at all cared by the A & N Administration. These fallen trees have economic value. If they are auctioned, the Administration can get a good amount of income which can be utilised for the development of the beaches. So it is suggested that the Administration may take immediate necessary steps to remove the fallen trees from the beaches in order to bring back the beauty of the beautiful beaches. Telling and arguing that the fallen trees are kept there to stop the soil erosion etc., are only the nightmare.
18. Cable cars/rope ways is an interesting attraction to the tourists. This is the best source of entertainment. At present such cars/rope ways are totally absent in the A & N islands. If this source is provided, it will be like adding honey to the mixed fruit juice.
19. Tourist accommodation near the harbour and the airport may be constructed at Chennai, Calcutta and Vishakapatnam which may contain more number of dormitory type beds. This is in order to facilitate the stay of the tourists and visitors of A & N islands. No tourist should be disturbed with the popular and meaningless words like “VIP is coming, so please vacate”. It is suggested that the so called disturbing and unproductive VIPs may not be allowed to stay in the proposed guest houses and even if they are allowed, they should be treated at par with the tourists so far as they stay in the accommodation.

20. The floating hotels may be constructed in the Port Blair city. For this purpose any scraped shipping vessel may be purchased and used.
21. A&N Administration may invite private sector to run 'pay and use' toilets, bathrooms etc. at important places such as bus terminuses existing as well as proposed, parks, beaches, bazaars, taluk head quarters etc. The tourism department may be entrusted the work of supervision in order to check the immoral activities.

Conclusion

The A&N islands are a very beautiful tourists destination. The Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands has been Blessed with a lot of Resources by the Nature. These resources are yet to be economically exploited fully. Tourism is the only scope of these Islands since the other sectors do not record much growth and development due to various reasons. But the Tourism has recorded a markable growth though it requires efficient management with the Planning, Organising, staffing, Controlling, Communicating, Budgeting and Coordinating and with the suitable Tourism Policy. Tourism has excellent scope in these islands if it is properly managed. Once the impediments in the path of the development of Tourism in Andaman and Nicobar Islands is removed and if a Strategy, Tourism Planning, and the Tourism Policy are formulated in the light of the suggestions given above, and the same is implemented very carefully, it is strongly believed that the Tourism in Andaman and Nicobar Islands will be improved, the revenue from the Tourism will increase, the office and administrative expenses will be reduced and the surplus can be seen. The Tourism will attract more tourists in to theses islands and also be able to contribute more to the economic development of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

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