

Tourism – Some Simple Idea

(with special reference to tourism of Darjeeling)

By

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Abstract

Tourism has emerged in this decade as the central pillar of the services economy and can uniquely help society to respond to global challenges if its growth is managed properly. Internationally tourism occupies a very important place in the economies of several countries. Governments all over the world are competing with each other in selling tourism and travel. The substantial growth of the tourism activity clearly marks tourism as one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena of the past century. An attempt has been taken in this paper to through some light about tourism in Darjeeling. The name Darjeeling comes from the Tibetan words, Dorje (thunderbolt) and Ling (place or land), meaning the land of the thunderbolt. In 1835, Darjeeling was annexed by the East India Company from Sikkim. Prior to that, Darjeeling formed a part of Sikkim and for a brief period of Nepal.

So far Darjeeling is a Himalayan town in the Indian state of West Bengal. (After the independence of India in 1947, Darjeeling was merged with the state of West Bengal). A separate district of Darjeeling was established consisting of the hill towns of Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong and

some parts of the Terai region. The town is located in the Mahabharat Range or Lesser Himalaya at an average elevation of 6,710 ft (2,050 m).

Most probably in the middle of nineteenth century township of Darjeeling was formally opened and tourism came into the existence in the queen of hills. The cool weather through-out the year along with beautiful flora and fauna make Darjeeling as a tourist destination for the people who wanted a break for a while from the scorching heat of plains and hurley-burley of daily life.

Key Words: *Tourism, Darjeeling , Economic Development*

Introduction:

Tourism has emerged in this decade as the central pillar of the services economy and can uniquely help society to respond to global challenges if its growth is managed properly. Internationally tourism occupies a very important place in the economies of several countries. Governments all over the world are competing with each other in selling tourism and travel. The substantial growth of the tourism activity clearly marks tourism as one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena of the past century. The number of international arrivals shows an evolution from a mere 25 million international arrivals in 1950 to an estimated 806 million in 2005, corresponding to an average annual growth rate of 6.5%. In general, the growth of international tourism arrivals significantly outpaces growth of economic output as measured in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In years when world economic growth exceeds 4 per cent, the growth of tourism volume tends to be higher.

Types of Tourism:

Various types of tourisms include Spiritual, Eco or Nature, Health & Medical, Sex and Adventure. Recently many other types of tourisms have emerged across the world including, Fun & Entertainment (E.g.: Disney Land, Amusement parks, etc.), Food, Business Tourism, Education Tourism, Religious Tourism & Space Tourism being the latest. Some of these are discussed below in brief:

Spiritual Tourism:

With its world famous pilgrim and spiritual centres, India has become one of the most favoured spiritual tourism destinations for the tourists across the world. The spiritual tourists are attracted to temples, mosques,

monasteries and Churches that are spread across the country and are architectural wonders of ancient world. This is also known as pilgrimage tourism where people look for the divine goal or simple life. India is known for its culture and places of worship. The most popular spiritual destinations in India are Badrinath, Kedarnath, Haridwar, Gangotri, Jagannath temple at Puri, Konark, Rameshwaram, Mahabalipuram, Meenakshi temple in Tamilnadu and Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh. Every year large amount of tourists visits these temples and shrines. In addition to this there are pilgrim centers of Satya Sai Baba in Andhra Pradesh, Osho Ashram in Pune and Shirdi.

Adventure Tourism

It is also called as Youth tourism which attracts tourists who are in search of adventure and thrill. Adventure tourism includes Water sports, skiing, yachting, gliding, sailing, mountaineering and trekking. Trekking has the greatest potential in terms of numbers and it requires little infrastructure.

Eco-Tourism

World Tourism Organization defines eco-tourism as, Tourism that involves travelling to relatively undisturbed natural areas with the specified object of studying , admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals , as well as existing cultural aspect(both past and present) found in the areas. The eco-tourism is a responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of the local people.

The peaks of the Himalayas, Thar Desert, coastal areas, bird sanctuaries and forests attract these tourists most. Countries like Thailand attract more nature tourists per year with natural under sea beauties.

