

A STUDY ON COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACT ON BIHAR TOURISM INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

All around the world, the most dreadful "Corona virus" has broken the lives of society. Most of the people have lost their job as well as their life too. Bihar is eyewitness of migration for their livelihood. Covid pandemic has disturbed the entire world economically, socially physically. Due to the decision of suddenly lock down Bihar, Trade and Tourism industry of Bihar was badly affected. All business activities and industries have been collapsed due to this sort of severe pandemic "covid-19". Tourism industry is also facing the threat of financial crisis. According to world tourism report, international tourist arrivals plunged by eighty-seven percent in January 2021. In respect of domestic tourist, Bihar is at 30th position and respect of foreign tourist is 8th position in India. This Study has been an attempt to know the Impact of the Covid Pandemic on the Tourism Industry of Bihar with the help of secondary sources.

KEYWORDS: *Tourism, Industry, Covid-19, Tourist, Bihar.*

Introduction

COVID-19 is a hazardous virus begun by a recently exposed as a coronavirus, first case testified in China (Wuhan city). The virus disperses mostly by expulsion from the nose or droplets of spittle as an infectious human body sneezes or coughs. On the 11th of March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) has acknowledged this epidemic a Worldwide Disease. After that many countries, including India, have shut-down its socio-economic and cultural institutions, excluding sectors related to essential services. The Covid-19 pandemic has emerged as a major challenge for the world. The spread of COVID-19 in India has started in January 2020. During starting of First Wave, that has been found by many experts and research felt that there is required to impose lockdown in India. It was taken in the situation of uncertainty. Now it required understand of Consequences effects of the COVID-19, on livelihoods of the people. Some experts and researchers suggest that the Second Wave of COVID-19 started at the start of May month, 2021 and it is more destructive than the first one because the COVID-19 virus is transforming very rapidly and affecting the lungs and immune system of human body. Afterwards On March 24, the Government of India ordered a twenty-one -days nation-wide lockdown to break the chain of the spread of Covid-19.

The Second Wave of corona pandemic is much worse than expected for India, approx. four thousand people died every day as per government records and approx. twenty-three lakhs forty-three thousand one hundred fifty-two active cases as of 28 May 2021. In the flow of the second wave, the nation's health care structure and financial structure totally collapsed, which also shows the poor infrastructure. It is very critical for any nation to develop and sustain the health facilities at a vast scale for the peoples. After the Second Wave of corona specialists are analyzing that Third Wave of COVID PANDEMIC is more severe, in which most likely the chance of small age group children might be affected at big stage. So, the management must attention on this situation. Vaccination is the only solution to beat this pandemic.

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The first Covid-19 case in the Indian state of Bihar was reported in Munger on 22-03-2020, a thirty-eight-year-old person tested positive for Covid-19, he was also the first patient. He had travel history to Qatar. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has confirmed a total of 62,031 cases as of 4 August 2020, including 20,922 active cases, 349 deaths and 40,760 recoveries. The virus has spread in 38 districts of the state, of which Patna district has the highest number of cases. The state has been under lockdown since 25 March 2020. The state began observing a thimble in the number of COVID-19 cases as migrant workers and many people of Bihar locked in other parts of the country returned to the state.

As an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world is facing global health issue and financial crises. tourism industries are among the worst-affected industries, with universal demand decreasing as a result of globally travel restrictions, including the closure of several borders to control the infection. International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) fell by seventy two percent in January-December 2020 compared to the same period last year, according to the latest United World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) World Tourism Barometer, and continue to decline, hampered by slow virus containment, low travelers' confidence, and significant travel restrictions still in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If evaluate to the same period of last year, there were nine hundred million foreign tourist arrivals in the first 10 months of this year, resulting in a loss of nine hundred thirty-five billion dollar in foreign tourism export incomes, more than 10 times the loss experienced in 2009 as a result of the worldwide economic crisis. Between month of January and December 2020, arrivals in Asia and the Pacific fell by eighty two percent. This 10-month period showed a seventy three percent plunge in the Middle East and a sixty nine percent plunge in Africa. Foreign tourist fell by sixty eight percent in both Europe and the Americas. In 2020, the forecast drop in worldwide tourism will equate to a loss of nearly one billion visitors and 1.1 trillion dollars in tourist income. This plunge in overseas tourism might outcome in a universally financial loss of more than 2 trillion dollars in 2019.

Review of Literature

Ravi Bhushan Kumar (2000) state in his study "The Impact of Tourism in developing countries". As per the practical approach, he splits the tourism process into three essentials, dynamic phase – movement to and from destinations, static phase of stay and consequential portion of considering socio economic and physical impact on environment. The study achieves that tourism can play a significant role in the development of nation. It provides a variety of chances for the development of industries and thereby the economic development of the humanity.

