



Chapter 5

Tourism

5.1. Introduction

Tourism has hitherto been regarded as a non-priority sector with regard to state economic planning. This view has recently undergone a shift, and tourism is now perceived as a significant contributor to the economy, specifically as a generator of employment for all sectors of society.

The main objective of this study is to define proposal(s) and strategies and projects that should be undertaken to promote the tourism interests in Uttar Pradesh, consistent with the overall state planning objectives. A number of action plans have been proposed along with related estimated cost structures. The projects are chosen to add value to existing tourism assets.

In this context, the current state policies have been reviewed in Section 5.2 to assess tourism potential in terms of the overall economic and tourism goals of the state. This in turn would lead to identifying tourism opportunities and action plans for bankable tourism projects. Section 5.3 identifies the strategic themes and specific tourism projects. Finally, the last section provides detailed analysis and plans for two key projects namely Bundelkhand-the Ganga Heartland Train circuit and Agra as an International Convention/Events Centre.

5.2. A Review of State Policy for Tourism Development

5.2.1. Key Elements of State Policy

State policy is reflected in Uttar Pradesh's industrial policy. The two main objectives that come to light include:

1. Increasing employment in the region.
2. Targeting high growth.

The policy aims to achieve these, through a series of public-private partnership programmes especially for infrastructure development. The policy also states that balanced development could be obtained through promotion of small-scale industries or enterprises. There is a realisation that service sector must be promoted for industrial and economic growth of the state. This becomes particularly relevant in view of the flagging tourism development and promotion for Uttar Pradesh.

The Industrial Policy also mentions the imperative for preservation of environment and cultural heritage, as well as the need to promote specific geographic areas/corridors.

Other key points include a review of the tax structure, promoting industry-specific programmes, and exports.

5.2.1.1. Key Elements of State Tourism Policy

The State Tourism Policy for Uttar Pradesh has certain specific objectives which need to be kept in mind for any coordinated development programmes for the region. These include:

- Tourism projects must be able to provide economic benefit to the local population and enhance employment opportunities.
- Quality must be a key consideration for any project approval.
- The project must be integrated through a master plan.
- Projects must improve and diversify the tourism product base, with a focus on adventure, religious and monument based traveller.
- The specific targets within the tourism industry include:

- Increasing the hotel capacity of the region.
- Increasing the visitation numbers.
- Enhancing the investment in the tourism industry.
- Increasing revenue per visitor through a superior visitor profile, better facilities and value addition to the tourism product.

These aspirations as projected by the State Tourism Policy, have the following strategies for development:

- Development of basic infrastructure as the key to attract tourism in the region; this would be undertaken by the government bodies.
- Importance of involving private sector to pursue meaningful development plans.
- Importance of planning tourists circuits through master planning.
- Dovetailing development funds from different sources.
- Improvement in the product diversity to attract a range of tourists.
- Restoration of heritage properties, since these form the key to tourism potential in the region.
- Coordination between various government departments.
- Importance of effective marketing.
- Importance of setting standards and quality benchmarks.

The State Tourism Policy also mentions themed circuits, which have to be prioritised for development. These include:

1. Buddhist circuit;
2. Bundelkhand circuit;
3. Braj (Agra-Mathura) circuit;
4. Avadh circuit;
5. Vindhya circuit; and
6. Water cruises circuit (down the river Ganges).

The significance of projects as a vehicle to improve the employment pattern of the region and tourism product type is a key factor in the tourism policy. These must be kept in cognizance for identifying any project for development.

5.2.2. Review of Tourism Potential

The Region

Uttar Pradesh is identified as the Indo-Gangetic plain of India. Situated in the northern part of the country, the state has come to be identified with the core India image or the 'Hindi Heartland'.

One of the biggest states in the country and definitely the most populous, Uttar Pradesh accounts for 70 districts. The 2001 Census pegs the population at 166 million people in an area of 2.36 lakh sq.km. At Rs. 4787 per annum, the per capita income is the third lowest in the country only ahead of Orissa and Bihar. The state has traditionally been agrarian in nature with poor industrial and tertiary sector growth. There are also major regional imbalances in the state economy with Bundelkhand low in education and agriculture. Rivers are a significant physical feature and tourism resource. All its important tourist destinations have an attractive riverfront that can be developed.

Physical Features

The state, after the carving out of the hilly state of Uttaranchal, lies almost entirely in the plains and once accounted for some of the richest alluvial soil in northern India. Even though the state doesn't account for any breathtaking topography, as is associated with the hilly states of Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh and beaches of the south, its most important physical feature is the River Ganges, which traverses the length of the state and accounts for some of the oldest cities/regions in the world. The river has long come to signify the religious heartbeat of the 'Hindu' majority. Its banks are associated with many myths, legends and religious beliefs. Varanasi, one of the most important cities of ancient and medieval India is also located along its banks.

The southern region of the state has drier scrubs and ravines associated with the 'Chambal ghatis' of Madhya Pradesh. This area along with some districts of Madhya Pradesh is known as Bundelkhand.

Connectivity

The state is well connected with Delhi, the capital city. In fact Delhi forms the main gateway (entry/exit point) to the state. The state itself has no natural entry or exit point.

Delhi, Agra (200 km from Delhi) and Jaipur (261km from Delhi) in Rajasthan, form part of the most

travelled tourism circuit in the country called the 'Golden Triangle'. The Delhi-Agra nexus almost touches the Bundelkhand region and makes project development possible. Agra is connected to Delhi by the Grand Trunk Road or NH1. The Golden Quadrilateral and the East West Highway both pass through Uttar Pradesh. This will improve the road links immeasurably.

Uttar Pradesh also has an extensive rail network with linkages to all the major cities in the country. Train services from Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai to principal tourist destinations are well established. The train link between Jhansi and Varanasi is not established. The air link is limited to some of the more important destinations including Lucknow (the capital city of the state), Varanasi (important religious and tourism centre) and Agra (important tourist destination). No other cities in the state have air link facilities.

