UNIT 13 ADVENTURE AND SPORTS

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13.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we will discuss about adventure and sports in relation to tourism. After going through this Unit you will:

- know how adventure and sports play an important role in tourism.
- know the main sport and adventure activities which attract tourists.
- be able to list the main places in India where such activities are organised, and
- have an idea about which particular sport or adventure activities can be developed in a specific region.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Sports can be very simply defined as any kind of organised indoor or outdoor activity which people pursue for recreation and physical fitness. Adventure on the other hand is generally an outdoor activity of sport which involves an element of daring and risk. The physical fitness is generally a precondition to participate in adventure activities.

Adventure and sports have always been an integral part of tourism. Throughout history, it has been common for persons having a spirit of adventure to travel great distances for satisfying their hunger for new challenges. In fact, it were the early adventurers who explored most of the new world and opened its gates to people of other civilisations. Again people have been known throughout history to travel to distant lands to pursue their interests in sports whether it was for participating in Olympics in ancient Rome or for game hunting in the African Continent.

In modern times, technological advancement has reduced distances considerably and the growing affluence has made it easier for people to afford travelling. People have also started looking for better quality of life and taking a recreational holiday for pursuing interests in adventure and sports. In countries having a marked degree of affluence, many centres of tourism owe their existence to the facilities and infrastructure offered for adventure and sports. Today centres like Chamonix, Zermatt and Leysin in the European Alps are household names for the adventure lovers due to their being great places for mountaineering and skiing. Similarly administrators in places like Colorado (USA) and Nepal have laid great accent on adventure activities to promote tourism in their areas. Facilities for golf and tennis have always been a tourist attraction in most of the Western countries. In spite of these activities having existed for a long time, India has only recently initiated efforts to use them as tourist attractions. In this Unit we will not be going into the details of such activities but provide only a brief account. We have divided such activities in a few categories and then explained certain adventure activities in each category. An attempt has also been made to familiarise you with the places in India where facilities for such activities are available.
The Unit also analyses the suitability of different types of sports and adventures for various categories of tourists.

As a tourism professional, you should not only be aware of the sports and adventure facilities available at a destination but should acquaint your clients also about them. This knowledge also helps you in identifying the types of such activities to be developed at a destination if you intend to start your own enterprise.

### 13.2 ADVENTURE, SPORTS AND TOURISM

Adventure and sports have tremendous potential towards promotion of tourism. They cater to the craving of humans for recreation, enjoyment and adventure. Let us first see how these activities attract different types of people and give a boost to tourism.

1. Many people pursue some of these activities as full time profession. Such people would like to visit the places where good facilities are available for a particular activity. For example golf professionals staying in hilly regions would like to go to plains during winters as they cannot play golf in the hills because of snowing etc. Similarly severe heat conditions in plains during summer would attract golfers to hilly regions. Besides, different areas provide varying experiences for the same adventure or sports.

2. Some people visit a place for holidaying away from their place of work. They want some recreation and adventure also. A destination offering these facilities thus, has additional attractions for tourists.

3. People who pursue different sports for physical fitness may not like to miss their routine even during holidaying and sightseeing tours. These people are likely to be attracted to such places where good facilities for sports are also available.

4. Many a times important sporting events or competitions play a very important role. A country hosting Olympics, World Cup in Hockey, Football or Cricket or other important sporting events attracts large number of visitors giving a boost to tourist traffic.

5. Many people while visiting a destination get interested in sports or adventures. This enhances enjoyment and it can become a memorable trip.

Thus, we notice that adventure and sports attract tourists of different interests. In other words a sport or adventure activity may attract:

- tourists with high level of attainment as professionals,
- people who have been practising it as a regular hobby,
- people who are novice and would like to try their hand if they get a chance, and
- the spectators (as tourists) who would like to see a competition or a performance.

