

“ADHITHI DEVO BHAVA”

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Tourism is the second largest industry in the world. It is an industry, which contribute seven trillion US dollars revenue by direct, indirect and induced. More than one billion people travel around the world every year and three to four percentage of increase recorded every year. Unfortunately, only 0.5 to 1 percentage of this world figure travel to India. When the world population is around 700 crore, even a small percentage increase of this arrival to India is a tremendous boost to our tourism industry. In this situation itself, it contributes 5.35 percentages to our GDP and provides 22 million jobs in India. In the world's scenario, we rank as the second largest tourism market in Asia, just behind China. Therefore, you can imagine the untapped potential of this industry. Indian Tourism Department is continuing its efforts and campaigns to increase this figure to another one more percentage by using its brands like 'Incredible India', 'God's Own Country' of Kerala etc.

Our State, Kerala is sharing only about 20 percent of foreign tourists arrive in India. Kerala Government has only considered tourism seriously as an industry, very recently. 1 million foreign and about 10 million domestic tourists visit Kerala and the total direct and indirect revenue is Rupees 24885 crore and out of which Rupees 6398 crore is from foreign sector. About ten thousand people invested in tourism ventures in Kerala, like tour operator, hotels and resorts, convention centers, home stays, houseboats etc and about 20 lakhs people involved. Half of the state, northern part is still alien to tourism. We have more than 500 km of seashore but beach tourism is restricted only to very few centers. The unclear CRZ regulations restrict the investments in these areas. Western Ghats and the hill station regions also face similar problems, like EFL regulations and other environmental issues.

Considering all these adverse impacts, still there is a scope for tourism. Sustainable thinking and eco concept is the solution for these crises. Ecotourism, sustainable tourism, green tourism, cultural tourism, natural based travel, adventure travel, responsible tourism, and all these words are very familiar now a days in tourism industry. Responsible tourism is the latest of the world campaign and Kerala Tourism has taken this as Kerala model in tourism. 'God's Own Country; People's Own Tourism' is the modified branding of Kerala.

A new wing of engineering is very much of essential in Kerala, with hospitality based design, planning and construction. Present style of curriculum in architecture and engineering is not at all meeting the requirement of the present time. Innovative and sustainable ideas needed to up bring the industry. Stakeholders of the industry have already introduced Kerala's own products like, houseboat; tree house etc, but there is no technical background for these products. Kerala is taking tourism as the growth engine of its economy, a research wing of hospitality

engineering need developed to meet the requirements of Kerala, stressing the environmental aspects of present time and friendly with the society. Mass tourism and five star hotels are not the priority of the state, because Kerala villages, backwaters, farms and beaches are our products in the tourism market.

AEA, as an association of Architects and Engineers, have a major role to play in developing this new wing and have to take the lead role in the changing time to support our emerging economy.