History and Culture—Showcasing Ancient and Medieval India

Uttar Pradesh boasts of some of the most significant architectural and cultural treasures in the Indian subcontinent. The state is testament to some of the most important historical events of ancient and medieval India. Apart from being the host state for the Taj Mahal at Agra, Fatehpur Sikri at Sikri, the monuments at Lucknow, it also has the unique distinction of being the birthplace of the Hindu civilisation along the *ghats* of the river Ganga. The state also hosts some key destinations on the Buddhist circuit. However one of the most undiscovered and unspoilt regions of the state is Bundelkhand. The region boasts of some of the most significant forts in the country, comparable to the forts of Rajasthan.

5.2.3. Destination Priorities

The destination priorities would include areas, which not only warrant tourism status because of their unique situation but also would most benefit by tourism development in terms of their economic growth.

Agra

Agra has come to signify the tourism and cultural icon of India. In spite of this exalted status, the city continues to suffer from haphazard urban development, lack of civic and basic amenities. There is no nodal agency dedicated to the management of the city catering

to the requirements of both the tourists and local residents. As a result of this, most tourists prefer not to stay in the city (and contribute to its economy).

Bundelkhand

The Bundelkhand region in spite of its rich cultural and architectural heritage remains one of the most underdeveloped regions of the country. The region lacks basic infrastructure and development focus to attract tourists in the region.

5.2.4 Market Opportunity Analysis

The market assessment was carried out through detailed interviews of various industry experts with the aid of a formal questionnaire. The results of this exercise produced primary market interests in the region, key improvement sectors, and key marketing linkages and market opportunities. These have been discussed below:

Primary Market Interests

- Strong historical and cultural focus in the region, with Agra as the focal attraction.
- Varanasi is the second most important destination after Agra mystical/spiritual connotations as well as a close association with the river Ganges.
- Strong interface between Uttar Pradesh and neighbouring Madhya Pradesh, with Jhansi as the gateway. The primary reason for this is that the region between Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh formed a geographic area called Bundelkhand with an inter-linked history.
- Lucknow, the state capital, is a primary tourist destination.

Key Marketing/Circuit Linkages

- Delhi is the gateway for international and most domestic travel.
- Uttar Pradesh itself doesn't have any significant entry or exit points.
- Agra and Varanasi are considered unique in the world, with no effective competitors.
- Agra is the most dominant attraction with primary linkage to Jaipur.
- Varanasi and Jhansi are important linkages to the Bundelkhand region namely Khajuraho and Orchha.

Conclusions on High Potential Products/Markets

The conclusions on the market opportunity have been inferred after a 'SOC' (strengths, opportunities, and constraints) analysis.

Strengths

- The state possesses two world-class unique destinations, Agra and Varanasi. These must be incorporated in any future development project planning.
- The two primary associations in people's minds about Uttar Pradesh are that of a rich historical/cultural heritage and sacredness.

Opportunities

- The state proves to be a primary link to Khajuraho and Orchha in the Bundelkhand region. Since the former is a World Heritage site and the latter a unique architectural and historical monument, they could be considered as important potential product for the region.
- The river Ganges has sacred and cultural connotations and is identified as the image of India.

Constraints

- There is a diffused image of the state as a whole, as far as tourism product identification is considered, even though it has unique individual products
- Accessibility to various/all tourism products/potential tourism interests is limited from Delhi and is the primary deterrent factor to growth.
- There is a limited presence of organised sector and poor infrastructure provision in terms of roads and accommodation facilities. This calls for a greater need for superior urban infrastructure and cleanliness.
- There is paucity of accommodation in most tourists spots in the Bundelkhand region, especially quality accommodation.
- There is a need for greater activity-based tourism development, especially evening activities.

5.2.5 Strategy for Tourism Development in Uttar Pradesh

The strategy must take into account the infrastructural constraints while building on the wealth

of cultural and historical strengths, in order to capitalise on the inherent opportunities of the region.

Action Plan 1

The region has emerged as a conglomeration of centres of importance loosely linked by poor road/rail connections. Each centre is known for either its historical monuments (Agra, Orchha, Jhansi, Mahoba, etc.) or places of ancient spiritual traditions (Varanasi, Allahabad).

The development programme for the region hence must focus on these centres of growth and develop adequate infrastructure to spur further growth in the region. Some of the possible centres as identified through this study are:

- Jhansi,
- Mahoba,
- Chitrakoot,
- Allahabad, and
- Varanasi.

These however are indicative and a detailed study needs to be undertaken to fully understand their individual growth potential and linkage within the region.

Action Plan 2

Large parts of the region have managed to preserve age-old characteristics and cultural traditions and norms. One of the main reasons for this is that the region, because of its industrial backwardness, has not been consumed by indiscriminate urbanisation.

This primarily rural character can be viewed as a major tourism potential for the region. Rural tourism has gained prominence amongst the Indian policy makers in recent times. Some of the key benefits identified are:

- Ecotourism—Experiencing the lifestyles, art and culture as lived in the rural setting, the habitations, rivers, etc.
- Preservation of the assets, values and traditions of meditation, yoga, ayurveda, etc.
- Promotion of fairs, festivals, arts and crafts.
- Creation of employment opportunities and improvements in quality of life.

Action Plan 3

Heritage Assets

The region, especially the Bundelkhand area has a rich inventory of heritage properties, since the region was largely based on fiefdoms and local rulers, each defied the other by making grander palaces and forts, Many of these are now in a state of ruin because of the lack of adequate capital.

Some ways to salvage these would be:

- To promote 'adoption' of heritage properties by the private sector.
- Encourage private owners to take up heritage hotels.
- To promote conversion of government-owned properties as heritage hotels.