However, in economic terms, some people would be in a position to spend large amounts of money whereas others would like to pursue these activities with less money to spend. It, therefore, becomes essential to take care of these factors before developing such activities at a destination. In order to be an attractive tourist package and for being commercially viable adventure and sports should fulfil the following criteria:

i) **It should not be so expensive** that it becomes unaffordable for tourists with average paying capacity.

ii) **It should not be very difficult to learn** the skills necessary for participating in the activity at an amateur level.

iii) **Enough experienced professionals should be available** to supervise, train and ensure safety of participants.

iv) **It should be possible to complete training and participation in a reasonably short period of time.**

v) **The centres should be easily accessible** and it should be possible for a reasonably large number of people to take part in the activities.

vi) Physical fitness standards required should **not be so rigorous** that an average person cannot conform to them.

vii) Requirement of infrastructure and equipment should **not be so large** as to make it exorbitantly expensive and financially unviable.
viii) Centres or units for such activities should be **able to offer something to people with varying levels** of interest. (We have already discussed the profile of people with various levels of interest.)

ix) Certain adventure and sports activities are **specific to a destination**. For example, skiing can be organised in snowy regions only. Hence, this aspect should also be **considered**.

The points discussed above are by no means exhaustive. It is just to give you an idea about some important aspects to be borne in mind for developing sports and adventure centres.

Let us now discuss various sports and adventure activities which may attract tourists or provide them recreation at any destination. We will discuss these in two broad categories.

i) Sports and Recreation, and

ii) Adventure Sports

**Check Your Progress 1**

1. Discuss the relationship between adventure, sports and tourism.

   - ...
   - ...
   - ...

2. Discuss some of the criteria for developing tourist attractions in adventure and sports.

   - ...
   - ...
   - ...

13.3 **SPORTS AND RECREATION** —

A wide range of sports, leisure and recreation activities are available in India. Some of these need elaborate infrastructure while others can be arranged with limited resources. These may be divided into two: indoor and outdoor.

13.3.1 **Indoor**

Among indoor activities we can list badminton, table tennis, billiards; squash, skating etc. Some table games like chess, bridge (a game of cards), carrom board etc. may also be included here.

These are quite common games and we therefore will not be describing them here. Let us see what sort of facilities are available for them.

Most of the popular tourist destinations have many of these sports. Generally they are available in established clubs or big hotels. In case of clubs the facilities are available to members only while most of the visitors to the town are non-members. Many such clubs especially in hilly towns have a provision to give temporary membership after charging a short-term fee. In most of the cases these clubs are managed by the state or affluent sections of the town. Consequently, generally government officials or high budget tourists manage to avail the facilities. The opportunities for general tourists are very limited.

In the case of hotels the sports facilities are available to residents only. In a few cases, they allow non residents also but for a fee which is normally very high.
In some places a few entrepreneurs have opened small places where facilities for one or more games are made available after charging a fee. But the number of such places is very few. There is enough scope for opening such enterprises. Table Tennis, and badminton do not need much investment apart from the space. Billiards equipment is expensive. Sports like squash and skating need more initial investment. But chess, carrom board and a table with cards for bridge can be easily provided by small hotels, tourist lodges and even by those who offer paying guest accommodation. The guests can use them during spare time.

13.3.2 Outdoor

Among outdoor sports one can list golf, tennis, horse riding, cycling, boating, swimming, etc. for developing tourism. Here again we will not go into the details of these sports and would confine our discussion to their potential and availability.

i) Golf: Golf has for long been a favourite with affluent tourists. The infrastructure required is quite large. A golf course requires a big piece of land with certain natural features (these features can also be created). Maintaining thousands of metres of land area with green lawns and golf holes is a very expensive proposition. Most of the golf courses in the country are maintained by the state or armed forces. A few are with established clubs. **Golf in India**, a publication of the Tourism Department, Govt. of India, mentions:

> What makes golfing in India exciting is the diversity of its courses. Not only does it have the oldest golf club in the world outside Great Britain, but also the highest at Gulmarg (altitude 2,700 metres) in Kashmir. There are golf courses in the mountains, plains, deserts and at beach resorts. The environment of each course is unique in its culture and history, highlighting all that makes India a diverse destination. In fact, it would not be wrong to say that one of the best ways to experience India is through its golf courses.

Realising the potential of golf tourism, most of India's golf courses are well connected by road, rail, and air, and have excellent accommodation facilities. Unfortunately, India has to still rely on the West for golfing equipment, and visitors are advised to carry their own sets with an ample supply of balls.

