

# Government Degree College Sugh-Bhatoli

## Tourism Youth Club

India is the most populous country in the world with 1.3 billion inhabitants, yet with an average age of 29, it has one of the youngest populations worldwide. The fact that India is home to one-fifth of the world's youth population may be crucial in helping the country reach its lofty goal of becoming a US\$ 5 trillion economy. The enormous number of young people provide both a workforce and a market. These young individuals are discussing diversity, entrepreneurship, and culture.

India has a population advantage, hence it is crucial to use tourism to educate and raise these young minds about India's natural and cultural legacy. The Ministry of Tourism plans to commemorate India@75 this year by creating a campaign centred around "YUVA Tourism." Creating tourism clubs would be one of the initiatives in this regard. These clubs would target various age groups in schools, colleges, and the workforce.

Tourism clubs play a significant role in encouraging ethical and sustainable travel throughout the nation. By creating social clubs at various academic institutions, the programme would aid in fostering a positive culture among the nation's youth.

In compliance to the direction given by Sh G. Krishna Reddy, Hon'ble Minister of Culture, Tourism and Development of North Eastern Region, GOI, dated 29/5/2023 and subsequent directions from Chief Minister Office, Government of HP issued by Joint Secretary to CM, Special Secretary (Tourism & CA) to the Govt. of HP, Director, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Shimla-9 and Director of Higher Education, Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-1 vide letter No EDN-HE(21)F(13) 3/2023-Misc, dated 16/9/2023, Govt. Degree College Sugh- Bhatoli has constituted 'Tourism Youth Club' on dated 19/9/2023.

The major objective of the proposed mission could be to:

- ❖ educate youth about diverse cultures and geographies of the country .
- ❖ appreciate the importance of travel and tourism in education
- ❖ create awareness about tourism opportunities at an early stage.
- ❖ teach and propagate responsible tourism practices.
- ❖ train students as skilled tourist guides and volunteers in hospitality sector.
- ❖ facilitate better coordination for study tours and student exchange programmes.

Tourism Youth Clubs in a rural college situated in a hilly area can play a significant role in promoting tourism, community development, and fostering a sense of responsibility among the youth. However, they also face unique challenges and opportunities. Here are some of them:

### **Challenges:**

**Limited Infrastructure:** Rural areas, especially in hilly terrains, may lack basic tourism infrastructure like roads, accommodations, and facilities. This can hinder the growth and accessibility of tourism activities.

**Seasonal Nature of Tourism:** Tourism in hilly areas can be seasonal, with peak periods during specific months. During off-seasons, clubs may struggle to sustain their activities and engagement levels.

**Environmental Sustainability:** Hilly areas often have fragile ecosystems that can be easily disrupted by tourism activities as we have witnessed during Covid-19 time and also in August 2023 natural disaster . The clubs need to find ways to promote responsible and sustainable tourism practices.

**Lack of Awareness:** The rural population and even local authorities may not fully understand the potential benefits of tourism. Education and awareness-building efforts may be required.

**Skill Development:** The youth involved in these clubs may need training in various aspects of tourism, including guiding, hospitality, and conservation, to effectively contribute to the sector.

### **Opportunities:**

**Natural Beauty and Cultural Heritage:** Hilly areas often have unique natural landscapes and cultural heritage sites that can be major attractions for tourists. The clubs can leverage these assets to draw visitors.

**Adventure Tourism:** Hilly terrains are conducive to adventure activities like trekking, mountaineering, and paragliding. This can be a significant draw for adventure enthusiasts.

**Community Engagement:** Rural areas often have tight-knit communities. Tourism clubs can work closely with locals to develop tourism initiatives that benefit both the community and the visitors.

**Economic Diversification:** Tourism can provide alternative sources of income for the local population, reducing dependency on traditional livelihoods like agriculture.

**Cultural Exchange and Education:** Tourism can facilitate cultural exchange and provide opportunities for educating visitors about the local way of life, traditions, and customs.



Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development: Tourism can spur the growth of small businesses, including home stays, local eateries, handicrafts, and other enterprises.

### **Strategies to Overcome Challenges:**

**Advocacy and Awareness Campaigns:** Clubs can engage in awareness campaigns to highlight the benefits of tourism and garner support from the local community and authorities.

**Capacity Building and Training:** Provide training programs for club members in areas such as tour guiding, hospitality, first aid, and environmental conservation.

**Collaboration with Local Authorities:** Work closely with local government and tourism departments to address infrastructure challenges and seek support for tourism initiatives.

**Promotion of Responsible Tourism Practices:** Educate both visitors and the local community about sustainable tourism practices to protect the environment and preserve the area's natural beauty.

**Marketing and Promotion:** Effectively market the unique offerings of the hilly area through various channels including social media, websites, and local events.

**Networking and Partnerships:** Collaborate with other tourism stakeholders, NGOs, and private enterprises to pool resources and knowledge for the mutual benefit of all parties involved.

By addressing these challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities, Tourism Youth Clubs in a rural college in a hilly area can contribute significantly to the development of sustainable and responsible tourism in their region.

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