This would involve the making of a detailed inventory of the heritage properties with growth potential and project plans for future development.

Action Plan 4

Destination Management

The already existing tourism centres need destination management plans to maintain and improve their existing status. Varanasi being the key tourism centre, attracting the maximum number of tourists in the region would require immediate attention. Plans need to be made for city decongestion, *ghats* and river experience improvement, accommodation, etc.

A study must be commissioned to revive this most ancient city of India and reverse the process of urban degradation, without destroying the cultural ethos of the area.

Action Plan 5

Innovative Tourism Products

Innovative tourism concepts can be developed which can create a memorable experience for the tourists. Some of the experiences identified in the region are:

- Experiencing fairs like the *Kumbh mela* in Varanasi Fairs and festivals based on music, dance and drama like the *Barsana Holi*, *Magh melas*, *Deep Deepawali* in Varanasi.
- Spiritual retreats, etc. at the numerous renowned *ashrams*.
- River-based experience on the Ganges, Yamuna, Gomti, etc.

- Soft adventure in terms of trekking, walking tours, river rafting, wildlife, nature, etc.
- *Ghats* experience in Varanasi.
- Experiencing rural life with rural activities and crafts.
- Promoting wellness concepts for rejuvenation of body, soul and mind like yoga, ayurveda cures and therapies, etc.

5.2.6 Strategy Statement/Challenges

To induce the above-mentioned concepts in the region, it becomes important to detail projects, which would help kick-start development in the right direction, incorporating these concepts.

The project must instigate development such that tourism as an economic activity can be developed and provides a means of steady economic benefits to the local community. It is important that all future development work in the region be in a partnership of the public and private sector to optimise the development potential and ensure efficient management practices.

5.3. Identification of Strategic Theme and Specific Tourism Projects

Uttar Pradesh Tourism has been benchmarked against Rajasthan, which has built its tourism on heritage. Tourism has been a significant engine of growth for Rajasthan to generate employment and revenues for the government. However, a closer examination shows that Uttar Pradesh has more advantages. It has more ancient and medieval sites whereas Rajasthan has more Mughal and Rajput sites. In terms of concentration of heritage buildings, Bundelkhand has a higher concentration than Rajasthan.

The State Tourism Policy objective should focus on the socio-economic benefits and improve, diversify and expand the tourism product to satisfy the following criteria:

- Generate 'quality' employment for the host community.
- Provide livelihood security for deprived sections.
- Develop rural tourism projects in the poverty belt to supplement agricultural incomes.

5.3.1. Key Initiatives for the Development of Tourism

Define the State Tourism Policy

The state tourism policy should aim to set up a tourism board and requires statutory support by

legislature to generate confidence. It should also create access and connectivity.

Build Awareness

Building awareness would involve sensitising all levels of the host population to the benefits of tourism and the code of conduct and sensitising all in the state administration and local bodies to the special needs of and opportunities associated with the tourism sector.

Revenue Generation and Initiatives

Revenue generation could involve a widening of the tax base to enhance revenue. For eg. there could be an entrance fees for *ghats*, etc. There could also be special incentives and tax holidays for Heritage properties. More emphasis could be laid on rural tourism and special tourist areas. To encourage investments and attract more traffic, the total central, state and municipal tax should be defined at 10 per cent. Interstate transport tax and movement restrictions could be rationalised to encourage more tourists. Increasing the visitations to monuments and lengthening stays can also encourage developments to move up the value chain. This generates more employment/economic benefits per rupee invested.

The government can also encourage private organisations to set up hotel/restaurants/tourism management institutes as also investment by the organised sector in hotel, tour operations and tourist transport. Strategic projects could be developed by converting non-performing assets like heritage, rivers, *ghats* into revenue generators. And all these can be given a boost by encouraging public-private partnership.

Develop Strategic Projects

The criteria could be:

- Create distinct brand identity for Uttar Pradesh.
- Develop heritage as a key theme: forts, palaces, villages, cities, temples, mosques and shrines.
- Develop products around the rivers.
- Develop products around spirituality/sports/leisure activities/rural areas.

Manage Destinations

This involves adopting a mission approach which could involve the following for destination management.

Centre

- Ministry of Railways.
- Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- ITDC.
- Archeological Survey of India (ASI).

State

- Public works departments, municipalities and local bodies.
- Cooperate with neighbouring states, in particular Madhya Pradesh for tourist road transport.

NGOs

- INTACH

5.3.2. Key Projects

Ten key projects have been identified by Uttar Pradesh Tourism, which have ancient and medieval India as the dominant theme to encourage tourism in the state. They are:

1. Develop a theme Ancient and Medieval India. Develop the region between Jhansi and Varanasi as a tourist experience.
2. Develop a 'Ganga Heartland' train from Delhi to showcase the theme.
3. Develop Varanasi as a hub to the Buddhist destinations and the Ganga heartland. And ensure improvement of tourism facilities in Jhansi, Mahoba, Chitrakoot, Allahabad.
4. Develop Buddhist destination facilities Gorakhpur, Sravas, Kapilavastu (Piprahawa) be included for development as a centre for Buddhist tourism.
5. Develop river tourism and the Chunar Fort. Start a river cruise from Varanasi to Chunar.
6. Develop a rural tourism experience Jhansi, Chitrakoot, Allahabad, Varanasi (Chunar).
7. Develop Agra as an international convention city.
8. Improve the Lucknow experience by developing the Gomti riverfront in Lucknow/Hussainabad area and make it a hub along with Varanasi.

9. Develop Jamuna riverfront at Vrindavan through a Krishna theme.
10. Develop wildlife tourism in Dudhwa with a train link from Lucknow.
11. Develop tourism related infrastructure

1. Developing a Theme: Ancient and Medieval India

This could involve showcasing of 'undiscovered tourism', thus providing a different tourist experience that offers exposure to religious themes of Chitrakoot and the Buddhist sites and also to the palaces, forts and temples of Orchha, Jhansi, Allahabad and Varanasi.