There are around 160 golf courses in the country. All of them need a membership. Most of them have the necessary facilities, but clubs also have facilities for tennis, table-tennis, billiards, restaurants and bars. A few even offer accommodation to stay. Still the infrastructure needs to be improved. Facilities like flood lit golf courses would be required as temperature in our country is more conducive to sports in the evenings. Some good golf courses are in Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta, Agra, Jaipur, Ranikhet, Lucknow, Allahabad, Varanasi, *Patna*, Gwalior, Bhopal, Pune, Nagpur, Kodai Kanal, Coimbatore, Cochin, Srinagar, Gulmarg, Shillong, Shimla etc. (Specific information on some golf courses can be found in the small booklet entitled *Golf in India*).

ii) Tennis: Almost every large town in India has facilities for playing tennis. Many of the big hotels also have tennis courts. In most of the hill stations and tourist places tennis clubs extend temporary membership after charging a moderate fee.

iii) Horse Riding: In most of the hill stations horse riding facilities are available. They provide an excellent part-time-sport. Children enjoy pony rides. They are also of great use in going to difficult heights for sightseeing. In addition they help in transporting people from one place to another.

Generally, these horses/ponies are available on hire for a fee on time basis or the distance to be covered. In most of the cases they are owned by individuals and are registered with local bodies or associations. In some places tracts for horse/pony riding are separately marked. The persons attending these horses also accompany the riders and work as local guides. The rides are generally safe if proper instructions are followed.

iv) Cycling: Cycling as a sport is not very popular from the point of view of sports. In a number of towns cycles are available on hire. These can be hired for sightseeing where distances are not much. The advantage for a tourist here is that the journey can be paced as per the tourists requirement enjoying the flora, fauna and scenery on the
way. The absence of separate cycling tracks makes it unpopular among foreign tourists. There is a lot of potential for developing and popularising it. Offering sports bicycles on hire is one example.

v) Swimming: Swimming is fast emerging as a popular sport in India. All the big hotels have swimming pools. A large number of swimming pools are maintained by sports bodies, local municipal corporations and clubs. Sea beaches extend an excellent natural facility for swimming and fun in water. At many beaches there are marked areas for swimmers with facilities for bathing and changing clothes. In most of the swimming pools trainers and life guards are also available. The swimming is very popular with tourists but facilities for low budget tourists are not adequate.

vi) Boating: Place with natural or man-made lakes provide an attractive enjoyment through boating. Some dams and seashores also offer boating for pleasure. Here people can avail joy rides in boats driven manually or in motorboats. In the sea people can go in glass bottomed boats to have a view of underwater fauna. Such facility is offered at Bangaram in Lakshadweep and at Port Blair in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The limitation of boating is that the place must have a large reservoir of water or a lake. There are innumerable places where the lakes, tanks, rivers and reservoirs are not put to use for attracting tourists or providing additional attraction at popular tourist places.

Places like Srinagar (Kashmir) and Nainital (U.P.) have their lakes as main places of tourist attraction. Haryana Tourism Department has lately developed a number of lake sites for attracting tourists. A number of other State Tourism Development Corporations have also developed such facilities. For example Delhi is providing boating facility around India Gate and Purana Qila. A number of lakes in the South India have also been developed. There is still enough potential to develop such sites keeping in view the popularity—particularly among domestic tourists and week-end excursionists.

vii) Angling: India can offer good facilities for angling or fishing as it is popularly called. Angling activities in India are not organised enough to attract many tourists. The sport has enough potential for tourism in the country due to the variety of fishes available in different regions e.g. Himalayan Trout, Nilgiri Trout, Mahseer etc. An added advantage of the sport is that it also involves some hiking and camping and thus adds to the attractions of trekking to a limited extent. In order that anglers from India and abroad can be attracted to this sport it is essential that commercial overutilisation of fishing is kept under control and areas offering good angling potential be identified.

Angling in India can be conveniently classified into
- Mahseer (Barbur Tor) fishing.
- Trout fishing, and
- Sea fishing.

Mahseer is generally found in the rivers of the Terai region of Himalayas, the Shivalik hills in the north and the river Kaveri in the south. Mainly river Jhelum (J & K), Beas (Himachal & Punjab), Ganga (in U.P. Hills), Bhoroli (Arunachal), and Manas (Assam), Kaveri (Karnataka) are good places for Mahseer fishing.