Sex Tourism:

Rio de Janeiro in Brazil is a popular tourist place for its Carnival (Rio Carnival) and music (Samba & Tango). Recently, this place has appeared in news for emerging as a hot sex tourism destination. The US soldiers while returning to their parent country on leave from Iraqⁱ wanted to stop at Rio de Janeiro for having sex along with participating in the Rio Carnival. Sex tourism is not a new phenomenon, many destinations like, Argentina, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Cuba, Thailand and many more countries have been named as sex tourism destinations. Sex tourism is a part of huge tourism sector where men or women travel to a particular destination to engage and enjoy sexual intercourse.

Medical and Health Tourism:

The term Medical Tourism can be described as people traveling to another place or country to obtain

medical or health care services. Though medical tourism and health tourism can be used interchangeably, in this article the author has differentiated these two terms as below:

Medical tourism:

A tourism destination that possesses ultra-modern medical facilities like super-specialty hospitals and provides medical services like surgeries and curing of diseases, etc. Medical Tourism refers to tourists of one country moving to another for availing the medical services for diagnosis and treatment including general surgeries, transplantations, organ replacements, cosmetic surgeries, joint surgeries, etc.

Health tourism:

Health Tourism refers to tourists arriving at a particular destination not for modern medical services as mentioned above but for availing the traditional health services like, alternative medicine, yoga, and other medical services mostly offered in the traditional form by specialized providers who mostly have inherited their expertise and specialization rather than acquiring qualifications. These health tourism destinations are born few centuries ago and the specialized services offered cannot be so easily transferred to any other part of the world as there is a close relationship between the services offered and the natural setup of that particular place. For example Panchkarma Centres in Kerala provide health solutions in the ancient form through ayurveda as a major treatment method. Usually, a health tourism destination will have locational advantage. For example, natural springs in New Zealand and Australia. Though the service providers use modern facilities like lighting, A/C rooms, hair driers, etc, the basic services are provided mostly using traditional tools, age old medicines and also in the traditional form.

Education Tourism

The term education tourism or edu-tourism refers to any "program in which participants travel to a location as a group with the primary purpose of engaging in a learning experience directly related to the location" (Rodger, 1998, p.28).

World Tourism Scenario:

The international tourism scenario is very attractive. It is going to be one of the vast employment generating sectors creating more than 5.5 million jobs world wide in the next decade. Every tourist directly or indirectly creates 1 job and according to estimates, for every 1 million of rupees invested, the agricultural sector creates 45 jobs, manufacturing only 13 jobs whereas tourism can create 89 jobsⁱⁱ.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) review, the year 2008 will go as a

year of turbulence and contrasts. The growth in international tourist arrivals had slowed drastically worldwide, international tourist arrivals reached 924 million, an increase of 16 million over 2007, global economy. After a 5.0 per cent increase in the recording a growth of 2.0 per cent. As a result of the first half of 2008, growth in international tourist extremely volatile world economy (financial crisis, arrivals moved into negative territory in the second commodity and oil price rises, sharp exchange rate half of 2008 (-1%).The final result was an estimated fluctuations), tourism demand slowed significantly 2.0 per cent growth for the full year – down from 7.0 through the year. The second half of 2008, in per cent in 2007, which was the fourth year of particular, showed an abrupt shift in trends, with consecutive strong growth in world tourism. International tourist arrivals flat or showing negative growth. Overall, the 5.0 per cent growth between January and June gave way to a 1.0 per cent decline in the second half of the Year. Growth was negative in the last six months of 2008 in both Europe (-3%), where the drop is even more significant given its double-digit growth in 2007 and strong showing in the first part of 2008. On the other hand, the Americas (+1%), Africas (+4%) and the Middle East (+5%) had posted positive results in the second half of the year, although with a significant slowdown compared with the period between January and June.