2. Developing a 'Ganga Heartland' Train from Delhi to Showcase the Theme

A tourist train for the Ganga heartland can be built to showcase the theme. The cost of building a new train with lockable doors, bathing facilities, dining car etc (e.g. Parikrama Express) is around Rs. 15 crore and the cost of improving railway sidings and station is three crore. Improvement of the destination experience for some areas have been estimated. For Jhansi, the estimate is Rs. 10.50 crore for the Lakshmi Taal, Pahuj Dam and Orchha. The cost for Mahoba *tehsil* (Rs. 5.9 crore) and Charkari *tehsil* (Rs. 4 crore) together stand at Rs. 9.90 crore. Chitrakoot; without the dam, would be Rs. 11.3 crore and the roadworks there have been estimated at Rs. 4.4 crore. The Allahabad riverfront, which includes Jhusi and Arail, would cost 6 crore. And the improvement of the 65 km stretch of the Mahoba-Khajuraho road would cost Rs. 6.50 crore. (Also see Section 5.3).

3. Developing Varanasi as a Hub to the Buddhist Destinations and Ganga Heartland

Varanasi has been the centre for education, religion, art and culture since time immemorial. For every visitor Varanasi has a different experience to offer. The riverfront, the high banks, the temples, the pavilions, chanting of *mantras*, the hymns along with the fragrance of incense fills the air with mysticism.

Developing Varanasi as a hub involves the repair of the 64 *ghats* in the region at a cost of Rs. 70 crore; conservation, restoration of the heritage buildings at a cost of Rs. 80 crore. It would also involve civic works water, sewage, lighting at a cost of Rs. 120 crore and roadworks like repairs, parking and flyovers at a cost of Rs. 130 crore.

The development of a river cruise can also add to the development of Varanasi. Development of docking facilities can be done at a cost of a crore and the development of the riverbank recreational area which involves the lighting, restaurants, shops, pedestrian area, etc. would cost around Rs. 11.5 crore. Building of river sightseeing boats, cruising restaurants can be done at a cost of Rs. 4.50 crore thus totaling Rs. 17 crore.

4. Developing Buddhist Destination Facilities

Development of this would imply development of statues, visitor centres, internal development like lighting, boundary walls, tree planting, restaurants and lodgings and signage, etc. at Sarnath, Kushinagar, Sravasti, Sankisa and Kaushambi. The total cost for this has been estimated at Rs. 148.0 crore.

5. Develop River Tourism and Chunar Fort

Chunar Fort can be reached by a 40 km boat ride from Varanasi on the Ganga. This 2000-year old fort was home to legends like Vikramaditya, Bharathari, Sher Shah Suri, Humayun, Akbar and Warren Hastings, and is being restored with the help of INTACH. The restoration, including Warren Hastings House, will cost Rs. 4.50 crore. And renovating existing rest houses, cafeterias, landscaping and signage would cost Rs. 5.80 crore. Development of water sports is also being undertaken and this would cost of Rs. 15.0 crore. And the dock on the riverbank for boats from Varanasi is also being planned at a cost of a crore.

6. Develop a Rural Tourism Experience at Jhansi, Chitrakoot, Allahabad

Tourism Development at Jhansi

The Jhansi experience covers the Jhansi Fort and the valour of the Rani of Jhansi and Bundelkhand culture, the Rani Mahal which today houses a fine collection of sculptures, the Maharaja Gangadhar Rao ki Chathri situated on the Laxmi Tal. This area is being restored with help from INTACH. INTACH has done considerable work in restoration in Orchha. The temple masses and famous *chathries* are striking. This would be an ideal setting for rural tourism.

Tourism Development at Chitrakoot

Chitrakoot was where Lord Ram spent 11 and-a-half years of his 14 years exile. This experience of ancient India covers what is still a rural area. The tour of this

area could cover a visit to the start of the *parikrama*, a view of the Hanuman Tilla, visit to the *ghats* of the Mandakini river and a Ram Leela performed by local players and finally a visit to the Ram Darshan.

Tourism Development at Allahabad

Allahabad is the *sangam* of the Ganga, the Yamuna and the Saraswati. Insights into medieval India are provided by a visit to the fort here. A *Sangam Camp* conjures an atmosphere that is magical with the *aarti*, site of the Kumbh and *Magh Mela* (annual event Jan./Feb.) and a rail site for Mahesh Yogi's project.

7. Develop Agra as an International Convention City

This concept of making Agra an international convention, exhibition and events city, (also see Section 5.3) will work both in the case of an international airport coming up in Agra or even without the airport, because Agra has good connectivity with Delhi and Delhi is very well linked with national and international destinations. Sun City, South Africa and Sunway Lagoon, Malaysia are good examples of off-metro destinations that have positioned themselves as convention/event cities.

TABLE 5.1

Cost Involved in the Development of Agra as an International Convention Exhibition and Events City

(Rs. Crore)

A.	
Build an International Standard Convention Centre	50.00
<i>Construction of a Visitor Centre</i>	4.0
<i>Construction of Entry Points to Promenades</i>	8.75
<i>Promenades along the Yamuna as Per Taj National Park Plan</i>	61.0
<i>Parking Facilities</i>	2.0
<i>Amphi-theatre for 10000</i>	3.50
<i>Establishment of a Golf Course</i>	2.50
<i>Water Supply and Tanks</i>	0.50
<i>Electrification</i>	6.50
B.	
Improvement of Electricity Distribution—Taj Ganj/Agra City	23.0
Southern Bypass Phase 2	60.0
City Sewerage	200.0
City Drainage	200.0
Taj Barrage	80.0
Solid Waste Management	7.0
Improvement of 20 City Roads	19.0

Source: The above items have been provided by the Taj Protection Mission and TTZ reports.