Trout is found in all high altitude streams and lakes. Kashmir is the best place for Trout fishing. Here rivers Sindh, Lidder, streams of Koternag, Verinag and high altitude lakes are ideal sites. Lakes and streams in high altitudes of Nilgiri hills and Himachal Pradesh also offer trout. This is not a costly sport. The equipment required is described below:

**EQUIPMENT FOR TROUT FISHING IN KASHMIR**

The Brown or Rainbow trout of the Kashmir waters is a good fighter like the Salmon. It makes flashing runs interspersed with repeated leaps from the water. A 2 or 3—pounder on a light fly rod is an unforgettable adventure.

As per the trend in angling in Kashmir, a set of two or three flies in tandem are tied on a cast of about 1 metre length of 8 lb. filament line. Some lead wire is used to ensure sufficient casting weight.
The average weight of trout expected to be landed is around 1/2 lbs. One should not, however, rule out the giant 5-pounder. The little fingerlings must be gently returned to the river without hurting them. As mentioned earlier, the bag is limited to six fish only. Suggested equipment is as follows:

**ROD**: A light fly rod 8 to 10 ft. long.

**REEL**: A medium-sized spool type fly reel should comfortably hold about 25 metres of coated silk line.

**FLIES**: Recommended flies include March Brown, Teal and Green, Coachman, Peacock, Butcher, Watsons Fancy, Coch-y-Bondhu, Zulu etc. Some colour variations from those mentioned could yield good results. Wet (spider) hackle flies, winged wet, dry fly spiders and winged dry flies are all useful. Hook sizes for fly dressing vary between No. 12 and 16. Two hooked tavys or lures are also productive when used as the lead fly at the end of the cast.

**EQUIPMENT FOR MAHSEER FISHING**

**RODS**: Stiff action rods for casting spinners, lures and plugs between 25 to 50gms. Heavy pike fibre glass rods 8 to 10 ft. long are ideal. For light fishing of up to 20lbs, a medium action rod is ideal. Two rods are a must.

**REELS**: Openface spinning reels like ABU Ambassadeur 7000 or 7000 C and ABU 770 or 440 are ideal. Some spares are essential as they are not always locally available.

**LINE**: 10/12 lb. for light fishing and 20/30 lb for larger waters of Nylorfi or Maxima brands or similar quality. Preferred colours are green or brown. There must be 200 metres line on each reel.

**LURES**: Lures up to 1 ounce (28 gms) silver, and combinations of silver/blue/green. Rappala 7” – 9” sinking plugs.

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**Check Your Progress 2**

1) **What purpose do horses/ponies serve at a hill station?**

2) **What are the advantages for going sightseeing on a bicycle?**

3) **Mention some sports that are popular with domestic tourists.**
Boating in Delhi

Hang Gliding
13.4 ADVENTURE SPORTS

As referred earlier India with its geographical diversity, vast territory, rich forests, hills and terrain has a lot to offer to adventure seekers. In recent times a lot of attention is being paid to develop Adventure Tourism in India. In this Section we will discuss some of the more popular types of these activities and their potential. For the convenience of study we will discuss it in three Sub-sections:

i) Aerial Adventure Sports
ii) Water Adventure Sports
iii) Land based Adventure Sports

13.4.1 Aerial Adventure Sports

A number of aerial adventure sports available in India are described below:

i) Parachuting: This sport involves jumping off from an aircraft or balloon and descending by means of a parachute. Though there is evidence to suggest that this sport was practised in elementary form by using very large size umbrellas in China but in its modern form it made its beginning in France in the late 18th century. Better designing of parachutes has made this sport relatively safe than earlier days and the sport has been kept alive and kicking due to its use as a means of transportation by the Armed Forces. Parachutes are deployed by connecting a line (called static line) to the aircraft which when pulled by the weight of a jumper pulls out the parachute automatically. To practise the sport an average amount of fitness and training is essential to reduce the risk of injuries sustained while landing.