Even at this stage of global economic downturn the For the year as a whole, all regions were positive European region received more than one half of except Europe which suffered stagnation in arrivals. world tourism (52.8%), while Europe and Americas The best performances were registered in the Middle taken together, the traditional scenes of international East (+11%), Africa (+5%) and Americas (+4%). tourism, received almost seven-tenths, (68.8%) of world tourism.However, it is important to note is the gradual decline in the shares of world tourism received by the Europe and East Asia & the Pacific and the corresponding increases in the shares of all other regions, during this period. Thus the share of the European region declined from 54.7 per cent in 2005 to 54.4 per cent in 2006 and 53.5 per cent in 2007 to 52.8 per cent in 2008. All other regions remained either relatively stable in their shares or recorded slight increases over the base year 2005.

Table-2

Region	Relative share			
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Africa	4.6	4.8	4.9	5.1
America	16.6	16.2	15.8	16
E. Asia & Pacific	18.3	18.8	19.5	19.2
Europe	54.7	54.4	53.5	52.8
Middle East	4.8	4.8	5.2	5.7
South Asia	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2
total	100	100	100	100

Source - Regional Distribution of World Tourism Arrivals (2005 to 2008)

World Tourist Arrivals by Regions in million (2005 to 2008)

Tourism 2020 Vision

Tourism 2020 Vision is the World Tourism Organization's long-term forecast and assessment of the development of tourism up to the first 20 years of the new millennium. An essential outcome of the Tourism 2020 Vision are quantitative forecasts covering a 25 years period, with 1995 as the base year and forecasts for 2010 and 2020.

The underlying structural trends of the forecast are believed not to have significantly changed. Experience shows that in the short term, periods of faster growth (1995, 1996, 2000) alternate with periods of slow growth (2001 to 2003). While the pace of growth till 2000 actually exceeded the *Tourism 2020 Vision* forecast, it is generally expected that the current slowdown will be compensated in the medium to long term.

UNWTO's *Tourism 2020 Vision* forecasts that international arrivals are expected to reach nearly 1.6 billion by the year 2020. Of these worldwide arrivals in 2020, 1.2 billion will be intraregional and 378 million will be long-haul travellers.

The total tourist arrivals by region shows that by 2020 the top three receiving regions will be Europe (717 million tourists), East Asia and the Pacific (397 million) and the Americas (282 million), followed by Africa, the Middle East and South Asia.

East Asia and the Pacific, Asia, the Middle East and Africa are forecasted to record growth at rates of over 5% year, compared to the world average of 4.1%. The more mature regions Europe and Americas are anticipated to show lower than average growth rates. Europe will maintain the highest share of world arrivals, although there will be a decline from 60 per cent in 1995 to 46 per cent in 2020.

Table-3

	Forecasts (2010) in millions	Forecasts (2020)in millions
World	1006	1561
Africa	47	77
American	190	282
East Asia and the Pacific	195	397
Europe	527	717
Middle East	36	69
South Asia	11	19

Source - United Nations World Tourism Organization

Tourism in India:

The potential of the tourism sector to stimulate economic and social development thereby transforming economies is internationally acknowledged. In this globalized era, tourism has always been considered on top priority in India with the Governments at the centre as well as the states making highly focused efforts to exploit the tourism resources offered at the national and local level.

Tourism in India is the largest service industry, with a contribution of 6.23% to the national GDP and 8.78% of the total employment in India. India witnesses more than 5 million annual foreign tourist arrivals and 562 million domestic tourism visits. The tourism industry in India generated about US\$100 billion in 2008 and that is expected to increase to US\$275.5 billion by 2018 at a 9.4% annual growth rate. In the year 2009, 5.11 million foreign tourists visited India. Majority of foreign tourists come from USA and UK. Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh were the top four states to receive inbound tourists. Domestic tourism in the same year was massive at 650 million. Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu received the big share of these visitors. According to *World Travel and Tourism Council*, India will be a tourism hotspot from 2009–2018, having the highest 10-year growth potential. The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2007 ranked tourism in India 6th in terms of price competitiveness and 39th in terms of safety and security. Despite short- and medium-term setbacks, such as shortage of hotel rooms, tourism revenues are expected to surge by 42% from 2007 to 2017.

