Industry Analysis

Media Reporting for Tourism Industry During COVID-19 in India

Jaykumar V.
Hospitality and Event Management
PES University, Bangalore, INDIA

Suggested Citation: Jaykumar, V. (2020). Media reporting for tourism industry during COVID-19 in India. TEAM Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 17(1), 3-4

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on India’s tourism industry, with the tourism and hotel industries taking the brunt of the impact, having been flattened and collapsed beyond redemption. As a tertiary sector that is still not classified as a separate entity in India, the industry is facing an unprecedented crisis. Around 8.1 percent of India’s population, or 42.7 million people, work in travel and tourism. Around 10 to 15 percent of workers in the hospitality and tourism industries are projected to be affected. Four of the top ten countries (China, Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom), which accounted for about 65 percent of India’s international tourist arrivals (FTAs), will not visit in the immediate future. Likewise, the top states contributing to domestic tourism, both as sources and as a destination, are affected. Maharashtra, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu are among these states. The government moved quickly to declare a three-month moratorium on interest and principal repayment. However, several economists argue and considered it to be too short and suggested 12 months instead. In 2019, India welcomed 10.5 million international tourists, with 5 million non-resident Indians returning home to be with family and friends, 1.8 billion interstate travellers reported within the country for holidays, pleasure, and recreation, and 26 million Indians traveling abroad for tourism. Many of these figures seem to be a long way off in today’s world.

According to current indications, lockdowns and curfews may continue in various intensities and impositions until the end of the year. Despite the increase in COVID-19 cases, the Indian government believes tourism will significantly revitalize the economy. The Indian tourism ministry has launched ‘Dekho Apna Desh’ (see your country), a webinar series hosted by experts who share essential gems and information on more than a dozen destinations in response to a long-term slump in international travel. Furthermore, stable states are attempting to resurrect tourism in order to improve their economies. India ranked 34th out of 140 countries in the 2019 Travel and
Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI), should focus on a two-pronged strategy to revitalize its tourism sector: a near-term and a medium-term strategy. When identifying these policies, policymakers should keep in mind that the near-term recovery will be in domestic tourism, and the medium-term recovery will be in international tourism. It is no longer business as usual in India’s tourism market, and the industry must redefine, refocus, and change its game plan moving forward. It is critical to assess Covid-19’s effect and develop a comprehensive plan involving both government and industry stakeholders, which can be divided into three phases: survive (short-term), revive (medium-term), and thrive (long-term). In terms of demand, India has a robust domestic market, which can mitigate the effect compared to countries that depend heavily on foreign tourists. Finally, the media’s position in highlighting government agencies’ efforts, industry sentiment, and public opinion is critical in bringing the current situation to light.