Note: The items in italics have been provided by the Taj National Park report.

8. Improve the 'Lucknow' Experience by Developing the Gomti Riverfront in Lucknow/Hussainabad Area

This could involve development of a river bank pedestrian area providing docking facilities, dining and entertainment, shops, etc. and the cost for this stands at Rs. 12.5 crore, running of jetty and cruise boats which cost around Rs. 4.50 crore. The improvement plan can also involve upgradation of the existing facilities (Rs. 0.50 crore) in the area and reactivation of the Hussainabad Trust (Rs. 15 crore). The Hussainabad Trust can generate revenues of Rs. 30 crore.

9. Develop Yamuna Riverfront at Vrindavan through a Krishna Theme

The Yamuna riverfront in Vrindavan anchors the Krishna legend. Development of the riverfront area for relaxation and enjoyment, improving the *ghats*, etc. can be done for the development of the Yamuna riverfront. This would involve a total cost of Rs. 12.5 crore. The growing ISKCON movement can be approached for partnering such projects.

10. Develop Wildlife Tourism in Dudhwa with a Train Link from Lucknow

Dudhwa National Park is spread over of an area of approximately 500 sq. km., along the Indo-Nepal border in Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh and is best known for barasingha/swamp deers, tigers, leopards, Indian one-horned-rhinoceros and wild elephant. Dudhwa is also a bird watcher's paradise.

12. Develop Tourism Related Infrastructure

Infrastructure and facilities of international standards should be made available in the state to improve tourism. An airport of international standard should be built in Agra and smaller airports for smaller aircrafts should be built at Varanasi, Ayodhya and Khushinagar. Also private investment in the construction of hotels needs to be encouraged. In addition to the convention centre in Agra, convention centres also need to be set up in Lucknow and Ayodhya to promote tourism in the state.

5.3.3. Awareness Building

The most important strategy for the development of tourism is to create awareness among the people and the decision makers of the tourism opportunities. This also involves sensitising the host community to the product. Creating a distinct brand identity for Uttar Pradesh through marketing, advertising and promotion would also help improve tourism. For this purpose, the

media can be put to use effectively especially the Internet can be made use of extensively. At another level, participating in festivals, building excitement around properties like encouraging film makers and fashion industry to use these properties as a backdrop and having high profile events attract attention of international media for e.g., Yanni at Taj Mahal, and can also encourage tourism to a large extent.

5.3.4. *Summing Up: The Road Map for Uttar Pradesh Tourism*

The following points sum up the strategies to be adopted for the development of Tourism:

- Bring tourism to the mainstream of administration and development programme of Uttar Pradesh.
- Adopt a mission approach with a focussed product/theme/destinations.
- Create opportunities and conditions with the help of local bodies to attract private enterprise.
- Tourism should create tangible benefits for the host community.

5.4. Analysis and Plan for Selected Key Projects

5.4.1. *Bundelkhand–The Ganga Heartland Train Circuit*

In an attempt to capitalise on the vast cultural and historic potential of this region and also taking into consideration the lack of adequate infrastructure, the concept of a tourist train has been suggested. This plan has been evolved by Jayanta Sanyal after detailed deliberations with the Railways as well as the travel and tourism industry. The Tourism Train provides connectivity, accommodation and basic infrastructure in a single product. It also provides a theme that is attractive and marketable.

Tourists Train for Ganga Heartland Destination

- The travel circuit will encompass: Jhansi, Mahoba (Khajuraho), Chitrakoot, Allahabad, Varanasi.
- Train will comprise air conditioned two-tier coaches with dining car facilities.
- The bi-weekly train will ply alternatively, starting from Delhi and Varanasi.

The focus of the trip, apart from showcasing the rich architectural heritage, would also include special activities (both in the train as well as at destinations).

These could include yoga, meditation sessions, lectures, films expounding the history and culture of the region. On-site activities could include visit to the local *haat*, dance, dance shows depicting local legends, etc.

5.4.1.1. Selection Criteria

Firstly, the choice of the Ganga heartland was predicated by the fact that its attractions cover:

- Bundhelkhand and its forts and palaces highlighting medieval India.
- The rivers–Betwa at Orchha, Mandakini at Chitrakoot, Yamuna and Ganga at Allahabad and Varanasi.
- Khajuraho and its temples which, though not in Uttar Pradesh, are very much part of the heartland experience (Mohaba was capital of the Chandelas who built Khajuraho).
- Chitrakoot and the Rama legend.
- Allahabad for the Sangam and the Kumbh *mela*.
- Varanasi as both the first city designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage City, and as a hub to visit the Buddhist sites. This highlights ancient India.

In spite of this, the area has never been systematically promoted. Access is not currently easy and the area remains largely unexplored.

Secondly, the product should pioneer new areas and thereby create new ‘quality’ jobs and opportunities.

Majority of the Ganga heartland falls within the poverty belt and tourism is the most efficient route to generate local employment and fuel the local economy. Tourism opens up options for women and illiterate or poorly educated craftsmen. It provides livelihood security by supplementing traditional agricultural incomes. The Ganga Heartland product has been fashioned to drive revenues directly into the local economies.

The concept of ‘rural tourism’ based around a heritage experience has been successful in Paragpur, Himachal Pradesh where renovation of The Judge’s Court was carried out with the involvement of the local *panchayat* and the entire village ‘restored’ itself to its original design. The Ganga Heartland offers myriad opportunities to develop along similar lines.

Thirdly, the product is designed as a catalyst to spur further development. To that end, the proposed tourist train offers a taste of the area’s potential and by

inciting repeat visits, encourages development along the itinerary. Details of tourist experiences outside the itinerary have also been mentioned to indicate the opportunities for repeat visits/ extended stays.