As far as tourism is concerned, the sport has limited scope. The infrastructure required includes aircraft, parachutes and a landing zone which has to be large in area as accuracy in landing is not possible due to very limited steerability of these parachutes. These requirements make the sport cost intensive which coupled with the limited thrill offered does not attract too many participants. The advantage however is that relatively larger number of persons can make the descent in one simple flight which does not have to climb very high. This reduces the costs somewhat and also shortens the turnaround time. The sport can also be used for training those who aspire to play Sky Diving and thus can be combined with a skydiving establishment.

ii) Sky Diving: This sport is also known as Free Fall in military terms and is described as “The fastest non-mechanical sport”. The sport differs greatly from “Static Line Parachuting” though it also employs a parachute for descending safely to the ground. A Sky Diver jumps off an aircraft or balloon at a much greater height without deploying his parachute initially and opens it after some interval at a pre-determined height. Initially the rate of descent of the jumper keeps increasing due to gravitational force but after about 11 seconds he reaches his terminal speed which is approximately 200 km per hour for a person falling in stable position. This happens because the resistance of the column of air on the body becomes equal to the gravitational force acting on it. This gives the person a feeling of floating on air and by altering his body position he can do various manoeuvres and can also cover distance in any direction horizontally.

In recent years the skydiving parachutes have gone through a revolutionary design change and almost every one nowadays uses rectangular parachutes having cells which get inflated by air. These parachutes are known as “Ram Air” parachutes or more commonly as just “Squares” and are like gliders which can travel forward at a speed of 25 to 30 km per hour in zero wind condition. This enables the skydivers to land in a small area with much greater accuracy.

The development of Ram Air parachutes has also given birth to “Canopy Relative Work” which means forming a vertical stair of a number of parachutes descending together. In spite of the great attractiveness of this sport it suffers from the drawback of prohibitive costs of aircrafts and parachutes. Since the sport also needs certain level of specialisation, every visiting traveller cannot practise it. In the Indian context it is highly unlikely that it will be ever successful on a mass scale due to its being cost prohibitive and non-availability of most of the equipment indigenously. At present the sport is primarily limited to the defence personnel and hardly any facility exists for an average tourist.
iii) **Hang Gliding**: It is comparatively a cheaper sport which uses a semi-rigid wing made of fabric supported by a light alloy frame. It essentially flies like a glider where the directional control is achieved by a shift in his own weight by the pilot. It does not require any infrastructure except some hilly terrain of reasonable gradient which can offer:

- small sloping patch for a running, take off
- relatively obstruction free flight path, and
- a flat area for landing which shall be free of obstructions.

In addition a motorable track between the take off point and landing area is needed to reduce the physical labour involved in recovering the Hang Glider and for shortening the turnaround time.

As far as tourism is concerned, the sport has a reasonable potential in India due to availability of hilly terrain in all parts of the country. Participation in the sport however be always limited because it requires intensive training as the skills cannot be acquired quickly. The sport is also risky and does demand reasonable amount of fitness which inhibits an average individual from pursuing the sport. Because of these factors the sport will always attract only serious practitioners and not the week-end enthusiasts.

For hang gliding the good places in India are:
- Srinagar valley in Jammu and Kashmir,
- Kangra valley, Dharamsala, Shimla and Kasauli in Himachal,
- Pune and Satara in Maharashtra,
- Nilgiri hills in Tamil Nadu,
- Chamundi hills near Bangalore and Shillong in Meghalaya.

iv) **Para Sailing**: A very simple sport which involves winching or towing a parachutist to a height of few hundred feet in the air and then descending by means of the parachute. This can be practised on the beaches also by using speed boats. It is a safe sport and people of all age groups can practise it without much training.

In the context of tourism in India this sport has a great potential since the infrastructural costs are low and every week-end fun lover or adventure seeker can easily experience it without spending too much time and effort on training.

v) **Bungee Jumping**: A comparatively new sport which has gained wide popularity in the western world in recent years. This sport requires no equipment other than a 'Bungee Chord' made of nylon fibre of enough elasticity to be able to absorb the shock at the end of jump. The only infrastructure required is a bridge, tower or any structure which offers few hundred feet of free fall. The jumper makes a head long jump in the empty space and the resultant rush of adrenalin makes the experience very exhilarating.

This sport too has a fair potential due to almost negligible costs and availability of infrastructure in almost any area. The only inhibiting factor is to get enough people with the courage to jump off in space. It does not require much training to take to this sport except the supervision of an expert. The sport is yet to make an appearance in India.

Most of the places that have airports (small or big) have flying and gliding clubs in India where facilities for some aerial activities are available. Baroda, Srinagar, Amritsar, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Patna, Bombay, Bangalore, Lucknow, Agra, Kanpur, Delhi, Indore, Raipur, Hisar, Madras, Calcutta, Bhubaneswar etc. are some important examples.

