

## TOURISM INDUSTRY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR – CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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### ABSTRACT

Almost every economy in the world relies on tourism to generate cash, create job opportunities, and contribute to the economy's GDP. Tourism is also playing a significant role in the overall development of the state's economy in Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmir has been aptly termed as "Heaven on Earth" for its breathtaking beauty all over the world. Tourism has a lot of promise in Kashmir, and it also gives a lot of commercial chances for residents in the region. This paper looks at the potential, prospects, and constraints of the tourist industry in Jammu & Kashmir.

**Keywords:** *Tourism, Economic development, GDP, employment prospects, J&K*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the fastest-growing industry nowadays. It was a "tiger" industry in the early 2000s. Tourism is a service business that serves many demographics. It includes travel from home or business to experience locations and tourism facilities. Humans have always valued travel and tourism. From ancient times, people have wanted to explore new areas in their own country or outside to improve their environment. Tourism generates money, jobs, and GDP in most economies. It boosts local jobs and living standards. In 2011, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) estimated that tourism generated 270.7 million employment and 10% of global GDP. It also aids cross-cultural communication. Learning languages, lifestyles, and traditions helps. As travelers introduce new lifestyles and gradually disturb social, cultural, and religious norms, it offers possibilities to absorb diverse cultures. Tourism protects local culture from development. It preserves local dance, art, craft, music, drama, attire, and historic landmarks.

### 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following precise research goals guide the current study:

1. To give a general overview of the J&K tourism industry.
2. To determine the possibilities and significant issues facing the J&K tourism industry.
3. To offer recommendations for fully using and growing the tourism industry in J&K.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The current study is descriptive and is based on secondary data. Secondary data was gathered from a variety of journals, periodicals, magazines, newspapers, newsletters, research articles, books, the internet, and public and unpublished records from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and J&K tourism.

### 4. TOURISM INDUSTRY IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Kashmir's northern India. Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh define it. Agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, forestry, and tourism sustain J&K. Tourism matters. Tourism favors J&K because mountainous terrain limits industrial growth. Asian tourists love J&K. J&K offers much. J&K's hill stations, backwaters, and terrain draw tourists. Monuments, forts, religious monuments, highland resorts, and more make the state magnificent. Foreigners visit them. J&K tourism is

booming. Labor-intensive enterprises employ many. Hotels need managers, receptionists, guides, tour operators, travel agents, photographers, and others. If the government takes advantage, J&K might dominate medical tourism. State lakes, forests, and freshwater abound. Jammu and Kashmir is known for its beautiful valleys, lakes, snow-capped hills, cool climate, trekking, fishing, skiing, archaeological, historical, cultural, and religious attractions, and friendly people. J&K has diversified Kashmir Valley tourism. Adventure, medical, rafting, skiing, and religious tourism. Kashmiri culture differs. Religion, philosophy, and art coexist. J&K has Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism. Amarnath and Vaishno Devi attract millions of Hindu pilgrims. J&K's holy sites draw pilgrims. Forts, museums, and historic places preserve state history. Tourism should embrace Jammu & Kashmir's tangible and intangible history. J&K is Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh. Three regions attract tourists. Transport, hospitality, horticulture, crafts, and small industries are affected. Kashmir is "Paradise on Earth". Famous Kashmir. Kashmir is considered the "Switzerland of the East" for its beauty and abundance of trekking, rafting, skiing, and mountaineering. Dal Lake, Mugal Gardens, Nlishat Bagh, Gulmarg, Yusmarg, Phalgam, and other Kashmir Valley attractions. South Asian adventurers love Kashmir's nature. Jammu has ancient Hindu temples, gardens, and forts. Maha Kali at Bahu Fort rivals Mata Vaishno Devi in magic. Maharaja Gulab Singh's 1822 coronation established the temple. Gauri Kund, Shudh Mahadev, Shiva, Peer Khoh Cave, Ranbireshwar, and Parmandal Temple Complex are city temples. Jammu's Hindu-Islamic architecture is historic. Adventure tourism has grown in Ladakh.