G.S. Batia and A.S. Chawla (2003) state in his study "The Economic Importance of Tourism in the National Economy" Tourism can be valued with position to its role in employment generations. It can be imagined as a significant factor in starting the idle resources of the country. In this trade we do not export actual wealth of our nation, but what we sell vision with a purpose of attracting more and more of the people to our nation and its charms. It also analyses the current trends in tourism advertising in India. The study tells that, in current years attention has been lifted from product destination to potential destination tourist.

Honey and Gilpin (2009), states that in his paper "Tourism in the developing world" Tourism industry has a mount effect on economic development as the expansion of a tourism destination attracts business. This paper also tells that revenue which we make through tourism is not that easy.

Rajeev Singh Chandel, Shruti Kanga, and Suraj Kumar Singh (2020) state that in research article "Impact of COVID-19 on tourism sector: a case study of Rajasthan, India" The COVID-19 pandemic is the major threat to any country has ever faced, as domestic and foreign travel has severely impacted by up to forty five percent in 2020, which is equal to a four-month travel loss. The tourism industry is most revenue generating sector but due epidemic effect it goes in low figures.

Objectives of the Study

- To know the Impact of the Covid Pandemic on the Tourism Industry of Bihar
- To suggest ways to deal with problems and challenges.

Methodology

This Study is based on secondary sources of data. The data has been collected from Website, Wikipedia, Bihar state tourism development corporation (BSTDC), Research paper, Journals, Articles, Newspapers, annual report of Bihar tourism department.

Tourist Places in Bihar

Bihar has the ability to attract tourists from all over the world due to its cultural, historical, religious and intellectual heritage. In Bihar tourism, Bodh Gaya, Nawada, Nalanda University, Rajgir, Pawapuri, Patna, Vaishali, Sasaram, West Champaran, Darbhanga, Begusarai, Bhagalpur and many more are such tourist places which attract tourists on a large scale. Apart from this, there are many such religious tourist places in Bihar which has been religious centre for tourists from all over India as well as the world. Bodh Gaya and Nalanda university are example of world heritage.

Bihar is one of the oldest inhabited places in the world with a history going back three thousand years. The rich culture and heritage of Bihar is evident from the innumerable ancient monuments that are scattered all over the state. Bihar tourism is home to many tourist attractions and is visited by large numbers of tourists from all over the world.

In Patna Mahatma Gandhi Setu, is one of the longest bridges in the world and Golghar is the world-famous heritage in the world.

- **Buddhist Circuit** the mythological divine enlightenment site of the Buddha under the divine Bodhi tree has become the charming point for human worshipers ever since. The delightful Mahabodhi temple that had been declared as a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO. The Kesaria Stupa, uppermost between the excavated Buddhist stupas is also situated in Bihar.
- **Sufi Circuit** there are abundant number of tombs, dargas and mosques and that have turned into Sufi pilgrimages. The awesome tomb of Sher Shah Suri and Maner Sharif are two outstanding emblems which should be included in any tourists' circuit.
- **Sikh Circuit** The 10th Guru of Sikh religion was Guru Gobind Singh was the son of the 9th Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur was born in Patna on 22nd December, 1666. At his birthplace there is a marvellous Gurudwara in Patna well-known as Takht Sri Harmandir Ji. Among his notable contributions to Sikhism are founding the Sikh warrior community called Khalsa in 1699. There are other gurudwaras which commemorate some events of Guru Gobind's life. These gurudwaras are not only holy pilgrimages for the Sikhs but wonderful to be visited by any traveller.
- **Nalanda University** vibrates as a motivation to anybody who heard about this place as the farming ground of the first residential international university of the world for great knowledge throughout the age when maximum of the other countries of the world were at the very emerging stage of growth. Today, even as the ruins of that magnificent past continue to mesmerize the present.
- **The Valmiki Wildlife Reserve** is the safe home for the tigers, one of the threatened species of the world. Situated at the cradle of Himalayan outmost ranges Shivalik range, the region has a very rolling landscape comprising of sharp rise and deep ridges with the plush green forest around. Valmiki Nagar Tiger Reserve.
- **Kakolat Waterfall** a superb little concealed marvel of nature, located on the beautiful Kakolat mount, situated on the boundary of Bihar and Jharkhand, just 33 km from Nawada. This is one of the most visited and famous Bihar getaways, where holidaymakers come from all over the state and touching areas to witness the absolute beauty of Mother Nature cascading marvelously.

Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Tourism Industry of Bihar

The COVID-19 has interrupted the lives of millions of people in the Bihar, numerous have lost their livelihood, jobs and income generation opportunities which have created a massive humanitarian disaster. As an impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world is facing a threat worldwide health, social, and economic crises. Tourism and travel are among the worst-affected sectors, with global demand plunging as a result of international travel restrictions, including the closure of several borders to control the infection. According to the United World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), total contribution of tourism industry was worldwide Gross Domestic Products (GDP) at approx. 9% but negative impact of Covid-19 has changed the whole picture of tourism industry. And International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) fell by 72 percent in January-December 2020 in comparison with January-December 2019.