### 13.4.2 Water Adventure Sports

Almost all the adventure activity which is water based is white water oriented. White water basically means fast flowing water which due to some obstructions in its path is turbulent at those places which gives it a white appearance due to the surf produced. Adventure sports which are practised on flat water are mainly sea based, though very large lakes can also be used for the purpose.

i) **White Water Rafting**: In this sport inflatable raft made of synthetic material is used to negotiate fast flowing rivers. With modern technology providing better material for the construction of rafts, the sport has become much more safe. People with no pre-
vious experience of rafting can very safely negotiate white waters of moderate difficulty under the supervision of a qualified river guide.

The sport is moderately expensive due to the cost of the equipment. It can be practised in almost any river offering reasonable amount of white water though an easy access to the river by a road makes the carriage of the equipment easier.

The sport does have reasonable tourism potential and enjoys fair amount of patronage by tourists. The main advantage from the point of view of tourism is that it can be experienced by novices too. An ordinary tourist does not have to spend too much time for experiencing the thrills involved in it. The sport is presently practiced in the rivers Ganga, Indus, Zanskar, Chenab, Sutlej, Beas, Yamuna, Sharda, Teesta, etc. A number of tour operators offer packages for White Water Rafting and also conduct them by offering facilities.

ii) **White Water Kayaking**: Kayak is a small light boat which was used by the Eskimos for seal hunting. It is a highly manoeuvrable boat and being smaller can generally accommodate only one person. It is also very easy for a Kayak to flip over because the very design makes it inherently unstable. Because of these factors, one has to acquire more skill even for practising this sport at an elementary level.

The sport is not very costly as the equipment required is not large. But the tourism potential is not very large because it requires more skill and time to experience this sport. It can also not be experienced off hand without any training which makes it difficult for an ordinary tourist to enjoy the thrills of the sport within a short time. As compared to rafting, physical fitness standards are also more rigorous which again is an inhibiting factor for any individual willing to try his hand in the sport only for the sake of experiencing it.

iii) **White Water Canoeing**: This sport is similar to Kayaking in nature, the only difference being that instead of a Kayak a Canoe is used. A Canoe is open unlike a Kayak and the paddler executes the strokes on only one side of the canoe rather than like the stroke being used on both sides of the Kayak.

The tourism potential of this sport too is limited like that of Kayaking for similar reasons. The popular places for this sport are in Bhagirathi river from Uttarkashi to Gangotri and another from Uttarkashi to Dheran.

iv) **Flat Water Adventure Sports**: These sports are practised either on seas or in large flat water bodies such as lakes or reservoirs. The prominent ones from the point of view of tourism are:

- Water skiing,
- Wind surfing, and
- Surfing.

**Water Skiing**: This sport is practised by being towed behind a motorboat on any large water body. The skills required for practising the sport at an elementary level can be acquired in a short time and the cost of equipment is not prohibitive. The potential of the sport, therefore, is good from the point of view of tourism. In India, the only problem being that enough large lakes are not available and the reservoirs along dams are under the control of different government agencies which generally do not permit their exploitation for tourism.

**Wind Surfing**: A small surf board with an attachment for sails is used for sliding the surf on the seas. Directional control is achieved by shifting the sail position and body weight of the wind surfer.

The sport requires training and more time for acquiring the skills. Since it is practised by a single person it does not allow any laxity. Advantage from the tourism point of view is that not much equipment is needed though in India all of it is imported. However, the potential for tourism is fairly small as the number of enthusiasts in the western countries is ever increasing and availability of facilities in or around beach resorts will always have many takers.

**Surfing**: A difficult sport where only a surf board is used for riding the waves and surf on the seas. The control is achieved by sheer body manoeuvre. Obviously the number of practitioners it will attract among ordinary tourists is going to be limited. The sport in India is still at a nascent stage and it will be very long before it catches the fancy of tourists. Yet, at many beaches surf boards are available.
13.4.3 Land Based Adventure Sports

Most of the popular land based adventure sports are mountain oriented. The prominent among them are trekking, mountaineering, angling and skiing.

i) Trekking: A very popular sport which can be practised at different levels by both young and old persons who may be either very fit or not so fit. It is generally associated with a journey across forest tracks or in the country side which is still largely untouched by formal means of transportation. In India trekking in the hill valley is most common and popular with college students in the lead. The number of trekking enthusiasts has been increasing all over the world as it gives most of the modern people an opportunity to get away from the crowds, noise, pollution and stress associated with thickly populated cities. An added attraction is requirement of very little equipment which keeps the costs low. This keeps the trekking trips very affordable and in many cases they work out cheaper than other kinds of urban tourism.

