The Vision...

- To place Uttarakhand on the tourism map of the world as one of the leading tourist destinations, and to make Uttarakhand synonymous with tourism.

- To develop the manifold tourism related resources of the State in an eco-friendly manner, with the active participation of the private sector and the local host communities.

- To develop tourism as a major source of employment and income/revenue generation and as a pivot of the economic and social development in the State.

The feel of excitement and vibrance has been built into the free flowing form of the Roman Letter U, constructed partly with the Devnagari 'U'...

The free rising forms are indicative of the peaks that are seen around Uttarakhand...

The colors...

**blues**... for water and snow capped mountains...

**green**... for the fauna...

Saffron for our souls... the Indian souls... indicating the religious significance of the place.
Preface

The Tourism Policy presented in this document is not merely a policy statement. It is an attempt to analyse the tourism potential and strengths of Uttarakhand along with the weaknesses and challenges which lie ahead. On the basis of this analysis, a road-map for the development of tourism in the State has been drawn up. Actionable objectives have been set and contours of an action plan have been delineated in order to reach the milestones and achieve specific targets, while indicating the areas of opportunity for participation of the private sector and the tourism industry and trade. In this process, an effort has also been made to bring out the manifold tourism attractions, which, in close cooperation with the private sector and all those associated with the Tourism industry, both in India as well as abroad, could make Uttarakhand a prime tourism destination globally.

Lying in the north of the vast and bountiful expanse of India, and cradled in the awesome beauty and calm serenity of the stately Himalayas, Uttarakhand, the Devbhumi (Land of the Gods) has attracted tourists and pilgrims from world over since time immemorial. Sacred pilgrimages of different religions including Haridwar and the world famous Char Dham or the four Hindu pilgrimage destinations of Shri Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri; the sacred Sikh pilgrimages of Hemkund, Lokpal, Nanakmath and Meethla Reetla Sahib, and Piran Kaliyar have drawn pilgrims and seekers after spiritual fulfillment to Uttarakhand since ancient times. The rich cultural traditions, the rare natural beauty and the cool and invigorating climate of this land of origin of the Holy Ganga and Yamuna rivers have been its main attractions.

The unlimited tourism potential of Uttarakhand has, however, not been fully realized in the absence of a planned and coordinated strategy of tourism development. Inadequate capital investment in tourism infrastructure and limited private sector participation have been substantially responsible for this.

The Present

Some important statistical indicators of Uttarakhand as compared to the neighbouring State of Uttar Pradesh and India as a whole are as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Area (Sq.km)</th>
<th>Population (in lac)</th>
<th>Population Density (per Sq. km)</th>
<th>Literacy (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>32,87,673</td>
<td>10,270.15</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>65.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>2,40,927</td>
<td>1660.53</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>57.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttarakhand</td>
<td>53,485</td>
<td>84.80</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>72.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: India Census, 2001, the last published report)

The relatively smaller population and low population density help to provide a clean and wholesome environment, while the relatively high rate of literacy would indicate that human resources conducive to tourism development are available in adequate measure.

Expenditure on schemes for tourism development and promotion of tourism in Uttarakhand has progressively increased over the years. In the current Five Year Plan, approximately Rs. 8,600 lakhs have been spent, which is more than ten times the amount spent during 1980-85. But, clearly, even this has not been enough to develop and fully exploit the vast tourism potential of Uttarakhand. Some idea of the additional investments that will be required is provided by the fact that even now, during the year 2000, the number of tourists who visited Uttarakhand stood at over 111 lakhs, whereas the total population of the State was merely 82 lakhs.

The main objective is to fully develop the vast tourism potential of Uttarakhand in a planned and integrated manner. Top priority will need to be given to augment the infrastructure facilities for tourists and to mobilize resources for this purpose. Towards this end, special efforts will be required to encourage private sector participation in a big way.
Our Strengths and Assets

Pilgrimage has traditionally been a major segment of tourism in Uttarakhand. However, we are blessed with enormous resources for cultural, adventure, wildlife, nature and leisure tourism and a wide variety of entertainment and sporting activities which attract the modern tourist.