Tourism in Darjeeling:

The name Darjeeling comes from the Tibetan words, Dorje (thunderbolt) and Ling (place or land), meaning the land of the thunderbolt. In 1835, Darjeeling was annexed by the East India Company from Sikkim. Prior to that, Darjeeling formed a part of Sikkim and for a brief period of Nepal.

So far Darjeeling is a Himalayan town in the Indian state of West Bengal. (After the independence of India in 1947, Darjeeling was merged with the state of West Bengal). A separate district of Darjeeling was established consisting of the hill towns of Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong and some parts of the Terai region. The town is located in the Mahabharat Range or Lesser Himalaya at an average elevation of 6,710 ft (2,050 m).

Most probably in the middle of nineteenth century township of Darjeeling was formally opened and tourism came into the existence in the queen of hills. The cool weather through-out the year along with beautiful flora and fauna make Darjeeling as a tourist destination for the people who wanted a break for a while from the scorching heat of plains and hurley-burley of daily life.

Education profile in Darjeeling:

There are 52 primary schools, 21 high schools and 4 colleges in the town. Darjeeling's schools are either run by the state government or by private and religious organizations. Schools mainly use English and Nepali as their media of instruction, although there is option to learn the national language Hindi and the official state language Bengali. The schools are either affiliated with the ICSE, the CBSE, or the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education. Having been a summer retreat for the British in India, Darjeeling became the place of choice for the establishment of public schools on the model of Eton, Harrow and Rugby, allowing the children of British officials to obtain an exclusive education. Institutions such as St. Joseph's College (School Dept.), Loreto Convent, St. Paul's School and Mount Hermon School are renowned as centres of educational excellence. Darjeeling has four colleges — St. Joseph's College, Southfield College (earlier known as Loreto College), Darjeeling Government College and Sri Ramakrishna B.T. College — all affiliated to the University of North Bengal. All these factors stimulate edu-tourism in Darjeeling.

Some important tourist destinations in Darjeeling:

Himalayan Mountaineering Institute (HMI):

This is one of the most visited spot in Darjeeling. This institute was created by the late Tenzing Norgay. He was a Sherpa who climbed the Mount Everest on 29th of may 1953 with Sir Edmund Hillary. All the equipments used in that climb are still a highlight in that institute.

- **Himalayan Zoo** (*Padmaja Naidu Zoological Park*), :
- It has a good collection of animals found in the Himalayan region.

Buddhist monasteries:

Japanese Peace Pagoda:

This impressive building is part of a grid of around 30 pagodas spanning the whole globe. Constructed by the Japanese Buddhist Nipponzan-Myohoji Order, the one at Charliment on the outskirts of Darjeeling was consecrated in 1992. A small temple just lies alongside. If you're woken up due to the sound of drumming in the streets of Darjeeling between 4 and 5 am: These are the monks (Theravada) of the Japanese temple having their early morning walk.

Tiger Hill :

Ideal to visit early morning when the first rays of the sun kiss the Mt Kanchenjunga and give it a golden color. To visit the hill, one needs to get up at 3:00AM in the morning. You can taste some excellent tea on your way to the hill, which will provide much needed warmth on cold Darjeeling mornings. When getting into a taxi at 4am keep in mind that they are shared taxis and your driver might wait around in vain for others to join your taxi causing you to miss the sunrise! Those travelling alone or as a couple might want to squeeze into an already occupied jeep to insure full viewing pleasure. Though it has executive lounge (Rs.40/- per person) and special lounge (Rs.30/- per person), nothing beats having view from open area as you can have a full panoramic view from outside avoiding crowd in the lounge.