A successful tourism product brings together many elements:

- attractions,
- access,
- accommodation,
- transportation,
- guides, information,
- recreation, and
- civic amenities and facilities.

It must be kept in mind that the carrying capacity of the region in terms of both physical and social impact must be respected.

5.4.1.2. The Proposed Product

A self-contained tourist train that transports tourists to sites that, to-date, were relatively difficult for the individual travellers to visit. The train offers both transportation and accommodation and will consist of:

- Ten second class air-conditioned sleeper cars.
- Two dining cum observation cars.
- An activity car for meditation, ayurveda, massages, crafts displays, lectures, etc.
- A generator car required to provide air-conditioning and lighting while stationary.

At the initial stages, the train will be a minor modification of existing coaches, but will evolve to provide adequate toilet and bathing facilities.

The itinerary will be a three night four day tour that will also be run in reverse enabling full utilisation of the rake. The twice-weekly itinerary also means that places on the itinerary will be visited twice a week providing a steady income.

5.4.1.3. The Creation of the Tourist Train Itinerary

A Core Committee was created and an itinerary drafted based on the individual experiences of committee members. It was decided that a recce trip must be done to validate the itinerary. An initial trip

was made by Cox & Kings to identify attractions and possible theme experiences. A second trip was conducted by ITDC's Ashok Travels and Tours to have formal discussions with Uttar Pradesh Tourism and MP Tourism regarding arrangements.

Theme evenings were developed to enhance the tourist experience:

- Orchha - Theme dinner at the Sheesh Mahal with the fort as a backdrop.
- Khajuraho - Sound and light at the temples.
- Chitrakoot - Ram Leela at the Ram Ghat on the Mandakini river.
- Varanasi - *Aarti* by trained performers in ritual costumes.

Visitors on the Ganga Heartland tourist train will receive a briefing on each destination prior to arrival. At each destination, the local population will be involved. For instance, it is planned to use cycle rickshaws in Chitrakoot, Allahabad, etc. and meals will reflect the local cuisine as far as possible.

The final itinerary was agreed upon by the committee and costed by Ashok Travels and Tours at US\$ 480 per person for three nights/four days. This covers all transportation, accommodation, all meals, theme evenings, sightseeing and guides.

Although Orchha and Khajuraho are in MP, the movement of tourist traffic from Agra to Varanasi passes through this region and therefore it may be advantageous to develop an integrated approach by creating linkage by road, rail and air. This will add value to the tourism package and increase visitor attraction to Uttar Pradesh.

5.4.1.4 Itinerary of Ganga Heartland

1. Jhansi and Orchha

- a. Jhansi Fort and the valour of the Rani of Jhansi.
- b. Rani Mahal and its sculpture collection.
- c. Maharaja Gangadhar Rao ki Chathri and Laxmi Tal.
- d. Orchha Fort and temples.

Jhansi is also the headquarters of Baidyanath, one of India's largest manufacturer of ayurvedic medicines. Participants will be introduced to the North Indian system of ayurveda through lectures and demonstrations on the train. There is a theme dinner at

the MP tourism hotel with the backdrop of the fort. Possible Extensions to be Developed from Jhansi are:

Datia–Bir Singh Palace, Raj Mahal, Old Fort, Pithabira Peeth Temple.

Datia is mentioned in the *Mahabharat*. Lutyens, the architect for New Delhi, describes Datia Fort as “One of the most interesting buildings architecturally in the whole of India.” It has Mughal and Rajput influences.

Gwalior–The attractions in Gwalior are the ancient hill fort which has Man Singh Palace, Tel-ka-Mandir, Sasbahu Temples and Jain Sculptures.

2. Mahoba

There is no sightseeing in Mahoba on this itinerary. Tourist attractions of Mahoba can be added at a later stage.

Mohaba was the Bundela capital, and the Chandela kings fulfilled their desires to build temples to their gods and bring water to their land. Four lakes were made by damming valleys.

Mahoba is also famous for its betel leaf industry. Leaf from Mahoba is exported all around India.

Possible extensions to be developed are:

Charkari–Fort and palace, Ratan Sagar and Tolaal lakes, Rayanpur and Kali Devi Peeth temples, Kothi Mahal. The fort at Charkari is considered a ‘gunner’s fort’ as it has many cannons.

Kalinjar–Kalinjar is the most ancient fort in all of India. It stands on the last spur of the Vindhyas and was once thought of as invincible.

3. Khajuraho

Khajuraho and its Chandela temples need no introduction. Eighty-five magnificent and richly carved temples were built near the village of Khajuraho, today only 22 have survived. The temples can be said to have a theme; woman. A celebration of womankind, myriad moods and facets. There are carvings of women in different moods. Innocent, coquettish, smiling, seductive, passionate and beautiful, all depicting in intricate detail, sharply etched, sculptured with consummate skill. Part of the tourist experience is a sound and light show and a theme dinner with the temples as a backdrop.

4. Chitrakoot

Chitrakoot is where Lord Rama spent 11 and a half years of his 14 years exile. The weather in Chitrakoot is considered healthy. On the itinerary, participants will be taken to the start of the 5 km *parikrama* and shown the Hanuman Tilla from a distance.

The sacred Mandakini river runs through Chitrakoot. The *ghats* have been developed on the Uttar Pradesh side of the river and are kept clean. Covered boats take tourists for small cruises. There will be a performance of the Ram Leela ballet at the *ghats*. Possible extensions to be developed from Chitrakoot: Gupt Godavri, a subterranean river temple.

5. Allahabad

Allahabad is famous for the *sangam*—the confluence of the Ganges, the Yamuna and the Saraswati. It is one of the most sacred of pilgrimage centres of India. Allahabad is also the site of the Kumbh and Magh *melas*. The highlight of the tourist experience in Allahabad will be the *aarti* performed as a colourful ceremony to create a spiritual and spectacular impact. Possible extensions to be developed are: Vidhyanchal, Rewa and Bandavgarh.