The subcontinent's silk route to Asia crossed over Greater Himalaya's "Moon on Earth" desolate peaks and steep valleys. Ladakh has few Buddhists. Ancient culture. Leh Palace and Namgyal Tsemo are popular. Soma, Shanti Stupa, Sankar Gompa. Religion, customs, festivals, geography, people, language, and culture differ. Modern Kashmir tourism began in 1846. Before 1846, sages, seers, missionaries, traders, pilgrims, explorers, and others visited Kashmir, but no tourism business existed. In 1885, the British authorities obtained enough ability to directly participate in government policy, and several innovative tourism advances happened, including the establishment of a road between Jammu and Srinagar, telephone links, and the 1925 landing of an aircraft at Srinagar airport. The State Government made Kashmir an international resort. 1989–90 politics hampered them. In 1987, India had 1.164 million tourists, with Jammu and Kashmir getting 7.21 lac and the valley 5.11 lac. Tourism collapsed in 1989–90. It lost jobs and revenue. Valley politics reduced 5.5 lac tourists in 1989 to 8.52 thousand in 1995, 9.98 thousand in 1996, and 16.13 thousand in 1997. till 2010. Kashmir saw more tourists 2011-12. Economic Survey-2014-15 reported 13.09 lakh, 11.71 lakh, and 11.68 lakh Kashmir Valley tourists in 2012, 2013, and 2014. Pre-1989 Kashmir was bliss. This destination lost visitors due the early 1990s military unrest. Tourism dropped in 1991, damaging the state's economy and every household. This state had over million tourists in 1988. State violence has hampered tourism for 20 years. Violence hurts Kashmir's tourism. Billion-dollar state tourism. The state lost 27 million tourists and \$3.6 billion from 1989 to 2002. Tourism generated 10% of the state's income before the turmoil. Tourism scarcely assisted the state throughout 23 years of instability. Foreign nations recommended against visiting Kashmir afterward. Tourism fell. In 2008, the World Monuments Fund (WMF) declared Srinagar India's most threatened site due to valley turmoil (Winter and Punjab, 2010). From 8 May 2016, violent events deterred Indian and foreign tourists from visiting Kashmir valley, badmouthing the current situation.

## 5. TOURISM CHALLENGES IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir has grown significantly over the past two to three decades, although much of its potential has yet to be realized. Due to a multitude of issues, this sector in the State has grown slowly and unsatisfactorily. Below are the main factors limiting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir:

- I. Poor roads and transportation.
  - II. Poor hygiene at rest stops
  - III. Unstandardized prices and fares
  - IV. Ineffective marketing and promotion
  - V. Heritage site neglect
  - VI. Security/harassment issues
  - VII. Unmotivated and skilled professionals
  - VIII. Inadequacy
  - IX. High fuel surcharges, bad flight management, etc.
  - X. Poor roads, health, cleanliness, communication, etc.
  - XI. Tourist harassment and security breaches.
  - XII. Uneven progress—slow local tourism growth, absence of tourist profile information,
- etc.
- Uneducated Guides.

## 6. TOURISM POLICY SUGGESTIONS FOR JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Tourism is crucial to Jammu & Kashmir's economy. Jammu & Kashmir tourism development recommendations are follow.

- I. A strong government-agency network to modernize Kashmir tourism.
- II. Finding new tourist destinations will boost the valley's tourism.
- III. Jammu and Kashmir tourism needs strong protection to make tourists feel comfortable.
- IV. Jammu and Kashmir is one of the top places for adventure tourism, medical tourism, polo tourism, and other new sectors that need to be explored, giving tourism fresh hope.
- V. Make tourism year-round. Seasonal tourism marketing can boost tourism dramatically.
- VI. Pilgrimage, heritage, and adventure tourism have potential.
- VII. Ecotourism has great potential.
- VIII. Local skills inventory development training.
- IX. Tourism infrastructure is needed.
- X. Community tourist sensitization campaign.

## 7. CONCLUSION:

Tourism is vital to Jammu & Kashmir. Tourism can unite the universe. Tourism creates income, jobs, and economic growth. Tourism creates jobs and increases the economy, but it may not relieve poverty. State government, local investors, and other stakeholders must actively participate in tourism and related activities. Local workers can help transit, service, and food suppliers minimize poverty. The state's varied topography and law-and-order challenges have hampered connectivity. Low state rail-road mix. New roads improve connection in some places. Many two-lane roads need four lanes. The sparsely populated state needs new airports. Tourism infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir should include wider and smoother roads, transport, including aircraft and train services, hotel renovations, and tourist locations. New roads improve connection in some places. The sparsely populated state needs new airports. Restore monuments. Jammu and Kashmir's sacred places need infrastructure development to draw pilgrims. As demonstrated above, tourism plummeted during the late 1980s Jammu & Kashmir uprising. Tourism helps economic growth, but the state's diversified landscape and law-and-order challenges hinder communication. Low state rail-road mix. New roads improve connection in some places. Restore monuments. Smart planning and resolve. Kashmir leads development and tourism. Kashmir is exclusive. State tourism rules. The diverse industry employs hotel managers, guides, travel brokers, and others. Kashmir's ecosystems and landscapes impress tourists.

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