Bihar's tourism plays an important role in economic development, social development and cultural development. And also, source of foreign currency acquisition and employment generation in local level. Bihar is one of the backward states in terms of industry as compared to other state of India.

Bihar has immense potential in tourism sector which can make Bihar a developed state. But due to covid-19 pandemic affect, there was a lockdown all over the world. All the activities of tourism were locked. The tourism industry and its ancillary businesses all over the world including hospitality industries, transport business, travel & tour agencies, were also badly affected by in Two years. Almost all economic activities came to a halt, sources of income of the people were also ended. According to a paper publish and media report, Bihar tourism industry has suffered an economic loss of about Rs 10,000 crore. At present, there are more than 500 tour operators, about 2000 small and big travel agencies and more than 5000 tourists operating in the state. Apart from this, there are more than 1000 small and big hotels in the state, more than 100000 people are directly employed. In such a situation people directly and indirectly associated with the tourist industries have been facing a massive economic crisis due to the corona pandemic. Covid-19 pandemic has brought the tourism business to almost zero.

According to Bihar State Tourism department the number of domestic tourists and foreign number of tourists arrival in Bihar are: - In 2015 is 2 crore 80 lakh 29 thousand 1 hundred 18 and the number of foreign tourists is 9 lakh 23 thousand 7 hundred 37, In 2016 the number of domestic tourists is 2 crore 85 lakh 16 thousand 1 hundred 27 while the number of foreign tourists is 10 lakh 10 thousand 5 hundred 31, In the year 2017 this number increased to 3 crore 24 lakh 14 thousand 63 for domestic tourists while 10 lakh 82 thousand 7 hundred 05 for foreign tourists, In the next year 2018, 3 crore 36 lakh 21 thousand 6 hundred 13 domestic tourists and 10 lakh 87 thousand 9 hundred 71 foreign tourists came, till 2019 the number of domestic tourists coming to Bihar had increased to 3 crore 39 lakh 38 and foreign tourists to 1 crore 93 thousand 1 hundred 41. If you look closely at these table figures, it is known that the number of tourists in Bihar was increasing continuously, the tourism industry of Bihar was growing at a rapid pace. But in 2020, due to Corona pandemic affect this figure has come down (decrease) significantly the number of domestic tourists was only 56 lakh 44 thousand 5 hundred 24 and the number of foreign tourists was 3 lakh 8 thousand 80 only.

Table: 1: Total Number of Tourists Visited in Bihar from 2001 To 2020

Year	Domestic tourists	Foreign tourists	Total no. tourists
2015	2,8029118	09,23737	2,89,52,855
2016	2,8516127	10,10531	2,95,26,658
2017	3,2414063	10,82705	3,34,96,768
2018	3,3621613	10,87971	3,47,09,584
2019	3,3900038	1,093141	3,5083179
2020	5644524	308080	59,52,604

Source: Bihar Tourism department Official Website (Bihartourism.gov.in/data.html)

Finding

As it is evident from the above table the tourism industry has been completely destroyed due to the covid-19 pandemic. Tourism activities have come to a halt for the last 2 years. Due to pandemic industry is facing the threat of financial crisis. Due to this, people are currently not coming out of the house to journey. This has a direct negative impact on the tourism industry itself. In 2019 the total number of tourist arrivals in Bihar was 3,5083179 but due to the Corona pandemic the total number of tourists arrival in 2020 was reduced to 5952604. There is a decrease in Domestic and Foreign tourist arrivals in the state from year 2019 to 2020. This was a huge fall from point of view tourists' arrival, which had a direct impact on lives of the people directly and indirectly connected with the tourism sector and their economic condition became very pathetic.

Conclusion

It is a fact that corona virus has devastated the whole world. Due to its economic activity has come to halt and the standard of living of human life has been ruined. In the current situation it is true that the suddenly many people have lost their job for the effect of covid-19, and its negative impact on Bihar's economic conditions. Along with the business of Bihar's tourism sector, other business has also been badly affected.

Suggestions

Based on the finding of the study the followings suggestions can be forwarded:

Looking at Current situation is challenging for Bihar tourism industry, so some important steps required for Boost up for Bihar tourism industry are:

- To strictly follow the guidelines of covid-19 by the government at the tourist place.
- Pay special attention to daily cleanliness in the tourist places of Bihar.
- Special distribution of sanitizers and masks on tourist spot for tourists.
- The safety of tourists is also an important issue related to tourism. So, pay special attention to the safety of the tourists.
- There is also a need to develop convenient tourist routes.
- Apart from this, adequate facilities for transportation resources like airport, railway stations, bus stands, and metro rail stations should also be available.
- To revive the tourism industry, there is a need to carve out various dimensions of tourism. And there is a need to develop it and spread it well among the tourists. So that the economic wings can be put again, in the Bihar tourism industry.
- So, important steps must be taken to attract domestic and foreign tourists and promote existing undeveloped and new tourist places of the state.

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