Pilgrimage

Important places of pilgrimage of different religions are located in Uttarakhand. Among these Badrinath, Kedarnath, Yamunotri, Gangotri, Haridwar, Hemkund, Lokpal, Nanakamata, Meetha Reetha Sahib, Piran Kaliyar, Pumagiri are some of the best known. Many important religious yatas, of which Nanda Devi Raj Jat and Kailash Mansarovar Yatra are the most popular, also take place in Uttarakhand. There are several other places of pilgrimage like Panchbadri, Panchkedar, Panchprayag, Patal Bhuvaneshwar etc., which need to be developed on a priority basis. Statistics relating to tourists who have visited Char Dham in Uttarakhand during the past three years are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of place</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Badrinath</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>6.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kedarnath</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gangotri</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamunotri</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cultural Tourism

Uttarakhand has a rich and vibrant cultural heritage. There are innumerable local fairs and festivals like Jhanda Mela (Dehradun), Surkanda Devi Mela (Tehri), Magh Mela (Uttarkashi), Nanda Devi Mela (Nainital), Chaiti Mela (Udham Singh Nagar), Pumagiri Mela (Champlain), Piran Kaliya Mela (Haridwar), Jollivi Mela (Pithoragarh) and Uttarayan Mela (Bageshwar); which are indicative of the immense potential for cultural tourism in Uttarakhand.

Natural Beauty

The Queen of the Hills, Mussoorie, the Lake District of India-Nainital, Kausani, Pauni, Lansdowne, Ranikhet, Almora, Pithoragarh, Munysari and many more attractive tourist destinations are part of Uttarakhand.

Adventure Tourism

Uttarakhand is a paradise for adventure sports. The sheer variety ranging from mountaineering (Bhagirathi, Chowkhamba, Nanda Devi, Kamet, Pindari, Sahastrastraal, Milam, Kafni, Kathlining, Gaumukh), Trekking, skiing (Auli, Dayara Bugyal, Munysari, Mundali), skating, water sports (in all the lakes and rivers in Uttarakhand) to aero sports like hang gliding, para gliding (Pithoragarh, Jolly Grant, Pauni) make Uttarakhand one of the most attractive destinations for adventure sports not only in India but the world over.

Wildlife Tourism

Along with the world-famous Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand has several other breath-taking destinations for Wildlife Tourism. These include the Rajaji National Park, Govind Peshu Vihar, Asan Barrage, Chilla and Saptarishi Ashram, the last four being a delight for bird watchers.

Eco-Tourism

Uttarakhand has a rare diversity of flora and fauna. This makes it an ideal area for developing eco-tourism, projects and activities like jungle safaris, trekking on mountain and forest trails, nature walks, catch and release angling for Mahseer and other fish species. All these activities have to be conducted in a manner that promotes awareness of environment and helps maintain the fragile ecological balance.

Amusement and Leisure Tourism

The clean, fresh and invigorating environment makes Uttarakhand a preferred destination to relax and unwind. From the modern facilities at Mussoorie and Nainital to the untouched, pristine beauty of its snow-clad peaks, rivers and forests, Uttarakhand provides all that a tourist could possibly seek for amusement and leisure.
Challenges

Augmentation of Infrastructure Facilities
In order to attract tourists from all over the world, there is an urgent need to create efficient, modern and state-of-the-art infrastructure to cater to the specific needs of tourists of all categories.

Winter/Year Round Tourism
Apart from its pollution free environs, Uttarakhand also provides clear skies and bright sunshine during the winter months. Yet tourism in Uttarakhand has been mainly confined to the summer months. Winter sports activities like skiing, ice-skating and ice-hockey, water sports, winter trekking etc. need to be promoted, publicized and advertised to attract tourists throughout the year.

