

Report says domestic tourist footfall down by 26% after 2013 disaster

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File Photo

Dehradun: The tourism sector in the state suffered the worst in the aftermath of the 2013 devastating flash floods in the hills. According to a report by Assocham, domestic tourist footfall in the state after the 2013 natural disaster declined by 26% while it was 22% for foreign tourists. About 199 lakh domestic tourist and 1 lakh foreign tourists visited Uttarakhand in 2013. The data also suggest that the state had recorded a rise in the overall footfall thereafter, as the numbers increased to 219 lakh for domestic tourists and 1 lakh for foreign tourists in 2014. These figures further increased in 2015, when the state witnessed a footfall of 225 lakh domestic tourists and 1.1 lakh foreign tourists, the Assocham report said.

Uttarakhand's hotel and tourism industry, having a turnover of nearly Rs 1,398 crore, contributes 1.5% to the nation's economy, said the report that also mentions that there is a huge potential waiting to be exploited. Though the state has made steady progress in tourism year on year after the 2013 flash floods, a lot of potential remain untapped, the Assocham report says.

As per the findings of Assocham, "The devastating flash floods of June 2013 swept away almost everything that stood on the way — agricultural fields, bridges, buildings, dams, livestock, people, roads, entire towns and villages. However, the process of rehabilitation and rebuilding of Uttarakhand has been going on a war footing with participation of all stakeholders, public and private sectors, even as Indian and foreign tourist arrivals grew by over 10% and 4% respectively in 2014. In 2015, the state registered a growth of over 2% and 8% in national and foreign tourist arrivals respectively."

The findings of Assocham have reiterated that there is a need to promote different types of tourism in Uttarak-



State's tourism sector had suffered after the 2013 devastating flash floods

hand, apart from tagging it as just a "mythological hub". Uttarakhand is known for a plethora of pilgrimage destinations, temples and spiritualism, and the state government must also focus on attracting different types of tourists that would greatly help in promoting its rich cultural heritage, the report said.

Speaking about the scope of tourism in Uttarakhand, Assocham's secretary-general D S Rawat said, "The future is of activity-based tourism. We have suggested to the Uttarakhand government to develop three tourist spots in the mountain state on the lines of Switzerland for adventure tourism. The state should frame a policy on adventure tourism by roping in experts and then prepare a master plan after conducting surveys. While river rafting and other water-based adventure activities are possible in several rivers, trekking, rock climbing, camping, etc can bring dividends in the form of increased tourist in-flow and employment opportunities. This would not only help in strengthening social and physical infrastructure but will also give a fillip to the state's economy through employment generation, which in turn will help in mitigating the problem of migration."

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U'khand must harness potential for adventure tourism development, says ASSOCHAM

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ASSOCHAM has suggested the Uttarakhand government frame a policy on adventure tourism by roping in experts and preparing a master plan after conducting surveys in this regard. While river rafting and other water-based adventure activities are possible in many rivers, trekking, rock climbing, camping in hills and others can bring dividends in the form of increased tourist inflow and more employment opportunities.

"This would not only help in strengthening social and physical infrastructure but will give a fillip to the state's economy thereby generating significant number of jobs which would also help in arresting the migration of youth



population," said ASSOCHAM Secretary General, DS Rawat. "There is a huge demand for activity-based tourism both in India and across the globe and for a state like Uttarakhand dotted with hills, rivers, wide and interesting variety of flora and fauna,

there is a huge scope for adventure tourism offering rare and incomparable experiences," said Rawat. "Adventure tourism has the potential to support local economies as it attracts high value customers and encourages sustainable practices," he added.

"Considering that tourists visiting adventure tourism sites tend to follow cultural and environmental aspects of such destinations, it can greatly aid economic opportunities of local people in rural and remote communities," he declared.

Tourism picking up after flash floods:

There was a drop of about 26 per cent and about 22 per cent in Indian and foreign tourist arrival in Uttarakhand after the devastating flash floods of June 2013 that triggered intense rainfall which swept away almost everything that stood in the way - agricultural fields, bridges, buildings, dams, livestock, people, roads, entire towns and villages.