6. Varanasi

Varanasi has been the centre for religion, education, art, silk weaving and culture since time immemorial. For every visitor Varanasi has a different experience to offer, the riverfront, the high *ghats*, the temples, the chanting of *mantras*, the hymns along with the fragrance of incense fills the air with mysticism. It is presumed that participants would spend more time in this, the first city in the world to be designated as World Heritage. As with the other gateway of Delhi, at Varanasi there will be no organised activities other than a river cruise and *aarti*. Possible extensions to be developed are:

River Cruises–The cruise to Chunar Fort is 40 kms along the Ganges. Chunar is 2000 years old and was home to legends like Vikramaditya, Bharathari, Sher Shah Suri, Humayun, Akbar and Warren Hastings.

The Buddhist Circuit – Sarnath, Bodh Gaya, Gaya,

TABLE 5.2

Investment Required (in Rs. Crores)

Building a New Tourist Train with Lockable Doors, Bathing Facilities, Dining Cars, etc.	15.00
Cost of Improving Railway Sidings and Stations	3.00
Improvement of Destination Facilities in Jhansi – Lakshmi Taal, Pahuj dam, Orchha	10.50
Improvements in Mahoba and Charkari <i>Tehsils</i>	9.90
Chitrakoot Improvements Including Road Works	15.70
Allahabad Riverfront at Jhusi and Arail	6.00
Improving the Road from Mahoba to Khajuraho	6.50
Total	66.60

Source: Uttar Pradesh State Tourism Policy.

Kaushambi, Sravas, etc.

5.4.2. Agra as an International Convention/Events Centre

Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Events—the so-called MICE segment—is one of the fastest growing segments in the travel and hospitality industry.

India's share of the global MICE industry however remains small but its strategic location halfway between Europe and the Far East can help India take advantage of this fast growing segment. The country doesn't feature in the top 50 destinations for convention priority by the international delegates as recorded by ICCA for 2000.

India hasn't developed a single convention-focus city. The conferences are largely hotel induced and through private efforts, rather than city authority efforts. The only notable conference/convention facilities in India are Vigyan Bhawan in Delhi, Ashok Hotel in Delhi, Sher-e-Kashmir in Srinagar and Jaypee Hotel in Agra. Vigyan Bhawan being a Central government enterprise has security and booking issues and also faces cancellation without prior notice in case the Government requires the facility. Sher-e-Kashmir, one of the best facilities is facing problems because of the escalation of the Kashmir problem.

Of the two left, Jaypee being a newer facility is attracting increasing convention market. Also its location in Agra (a resort location as compared to Delhi) and suitably located close to Delhi (international airport) has of late gained prominence. The Agra Summit between India and Pakistan was also held here.

Agra has long symbolised India's tourism and cultural icon. Located close to Delhi (200 kms), it is served with excellent road, rail and air links.

Projecting Agra as a convention city, would attempt to capture the convention market to North India. Because of its easy connectivity to Delhi, the infrastructure could more importantly focus upon the direct infrastructure requirement for the convention centre.

To make the city into a convention centre, it becomes imperative that apart from the actual planning and execution of the convention facility, the city also gears up to be a more hospitable place for visitors and delegates. At present, the city greatly lacks basic infrastructure facilities and civic amenities. The touts

and rickshaw drivers are a bane for most tourists and the visit to the Agra becomes just a day journey, without inducing tourists to actually spend any money in the area.

Additional public space with parks and green areas need to be allotted, access roads to the waterfront and waterfront development needs to be undertaken. Environment and economic impact studies are also recommended to ascertain the impact of the proposed development. This will also be beneficial for raising capital investment for the project.

The city authorities will play a key role in the development and execution of the project. Public-private participation is recommended for the efficient management of the project. This could be performed through setting up of an independent board, as practiced by the Singapore and Hong Kong Convention facilities.

5.4.2.1. The Opportunity

As pointed out earlier, India has no suitable facility for international conventions which gives an opportunity for Agra to occupy this gap. No other city in Uttar Pradesh can aspire to this position as Agra not only has the advantage of instant international positive name recognition, but is well connected with the Delhi gateway.

Agra has numerous monuments besides the Taj Mahal and numerous possible excursion extensions to Jaipur, Kaladeo, Gwalior, Jhansi and Ferozabad, etc. The other monuments in Agra are the Agra Fort, Itmad-Ud-Daulah's Tomb, Sikandra, Jama Masjid, and Fatehpur Sikri. The emerging international commercial hub at Gurgaon also strengthens the Agra's competitiveness as a convention destination.

5.4.2.2. The Proposal

Conventions *per se* do not generate enough returns and must be supplemented with exhibitions and events. Apart from International Association Conventions, Agra as a destination could easily compete with other South Asian cities for global events such as beauty pageants, musical extravaganzas, award ceremonies, sports contests, etc.

Events tend to generate much more media coverage than conferences, leading to an exponential increase in exposure.

5.4.2.3. Advantages for Developing Agra as a Convention and Event Destination

- *Benefiting the Host Community*
 - This kind of tourism creates lot of direct, quality employment opportunities.
 - It has been established that this category of tourist spends more than normal tourist.
 - The longer stays of convention delegates translate into greater spends into the local economy.
- *Helps Address the Over Supply of Hotel Rooms at all Levels.*
 - Agra has a problem with limited overnight stays—the average length of stay is 0.8 days. International statistics suggest that average meeting length is three days.
- *Addressing ‘Under Visitations’*
 - The ‘under visitations’ of other historic sites other than Taj and Agra Fort stems from the lack of knowledge of their existence and whereabouts, compounded by accessibility problems. There is no pedestrian circuit to take tourists along the riverfront. This is a very good opportunity in comparison to other destinations. There is so much to be shown and explored.
 - This will also encourage longer stays.