Target Group Oriented Tourism Development
Apart from the general need to provide a clean and healthy environment at all tourist destinations, it would be essential to identify specific target groups and tourism activities and provide facilities according to their special requirements. For instance, the nature lover needs facilities which are quite different from those of a pilgrim. The challenge is to identify the needs of different categories of tourists and provide for them in a comprehensive and integrated manner.

Development of New Tourist Destinations
Apart from the pilgrimage centres, Uttarakhand has so far been generally known for its "Hill Stations" such as Mussoorie and Nainital. However, there are innumerable other destinations with immense potential such as New Tehri, together with the vast Reservoir which shall come into existence on completion of the Tehri dam, Pithoragarh, Munsiyari, Pauri, Khiru and Lansdowne and many others in the interiors, which can be and need to be developed into attractive tourist hill destinations.

Promotion of Tourism Oriented Handicrafts Industry and Cuisine
Souvenirs and cuisine are integral to tourism anywhere in the world. So also, in Uttarakhand, it will be essential to promote large scale production of souvenirs and artefacts based on the traditional arts and crafts of the region, and encourage a rich fare of high quality international, national and local cuisines.

Publicity and Tourism Marketing
Publicity and marketing of the tourism attractions of Uttarakhand at the national and international level has been inadequate. Planned and coordinated efforts are required in this direction, with the fullest utilization of information technology. Above all, Uttarakhand Tourism needs to develop its own brand name and image.

Human Resources Development
Special arrangements and up-gradation of existing institutions and facilities will be necessary for developing tourism entrepreneurship and management capabilities and training in specialized services such as guides, porters, chefs, housekeeping, etc.

Tourism Administration and Management
The existing institutional arrangements need modernization and qualitative improvement. In doing so, it will be essential to provide for the maximum involvement and participation of the private sector, specialists and experts, and those concerned with the tourism trade and industry. It would also be essential to ensure coordination between different agencies involved in tourism development.

Private sector participation
There has been a dearth of participation and involvement of the private sector, particularly in the organized sector, in the development of tourism in Uttarakhand. There is need to promote and encourage private sector participation in the development of modern tourist facilities and infrastructure and management practices in the State.
The Role of Zonal Development Collaborations in Tourism Development
The structure and functions of the existing Garhwal and Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam or Zonal Development Corporations will be reviewed and streamlined with a view to enhancing their commercial viability and operational efficiency.

Infrastructure Development
Establishment of world class infrastructure facilities will be the highest priority of the Government. In order to do this, special efforts will be made to mobilize institutional resources and private sector investment and participation. In this context, the following areas will receive special attention:

- Rail and Air services.
- Road transport.
- Accommodation facilities for tourists of different income groups.
- Modern telecommunication facilities.
- Hygienic conditions and clean drinking water.
- Land and buildings for development of infrastructure facilities.

Rail and Air Services
Efforts will be made to connect Uttarakhand to important cities in India by high speed trains. Efforts will also be made to develop and upgrade existing airports and air strips in the State and link them to major air service centres. Integrated development plans will be prepared for areas around the airports and air strips. Participation of the private sector in this area will be sought wherever feasible.

Road Transport
An efficient road network, equipped with modern tourist facilities, will be developed to connect the important pilgrimage and tourist destinations in Uttarakhand. A road map for pilgrimage routes will be drawn up and implemented in a time bound manner.

- Roads linking important tourist centres, will be equipped with petrol pumps, motor garages, fast food centres, toilet facilities, arrangement for parking and transport, etc., Private sector participation will be encouraged for this purpose.
- Transportation facilities in the private sector will be strengthened. Schemes like “Rent a car” will be encouraged.
- Treating major tourist centres as base camps, trails to the nearby lesser known tourist spots will be developed and package tours to these places will be organized and encouraged.