However, the process of rehabilitation and rebuilding of Uttarakhand has been underway on war footing with participation of all the stakeholders from public and private sectors, evidenced by the fact that Indian and foreign tourist arrivals

grew by over 10 per cent and four per cent in 2014.

While in 2015, the state registered a growth of over two per cent and about eight per cent in national and foreign tourist arrivals.

Though Uttarakhand is world-renowned for a plethora of pilgrimage destinations, temples and spiritualism, but the state government must now also focus on attracting different types of tourists which would help promote its rich cultural heritage.

As a leading industry body, ASSOCHAM has recommended the state government conduct tourism sector specific road shows and exhibitions both in the country and abroad thereby showcasing various aspects of the state through new destinations offering special packages.

Besides, the state tourism department can also tie up with local and global television channels catering to the hospitality and tourism sector.

Uttarakhand must harness potential for adventure tourism: ASSOCHAM

DEHRADUN,
OCT 27 (HTNS)

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"There is a huge demand for activity-based tourism both in India and across the globe and for a state like Uttarakhand dotted with hills, rivers, wide and interesting variety of flora and fauna, there is a huge scope for adventure tourism offering rare and incomparable experiences," said Rawat adding, "Adventure tourism has the potential to support local economies as it attracts high value customers and encourages sustainable practices".

"Considering that tourists visiting adventure tourism sites tend to follow cultural and environmental aspects of such destinations it can



greatly aide economic opportunities of local people in rural and remote communities," further said Rawat.

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growth of over two per cent and about eight per cent in national and foreign tourist arrival. Though Uttarakhand is world-renowned for plethora of pilgrimage destinations, temples and spiritualism but the state government must now also focus on attracting different types of tourists which would help promote its rich cultural heritage.

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उत्तराखंड में एडवेंचर टूरिज्म स्विट्जरलैंड से कम नहीं

जागरण संवाददाता, देहरादून: भारतीय वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंडल (एसोचैम) ने उत्तराखंड सरकार को एडवेंचर टूरिज्म पर सुझाव पत्र भेजा है। कहा कि स्विट्जरलैंड की तर्ज पर यहां भी एडवेंचर टूरिज्म देशी-विदेशी युवाओं के लिए आकर्षण बन सकता है। इससे रोजगार के साथ ही राजस्व में भी इजाफा होगा।

भारतीय उद्योग जगत में एसोचैम समय-समय पर संभावनाएं तलाश कर सरकारों को सुझाव देता है। उत्तराखंड में आपदा के बाद पर्यटकों की संख्या में गिरावट दर्ज होने के बाद से एसोचैम चिंता जाहिर करता रहा है। इसके लिए एसोचैम ने तीर्थाटन के साथ एडवेंचर पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देने का सुझाव मुख्यमंत्री को दिए हैं। एसोचैम के महासचिव डीएस रावत ने बताया कि

पहाड़ी क्षेत्रों में सरकार एडवेंचर टूरिज्म को लेकर नई शुरुआत कर इसका दोहरा फायदा उठा सकती है। एसोचैम के सर्वे के अनुसार राज्य में रिवर राफ्टिंग, वाटर बेस्ड एडवेंचर, ट्रैकिंग, रॉक क्लाइंबिंग, कैंपिंग जैसी गतिविधियां युवाओं के अलावा विदेशी पर्यटकों के लिए आकर्षण का केंद्र बन सकते हैं। साथ ही कहा कि एडवेंचर से यहां की संस्कृति और सभ्यता देश-दुनिया तक पहुंचेगी।

आपदा के बाद 12 प्रतिशत इजाफा
: एसोचैम के अनुसार उत्तराखंड में आपदा के बाद से देशी पर्यटन करीब 26 और विदेशी पर्यटन 22 प्रतिशत तक सिमट कर रह गया था। इसमें दूसरे साल 10 और चार और तीसरे साल दो और आठ प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हुई है।