Observatory Hill:

Observatory hill is the oldest site in Darjeeling. This hill is also known as the “Makal-Babu-Ko-Thaan” in local area. It is said that a Red Hat Buddhist Monastery stood at this very spot. Nepal people destroyed this monastery in the 19th century. Darjeeling is one of the oldest hill stations in India, and has plenty of options, both for those seeking a lazy getaway from the hot plains, as well as nature enthusiasts and adrenaline junkies. Apart from sights within the town, there are plenty of trek options along the Himalayan ridges on the Indo-Nepal border near Darjeeling. The most popular one being the Singhalia Ridge Trail. Bookings for guides, porters and accommodation on the trail can be made in Darjeeling or in the nearby town of Manebhanjang, which serves as the trail-head. Be aware that from July to mid-September the Singalia park is closed, but because of the rain, clouds and fog it is less enjoyable anyway.

Shruberry Health Club:

less visited but offers unique and charming views of Kanchenjunga. Few locals can be found jogging here and offering prayers to various objects edit

Singalila National Park, (*west of Darjeeling, adjacent to Nepalese border*):

Singalila is a trekking destination in the far northwest corner of West Bengal state. Kanchenjunga, the world's 3rd highest peak, is visible for much of the trek, to the north, on the Nepalese border with Sikkim. Usually the park is accessed from Maneybhanjang, approx. one hour, or 30 km. west of Darjeeling. The park can also be accessed from Rimbik, where many trekkers finish up, or from Bijanbari, with one extra day's walking. Trekkers must pay a 100rp fee to enter the park, and must hire a guide. Porters can also be hired in Maneybhanjang. Many trekkers sign up for a 3, 5 or 6 day trek in Darjeeling, where various trekking companies make all of the arrangements. Passports must be carried, as the trek crosses briefly into Nepal, then back into India. Sleeping bags and layered warm clothing are a must, as the temperature dips well below freezing most nights. Overnight lodging is done at assorted huts or simple guesthouses along the way, and hot meals are available at the same. Starting from Maneybhanjang, most trekkers stay overnight in Gairbas or Kalipokhari, and press on to Sandakphu for the 2nd night. Sandakphu at 3636 meters, is a favorite spot to view the high Himalayan peaks of Llotze, Everest, Makalu, etc., in early morning when visibility is good. 3 day trekkers turn aside and head downhill to Rimbik for their final night, while others head further north for spectacular views from Sabarkum and Phalut, then downhill for Raman, and finish in Rimbik for the last night. For greater cash outlay, non-trekkers, or those pressed for time can hire a jeep as transport from Maneybhanjang to Sandakphu, and stay overnight to catch the sunrise views. The ideal time to visit is April or May, in spring when the rhododendrons are in bloom, but Singalila can also be done in the fall, after monsoon season.

Darjeeling Himalayan Railway:

The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, nicknamed the "Toy Train", is a 2 ft (610 mm) narrow-gauge railway from Siliguri to Darjeeling in West Bengal, run by the Indian Railways. It was built between 1879 and 1881 and is about 86 km (53 mi) long. The elevation level is from about 100 m (328 ft) at Siliguri to about 2,200 m (7,218 ft) at Darjeeling. It is still powered by a steam engine. A modern diesel engine is used for Darjeeling's mail. The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1999 which becoming only the second railway in the world to have this honour .

Mountain Biking:

Mountain biking is an adventure and the best way to explore the beauty of any mountain or hilly area. This is the best way to explore the natural beauty of the Darjeeling. Darjeeling has many exciting tracks for the motor biking. Adventure lovers love to ride on these roads as they provide them the opportunities to explore the natural beauty at their own with some adventure and thrill.

Rope way:

The Darjeeling Ropeway, functional since 1968, was closed in 2003 after an accident. It was proposed to be reopened in 2007, but remained closed as of November 2009 due to absence of patronage as a result of the development of the road network in the region. Though it is expected to reopen very soon.

Darjeeling is a part of the Eastern Himalayan zoo-geographic zone. Flora around Darjeeling comprises sal, oak, semi-evergreen, temperate and alpine forests. Dense evergreen forests of sal and oak lie around the town, where a wide variety of rare orchids are found. The Lloyd's Botanical Garden preserves common and rare species of plants, while the Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park specialises in conserving and breeding endangered Himalayan species. There are two national parks in Darjeeling district - Singalila National Park and Neora Valley National Park. Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary, Jore Pokhri Wildlife Sanctuary and Senchal Wildlife Sanctuary are the three wildlife sanctuaries of the district which are essential destinations for adventure tourism. Another reality for adventure tourism is trekking.