Accommodation
Special efforts will be made to develop and upgrade tourism accommodation at important tourist centres in Uttarakhand keeping in view the requirements and income levels of different categories of tourists. Apart from the State government agencies maximum involvement of organized private sector and local residents (having guest accommodation) will be encouraged in this sphere.

Modern Telecommunication Facilities
With the help of the Government of India and the private sector wherever feasible modern telecommunication facilities will be made available in the far flung areas of Uttarakhand.

Hygienic Conditions and Clean Drinking Water
Special efforts will be made to ensure healthy sanitary conditions and safe drinking water supply in all important cities, major pilgrimage destinations and tourist centres in the State. Effective supervision in this regard will be provided by the local tourism offices with the help and involvement of voluntary organizations and local citizens. Steps will also be taken to establish water conservation facilities in units of tourist accommodation.
Land and Building for Development of Infrastructure Facilities

- Land will be identified and Land Bank established for purposes of developing accommodation and other infrastructure facilities at important destinations and tourist spots and along the pilgrimage routes. Land will be made available, on reasonable terms/price or as equity, by the State Government to private entrepreneurs for tourism schemes. Regulations will separately frame for this purpose.

- In addition to the properties of the Tourism Department and Garhwal/Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam or Zonal Development Corporations, rest houses of the various departments such as the Forest Department, Irrigation Department and Public Works Department will be utilized for tourism activities. Private sector participation in the development and management of such facilities will be promoted and encouraged.

Private Sector Participation

Private sector participation in the tourism industry is of vital importance. Development of accommodation facilities for the different categories of tourists, tourist resorts, specialized food restaurants, facilities for adventure sports, amusement parks and facilities, etc., are some areas which provide attractive investment opportunities and where private sector could play a vital role. For this, the following facilities will be provided:

- New tourism units in the State will be allowed rebate/deduction facility in the payment of luxury tax for a period of five years from the date of commencement.

- The norms and procedures for determining luxury tax on hotels will be modified and simplified.

- New ropeways installed in the state will be exempt from the payment of entertainment tax for a period of five years from commencement.

- A Compounding Scheme will be made applicable for fixing the rate of entertainment tax on hotels showing programmes on the various channels through cable and satellite.

- New Amusement parks set up will be exempt from entertainment tax for a period of five years from the date of becoming fully operational. For this, standards will be specified to determine eligibility.

- Steps will be taken to provide beer-bar licenses to hotel units with attached restaurant facilities.

- To ensure increased participation of the private sector in the area of tourism a consultative mechanism will be established.

Schemes for Self-Employment/ Uttarakhand Tourism Development Scheme

To provide self-employment opportunities for local residents and encourage maximum participation of the host community in the tourism sector a new "Uttarakhand Tourism Development Scheme" will be implemented. Under this Scheme, State assistance up to a maximum of 20% for projects with a capital investment of up to Rs. 10.00 lakhs will be provided. Projects under this Scheme will include fast food centres, setting up retail outlets for local handicrafts, plying of buses and taxis, provision of equipment of adventure sports, establishing small motel-like residential accommodation, setting up tourism information centres with PCOs/restaurants, tented residential facilities and garages.

Package Tours/Tour-Travel Agencies

- With the objective of boosting tourist traffic to Uttarakhand and enriching the quality and content of tourism products, attractive package tours will be developed and promoted, with the help of private sector tour operators and travel agencies, these will include air/road/rail travel, boarding and lodging, excursions, site visits, etc. These package tours will be specially promoted for the Char Dham, Nainital and Mussoorie sectors, and the Dehradun-Haridwar-Rishikesh golden Triangle.

- A list of the accredited travel agencies will be prepared. Rules for accreditation will be simplified. Assistance of such accredited agencies will be sought to enlarge tourism business.
Augmenting Capital Investment in Tourism

- To develop infrastructure facilities in the tourism sector, it is proposed to invite domestic private sector investment, foreign investment as well as investment from non-resident Indians. Such capital investment is specially proposed for construction of star-category hotels, tourist-resorts, golf courses, large eco-parks, amusement parks, ropeways, children’s parks and winter sports projects.

