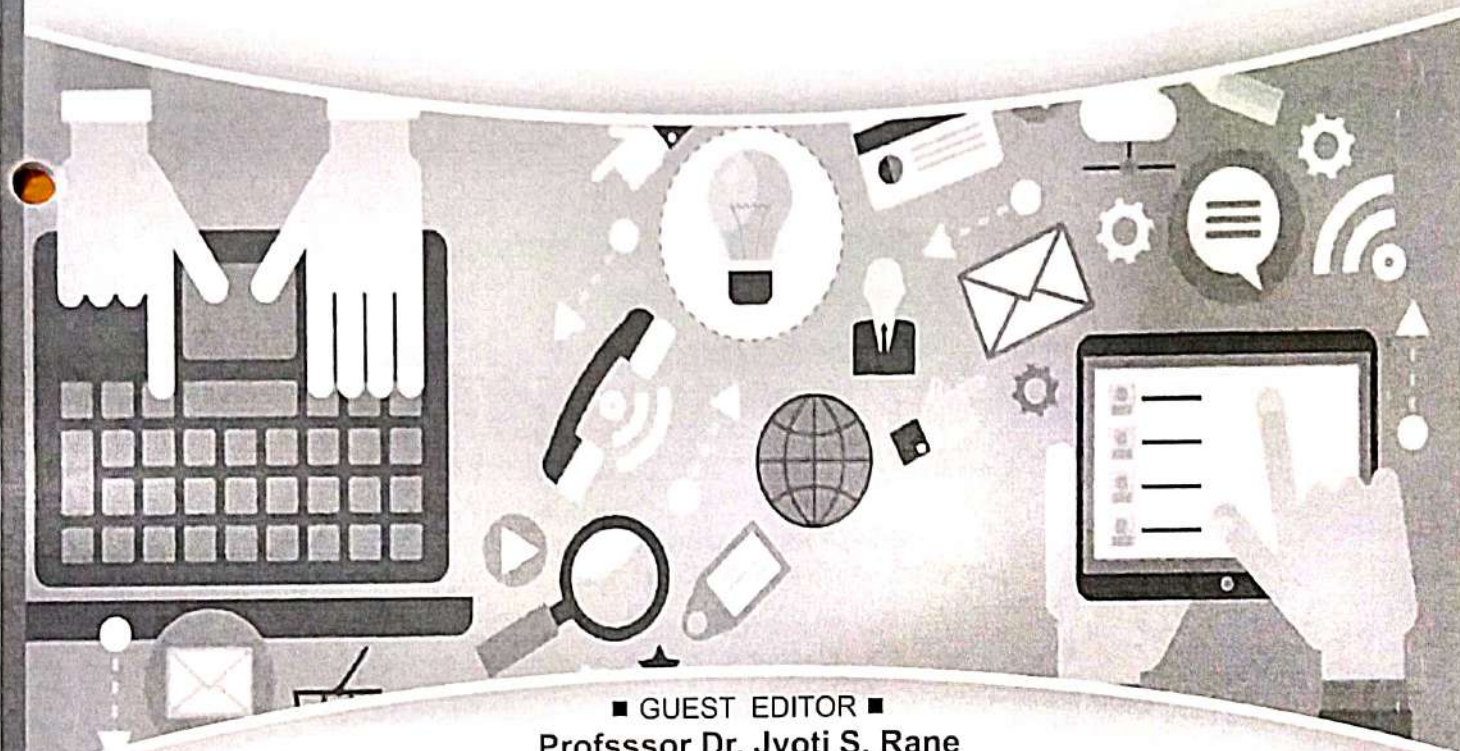


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Tourism in India : Potentials, Challenges and Opportunities in KONKAN Region

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Abstract -

Konkan is important from tourism point of view. Tourists thong the district to visit the historical first of Raigad, Ratanagiri, Shindudurg, Malvan, Kudal, Vengurla, Ganapati Pule, Dapoli, Kulaba, Murud-Janjira and to enjoy its beautiful beaches. The famous hill station Matheran and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar memorial at Mahad are other tourist place in the district. Other major attraction in Raigad are Ballaleshwar Ganapati – Pali, Varad Vinayak Ganpati – Mahad, Birla Ganesh temple, Kankeshwar, Elephanta Caves are famous religious place. Mandwa and Kihim beach, Hari-Harishwar beach and Murud – Janjira Fort in south western side of Maharashtra State are other popularly visited tourist spots. The travel and tourism industry has emerged as one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors globally. Its contribution to the global Gross Domestic Product and employment has increased significantly. The Indian tourism industry has emerged as one of the key drivers of growth among the services sector in India. Tourism in India is a sun rise industry, an employment generator, a significant source of foreign exchange for the country and an economic activity that helps local and host communities. Rising income levels and changing lifestyles, development of diverse tourism offerings and policy and regulatory support by the government are playing a pivotal role in shaping the travel and tourism sector in India. However, the sector is facing challenges such as lack of good quality tourism infrastructure, global concerns regarding health and safety of tourists, disparate passenger/road tax structures across various states and shortfall of adequately trained and skilled manpower. Concerted efforts by all stakeholders such as the central and state governments, private sector and the community at large are pertinent for sustainable development and maintenance of the travel and tourism sector in the country.

Key words - Infrastructure, inclusive growth, Skill development.

Introduction -

India is a federal union of states comprising twenty-eight states and seven union territories. Maharashtra is one of the 28 states in India. The states and union territories are further subdivided into districts. Raigad is one of the 35 administrative districts of Maharashtra located in the south-western part of the state. The district was renamed after Raigad fort which was the former capital of Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The District head Quarter of Raigad District is Alibug. Alibug is situated on the western coast of India and on the shore of Arabian Sea. Raigad has Approximately 240 km of coastline in the west. The district is rich in natural resources. It includes the large natural harbor of Pen-Mandwa, which is immediately south of Mumbai Harbor, and forming a single landform with it. Part of the district is included in the planned metropolis of Navi Mumbai, and its port, the Jawaharlal Neharu Port. The district is geographically subdivided into three parts as follows:

- 1) The Sea Coast
- 2) The Central Belt
- 3) The hilly areas of Sahyadri range

The travel and tourism industry has emerged as one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors globally. According to the UNWTO (2013), tourism's total contribution to worldwide GDP is estimated at 9 per cent. Tourism exports in 2012 amounted to USD 1.3 trillion accounting for 6 per cent of the world's exports. New tourist destinations, especially those in the emerging markets have started gaining prominence with traditional markets reaching maturity. Asia Pacific recorded the highest growth in the number of international tourist arrivals in 2012 at 7 per cent followed by Africa at 6 per cent. Increasingly, travel and tourism is emerging as an important category of services exports worldwide.