One of the most famous trekking routes coveted by the trekkers is the Darjeeling-Sandakphu / Phalut trek. During the months of April, May, October and November, this route offers adventure and fun at the same time. During this time, the environment remains clear and offers hospitable weather conditions to perform trekking without any climatic perils. Phalut is also revered as the viewpoint of the Himalayas and is one of the most important & famous treks in the region. The trek starts with a small bus trip to Manaybhanjang. After traversing a distance by bus, the trek passes through the mountains to Sandakphu. From here, the trekker has to proceed further up or can take a return trek route via Rimbik to reach Darjeeling by Bus.

Transport in Darjeeling:

Darjeeling can be reached by the 88 km (55 miles) long Darjeeling Himalayan Railway from New Jalpaiguri, or by National Highway 55, from Siliguri, 77 km (48 miles) away. Bus services and hired vehicles connect Darjeeling with Siliguri and Darjeeling has road connections with Bagdogra, Gangtok and Kathmandu and the neighbouring towns of Kurseong and Kalimpong. The nearest airport is in Bagdogra, located 90 km (56 mi) from Darjeeling.

Progress in tourism in Darjeeling:

The district statistical hand book of Darjeeling provides the following information regarding the progress of tourism in Darjeeling.

Table-5

Progress in Tourism in Darjeeling

Year	No. of Vehicle	Trips conducted	No. of Tourist Carried	No. of Tourist Staying in Tourist Lodge (Govt.)	No. of Tourist Lodge*	Total Earning ('000 Rs.)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1999-00	17	1293	14723	5247	3	2427
2000-01	16	894	11598	16693	12	1397
2001-02	14	540	8433	9263	12	4122
2002-03	14	482	6792	8622	14	2920
2003-04	4	330	6526	8523	14	3482

* = Out of 14 Tourist Lodges only 4 are running at present.

Sources : - 1) Manager of Tourist Lodges.
2) Dy. Director of Tourism, Darjeeling.

The number of foreign tourists who visited Darjeeling during the years 2007, 2008 and 2009 were 19885, 21152 and 21025 respectively. The State Government does not maintain any records regarding the income earned from foreign tourists visiting Darjeeling. Clearly there is a declining trend of tourists arrival in Darjeeling both for domestic as well as foreign tourists specially after 2005. This is not a good sign for Darjeeling as a tourist's destination.

Figure-1
Domestic Tourists Arrivals in Darjeeling

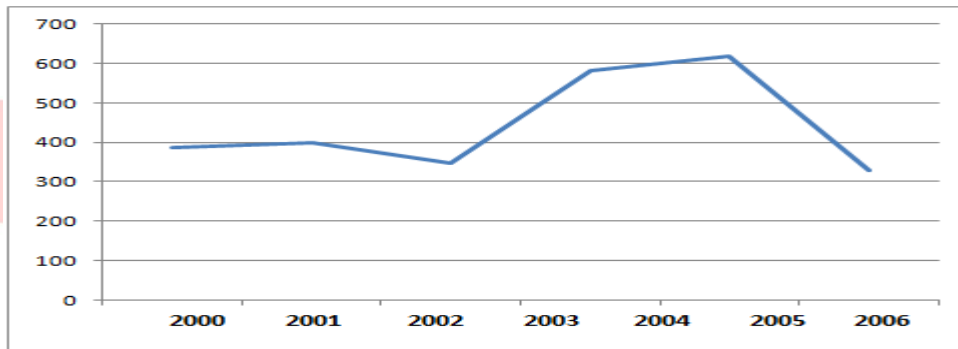
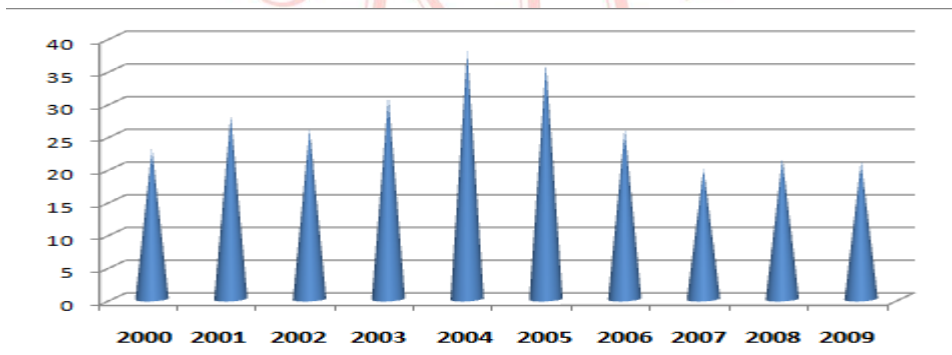