- In addition, efforts will be made to seek financial assistance from World Bank, Asian Development Bank and other international agencies.

- To ensure private capital investment and participation for the development of tourism, separate Funds for tourism development will be established. Arrangements will also be made to mobilize finances for these Funds through voluntary contributions from travel trade representatives, industrialists and other establishments connected with tourism. For this a separate set of rules will also be framed.

Human Resource Development

High-Level Training Programmes
Diploma and degree training programmes will be conducted in the Hotel Managements and Catering Institutes. Training institutes will be developed for specialized activities like adventure sports, aero-sports, water sports, etc.

Middle-Level Training Programmes
Arrangements will be made for tourism awareness programmes, and short-term training in specialized tourism related activities and services such as catering, fruit conservation, cookery, running paying guest facilities, managing S.T.D. equipped tourism information centres, handicrafts/souvenir related activities, guides and porters.

Special Training Programmes
- Special training programmes developed for local women and for the youth in areas like adventure sports, trekking etc. will be established with participation of the private sector as well as experts.

Publicity and Tourism Marketing
- Posters, pamphlets, guide maps, U-Matic films and other tourism literature depicting the important tourism attractions in Uttarakhand will be produced and widely circulated.

- An Uttarakhand Tourism website will be launched and campaigns will be run in both print and electronic media. Apart from providing tourism related information, reservation facilities shall also be made available through the proposed website.

- Familiarisation tours to tourist places in Uttarakhand will be organized from time to time for members of various sections of the tourism trade and industry, media persons, departmental officers/employees.

- Organisation of, and participation in Tourism Conferences/Seminars, Travel and Trade Fairs on a regular basis will be encouraged.

- In order to give wide publicity to places of tourist interest in Uttarakhand, efforts will be made to promote film shooting in the region. Action will be taken to establish a Film City in this region and the necessary infrastructure for film shooting will be provided.

- Information Centres and other tourist facilities will be provided and developed at railheads and convenient points on highways in Uttarakhand.

- Tourism related signage will be developed at all important highways, airports and bus stands for the information and convenience of tourists.

Pilgrimage Tourism
- Amendments in relevant statutory framework will be considered with the aim of streamlining the institutional arrangements pertaining to the “Char Dham” pilgrimage.
Accommodation and facilities along the pilgrimage routes will be augmented and upgraded in a phased and coordinated manner and a Master Plan will be drawn up for this purpose.

Action will be taken for the integrated development of the less developed and lesser known pilgrimage sites such as Pumaygri, Patal Bhuvaneshwar, Panchprayag, Panchbadri etc.

Efforts will be made to develop integrated packages and facilities whereby pilgrims are also attracted to other tourism destinations in the area.

Cultural Tourism.
The various fairs and festivals, traditional life styles and customs, dress and food habits of the people of Uttarakhand will be given wide publicity, so that tourists and visitors can get a chance to see and partake of the rich and varied culture of the region. Efforts will be made to develop the local fairs and festivals into tourism events and attractions. Action will also be taken for preservation of buildings and places of archaeological interest.

Nature & Eco-Tourism
Botanical Gardens-cum-Heritage Centres and Theme Parks will be established in order to highlight the biodiversity of Uttarakhand.

Integrated Eco-Tourism projects will be developed and established and steps will be taken to promote eco-friendly tourism activities like Jungle Safaris, Nature Walks, Mountain treks, Camping, etc. in a manner that also promotes awareness and sensitivity towards environment conservation.

Tree plantation as a tourism linked activity will be given special attention. Action will be taken in a planned manner to deal with the problem of non-bio-degradable wastes. Intensive campaigns to regulate plastic waste will be launched with the assistance of the private sector and non-government organisations.

The use of earthquake resistant technology and techniques in construction of buildings, and use of local materials will be promoted and encouraged.