5.4.2.4. Essentials for a Conference Destination

Meeting and Convention Facilities

Purpose built convention facilities with meeting rooms, breakout rooms and exhibition space. Facilities should have state of the art audiovisual, sound and lightning equipment and ideally should offer restaurants, coffee lounges, shopping, recreational and business amenities nearby.

Proposed Convention Facility at Agra, a 3.5 Lakh Sq. Ft Facility, with Following Capacities:

- A general body meeting hall 50000 sq. ft. to accommodate 3000 to 3500 delegates.
- 15-20 breakout areas of various sizes for simultaneous sessions 50000 sq. ft.

- Restaurants and banqueting facilities 100000 sq. ft.
- Exhibition area 150000 sq. ft.
- Parking and circulation areas.

Access International and Domestic

The destination needs to be well connected with all-important cities of the world and proximity to the international gateway is also important.

Agra has excellent air, rail and road connections with Delhi. Agra airport could be converted to an international airport with customs and immigration facilities. The cost involved is minimal as the runway is capable of taking wide bodied airliners.

Accommodation

Ideally accommodation, in a wide range of price levels, should be available in close proximity of the convention or event facility. Agra has ample accommodation. The accommodation is available in a wide range of rooms: in five star hotels-1161, four star hotels- 156 and three star hotels- 349.

Besides these, there are several budget hotels, tourist bungalows and hostels.

Local Transportation

Reliable and convenient means of transportation makes the access easy for delegates. There should be both good public transportation and preferably bus shuttle bus services from hotel to conference/event venue. The main mode of transport in Agra is auto rickshaws, cycle rickshaws and private taxis. The auto rickshaws can be upgraded to provide a unique experience.

Communication Facilities

IDD direct dialing, simultaneous interpretation service at convention facility, broadband internet access and press conference facilities. Agra has IDD direct dialing facilities to most important cities in the world; simultaneous interpretation services have to be installed at the convention centre.

Human Resources

Expert conference and event management help to the organisers to concentrate event/conference.

Agra lacks expert manpower to handle convention and events. This can be addressed by training during

the time the convention centre is coming up.

Entertainment and Recreation

Ample opportunities and options for entertainment and recreation like multicuisine food options, modern shopping centres, sports facilities like golf, tennis, etc. can make the whole experience at the destination more memorable. Agra has other heritage monuments besides Taj, excellent excursion possibilities to Jaipur, Kaladeo, Gwalior, Jhansi, Ferozabad, etc.

Besides these, there is a need to build recreation facilities and entertainment facilities. Shopping, sports such golf, riding, etc. at daytime and some nightlife will be required.

5.4.2.5. Essentials for an Events Destination

Events can be of different types and require different kinds of infrastructure. For e.g., sports events, performing arts, travelling museum exhibitions, beauty pageants, etc. The other requirements remain same as mentioned above for conventions.

The heritage monuments can provide one of best possible backdrops to events like beauty pageants, cultural shows and award functions.

What is Required to Make Agra an Attractive Convention and Events Destination?

Besides the points discussed above, there are some other elements which are critical for the success of a convention facility.

Marketing and Promotion

The formation of an independent, autonomous, professional Agra Convention Bureau. Its role would be to promote Agra as a convention destination. The Bureau could be funded through a cess on all Agra visitors.

Improvement of the City

Much of this has been covered in the Taj National Park project report. Obviously, improvements in infrastructure generate multiple benefits. Public facilities, public conveniences, information centres and signages are all required.

The proposed dam downstream of Agra would not only allow the addition of some river based activities, but would also make access to the trans-Yamuna area much easier by ferry.

Safety and Security

Safety and security precautions must be overt. The abundance of hawkers, peddlers and photographers provide a major nuisance and harassment to the visitors. This needs to be addressed.

Revenue Streams

Apart from meetings and events, the infrastructure would serve the incremental tourist arrival and encourage non convention visitors to lengthen their stay.

5.4.2.6. Proposed Location and Estimated Expenditure

Proposed Location

An ideal location would be within the Agra Fort. It is centrally located with ample space for parking and movement. It is an underutilised heritage asset. The Indian Army is currently utilising the space for barracks accommodation. The convention centre architecture could be made to blend with that of the fort.

5.4.2.7. Benefits of Investments in Tourism

The World Bank has estimated that for India, the number of jobs generated for every Rs. 10 lakh invested in the tourism sector *versus* other sectors is:

• In Tourism Projects	47.5 jobs
• In Hotels and Restaurants	89.0 jobs
• In Agriculture	44.7 jobs
• In Manufacturing	12.7 jobs

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has calculated the 'Direct Job Multiplier' as 4.62. This means for every direct job created in tourism, 4.62 other jobs are generated in ancillary areas.

The 'Direct Revenue Multiplier' has been calculated at 2.07. In other words, every rupee spent on a tourism product/activity, generates Rs 2.07 spending down the line.

5.4.2.8. Estimated Benefits of this Proposal

Employment

The investment as per this proposal (less water supply and electricity) is Rs. 70.75 in tourism projects. This should generate in the region of 33600 jobs of which 6000 (33600/5.62) will be direct employment and 27600 jobs will be created in related fields.

Revenues

It is difficult to forecast revenues without a formal survey of the potential market. Potential revenue streams will accrue from:

- rentals, food and beverage operations, ticket sales;
 - conferences, conventions;
 - exhibitions and product launches;
 - events;
 - marriages;
- shop rentals;
 - golf green fees;
 - parking; and
 - entrance fees to promenades, etc.

A time bound action plan and prioritisation of the schemes/projects may be preferred after an interactive exercise with the state government.