Figure-2
Foreign Tourists Arrivals in Darjeeling



Some basic problems of tourism in Darjeeling:

- The Darjeeling hill area is formed of comparatively recent rock structure that has a direct bearing on landslides. However, heavy monsoon precipitation is however a very common cause of the landslides.
- The Darjeeling-Sikkim region has seen tremendous growth in the last 8-9 years, but the often and on strikes are wreaking havoc on the region's image. A strike paralyzed the area, with closed hotels, restaurants and shops, and the accompanying protests even turned violent a couple of times. The strikes and disturbances are most definitely affecting the region.
- Trouble in Darjeeling has always affected tourist flow to Sikkim as well, as people prefer to visit both places. The agitators chose to block the national highway (NH31a) connecting Sikkim to West Bengal.
- The Himalayas serve as the source of natural resources for the population residing in the hills as well as in the plains. As human population expands in the hills, forests are being depleted for the extension of agricultural lands, introduction of new settlements, roadways, etc. The growing changes coming in the wake of urbanization and industrialization leave deep impressions on the hill ecosystem.
- The town of Darjeeling and surrounding region face deforestation due to increasing demand for wood fuel and timber, as well as air pollution from increasing vehicular traffic.
- There is a steadily widening gap between water supply and demand; just over 50% of the town's households are connected to the municipal water supply system. Various efforts made to augment the water supply, including the construction of a third storage reservoir in 1984, have failed to yield desired results.
- Darjeeling has seen a significant growth in its population, with its average growth rate being 47% between 1991 and 2001. The colonial town had been designed for a population of only 10,000 and subsequent growth has created extensive infrastructural and environmental problems. The district's forests and other natural wealth have been adversely affected by an ever-growing population.

Environmental degradation, including denudation of the surrounding hills, has adversely affected Darjeeling's appeal as a tourist destination.

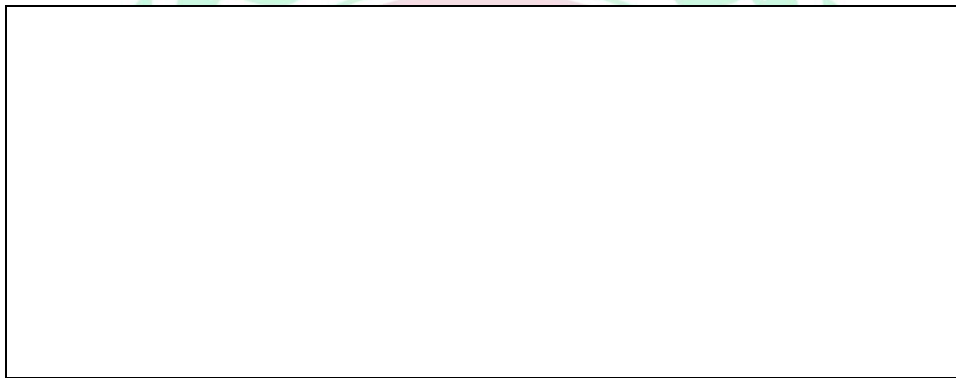
- Tough competition from foreign neighbours like Bangkok and Singapore in terms of pricing too has come as a setback to the region. “An air trip to and from Bangkok-Kolkata will cost Rs 6000 and the same is for Bagdogra. And with all these disturbances in the region, the choice becomes obvious.
- The most important thing is the carrying capacity specially the condition of road is horrible. Still now there is a single road from Kurseong to Darjeeling. Very often the tourists are to face huge traffic problem. Unless this improves permanently the tourism of Darjeeling will not be sustainable.
- Though the tourists enjoy the enormous natural beauty and evergreen climate of Darjeeling. But it has been observed that the most of the tourists are not satisfied with water supply, power supply and cleanliness of accommodation. Congestion and existence of dirty environment in various parts of the town are other reasons for dissatisfaction. In fact, level of tourist satisfaction is deteriorating in Darjeeling Town day by day.
- Moreover the taxi drivers are sometimes creating an artificial crisis of vehicles and charge exorbitant fare. The behavior as well as honesty of few taxi- drivers are not reliable, which also carries a wrong signal regarding the goodwill of this place as tourist destination.