Special attention will be given to the aspect of carrying capacity while preparing tourism development plans.

Amusement Tourism
Action will be taken to develop projects for ropeways, amusement parks, golf courses, children's parks, lakes and ponds and generally augment entertainment facilities in places of tourism interest.

Leisure Tourism
Uttarakhand has innumerable locations which can serve as quiet retreats amidst exquisite natural beauty, for those seeking leisure away from the stresses of modern urban life. Special efforts will be made to develop leisure-oriented tourism spots including Health resorts, spa centres, yoga and meditation centres etc. herbal treatment and naturopathy centres to attract such tourists.

Tourism Villages
Action will be taken for development and promotion of village tourism and tourist villages at different places in the State. This would include development of basic facilities of clean and healthy food and comfortable accommodation to tourists in these villages. Together with mountain tourism activities in the surrounding areas, the historical traditions of the villagers, folk arts/culture and cuisine will be promoted as special attractions.

Corporate Tourism
Steps will be taken to develop the enormous potential in Uttarakhand for Corporate tourism. The private sector will be encouraged to participate in the establishment of high class Convention Centres and facilities for conferences, seminars, workshops, business meets etc.

Adventure Tourism
A major thrust will be given to the promotion and development of the following adventure tourism activities in the State.
Trekking

- There exists a great potential for trekking in Uttarakhand. A Master Plan for development of trek routes will be prepared and implemented.

- The facilities on various trek routes will be improved i.e. for camping, provision for safe drinking water and hygienic food.

- Arrangements will be made for pre-paid facilities for trained guides, porters, tents and apparatus on hire at the starting points of these treks.

- Special efforts will be made to ensure that the environment is not polluted during trekking and necessary guidelines will be prepared.

- A review will be undertaken in regard to the determination of the Inner Line.

Water Sports

- Activities like river rafting, canoeing, kayaking etc. are becoming increasingly popular. At present, these are being conducted with private sector participation, along the Ganges from Kaudiyala to Rishikesh, and on some other rivers and water bodies. River rafting will be further promoted/extended to other areas in Uttarakhand. For this purpose, guides will be trained and employed from among the locals, who will also be assigned the task of protecting both the tourists and the environment. Steps will be taken to set standards and regulations for this purpose.

- Other water sports will also be developed and extended to various water bodies in Uttarakhand like Dodital, Asan Barrage, Haripur lake, Tehri Dam and Maneribhal, etc. Fishing/angling, including “Catch and Release” angling will be promoted in planned and regulated way.

Development of Winter Sports Centres

A Master Plan will be drawn up to further develop Auli (already an established centre) as an ultra-modern winter sports centre. Action will be taken in a time bound manner to develop Dayara Bugyal in Uttarakashi district as an international winter sports centre. Steps will also be initiated to promote similar centres at other places such as Munsiyari. Although these centres are envisioned mainly as winter sports centres, they will be developed in such a manner as to attract tourists round the year.

Aero Sports

With the help of the Government of India and the private sector wherever feasible modern telecommunication facilities will be made available in the far flung areas of Uttarakhand.

Standardisation and Rescue Organisation

Adequate facilities will be developed to provide a high level rescue system for adventure sports and other tourism related activities. This will include provision of various rescue equipments like recovery vans, Repling, Piten, Jumar and walkie-talkie sets etc. A Rescue Co-ordination Committee will also be set up.

Registered organizations/clubs connected with adventure tourism will be encouraged through grants. A separate set of rules will be framed for this purpose.

Development of Handicrafts and Souvenirs

To encourage traditional handicrafts, rural craftsmen will be provided the necessary training and craft bazaars and craft villages will be set up and developed. Stalls will also be made available for marketing the crafted goods, especially during the various fairs and festivals. Besides, space will be provided for development in the Tourism Department Hotels/Guest Houses for setting up Souvenir shops in order to showcase and market locally produced handicrafts.
Contact Details
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