Conclusion:

But the positive aspect is that in order to encourage tourism in Darjeeling, a total amount of about Rs 32 crore has been sanctioned by the Government of India for Darjeeling to implement various projects related to infrastructure development. With the completion of these projects, the tourist industry will get a very positive boost. Any other proposal of the State Government for enhancing tourism in the district will be extended financial support. Moreover it is also expected that with the initiatives of new government in Bengal the Bandth culture of Darjeeling is going to be ended and once again we can see a peaceful, green and clean Darjeeling with full of tourists very soon.

Some photographs are given below for those who have not travelled Darjeeling yet, with an appeal please don't try to fulfill the taste of milk through buttermilk. If one really wants to enjoy the cool and heavenly climate, calm and serenity of kanchanjangha, honesty and hospitality of the local people, the academic environment, colorful rhododendrons, precious red panda, world famous tea, world heritage toy train he has to come to Darjeeling. It is only you who can save the millions of people who are directly and indirectly engaged in the tourism of Darjeeling probably a gift of nature.

View of Darjeeling in 1980



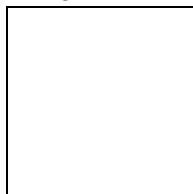
Mount Kanchanjangha as viewed from Darjeeling



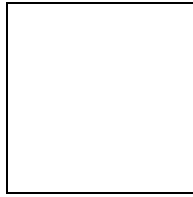
View of Happy Valley tea garden



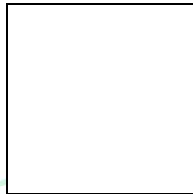
Darjeeling War Memorial



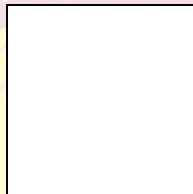
Bringing in the Darjeeling tea harvest, circa 1890.



A Darjeeling street during heavy rain



Tea plantation in Darjeeling



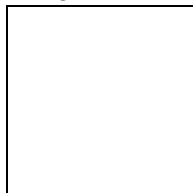
The "Toy Train" approaching Darjeeling



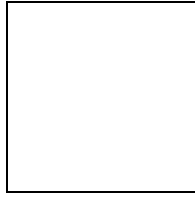
Colourful flags with Buddhist text around a Hindu temple



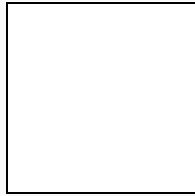
Tibetan Refugee Self Help Center



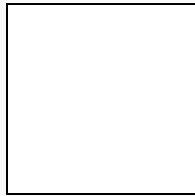
Kunchenjunga covered with snow



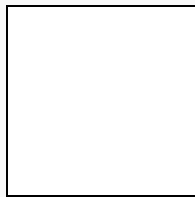
A view of river Teesta, flowing through the mountains



Mirik Lake is a nice place for boating



View of Kunchenjunga from Tiger Hill



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