In India, this sport has tremendous amount of tourism potential due to availability of large virgin tracts suitable for trekking in Himalayas, Nilgiris, Sahyadris etc. Since this sport also offers lot of flexibility to the tourists in terms of time, budget and fitness levels required, it is likely to attract more and more of them. There are already a large number of tour operators and travel agencies running financially successful trekking operations for both domestic as well as foreign tourists.

Here we would like to give you a list of some of the popular treks in India. In Jammu and Kashmir the area around Srinagar is rich in forests and lakes. This is a trekker's paradise which merges on ahead with Zanskar and the region of Ladakh. Other treks are Amarnath Cave Trek, Chandanwari, Sheshnag, Pisu Hill, Pisu Ghati, Zojibal, Skin to Markha (in Ladakh), Srinagar to Kishtwar and Pahalgam to Lidderwat.

Kumaon and Garhwal, the two hill regions of U.P., offer excellent treks for trekking. In Garhwal the trek to the source of river Ganga—the Gangotri—is most picturesque. Other treks are Joshimath to Kuari, Valley of Flowers, Dodital in Uttarkashi, Yamnotri—the source of river Yamuna, etc.

Almost every area in Himachal has novel trekking routes. A diversity of terrain offers trekking scope for almost everyone, from novice trekkers to professionals. A few popular ones are—from Shimla, via Luhri (85 km. by bus) – Anikhang – Jalorripan, Jibhit to Banjer, Dharamsala, via Bhagrunath to Tirund, Kulu via Jari (35 km by bus), Malane – Naggor to Kulu/Manali, Manali to Rohtang pass, Dalhousie to Khajjar, Manikaran to Pulga-Sara Unga pass etc.

In Sikkim the popular trek is Yukram – Bakhim – Troka-Dzongri – Thergshing – Zemathang.

In Darjeeling you have Maneybhanjyong – Tonglu – Sandekphu – Phalut – Ramman – Rimbiick – Bijanbari as important places for trekking.

For trekking proper clothing, equipment and food is to be carried. This includes a sleeping bag, rucksacks, torches, airpillows, first aid kit, etc. Proper clothing and shoes are also important. The Department of Tourism publication Trekking in the Himalaya provides detailed information in this regard.

ii) Mountaineering: This sport is more specialized and requires more fitness and determination on the part of mountaineers as compared to trekkers. It still offers some flexibility in terms of time budget and the skills required because the nature of climbs differ from each other. Since higher altitudes and more adverse weather conditions are encountered; the requirement of equipment is also much more. This increases the expenses.

In India, the sport is an attractive proposition for tourism purposes because of the large number of climbing challenges available in the Indian Himalayas. It continually attracts both Indian and foreign climbers. In addition, peaks in Himachal are much more easily accessible from roadheads which saves on the time required. Most of the travel agencies dealing with trekking in India also help organize expeditions and do reasonably well financially. A list of some important peaks is provided here. (Source: The Week, Feb. 27, 1994)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of peak</th>
<th>Height (m)</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abi Gamine</td>
<td>7,355</td>
<td>UP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badrinath</td>
<td>7,138</td>
<td>UP</td>
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<td>Brammah I</td>
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<td>Trishul</td>
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<tr>
<td>White Sail’</td>
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iii) Skiing: Skiing is a major tourist attraction in the European Alps and it is quite common for the 'Rich and Famous' to take skiing holidaying in Switzerland and Austria. In fact it is quite fashionable to boast on which trek one has skied. Many businessmen and executives mix pleasure with business at these Ski resorts in Europe. To practice the sport not much equipment is required but the infrastructural costs are very high at the Ski resorts. This is because it is essential to have Ski lifts for reducing the physical effort of climbing up with the skis after every ski run and for shortening the turnaround time.

In India, an additional handicap is high snow line in the Indian Himalaya during summers which limits the ski season to only a few months in winters. The sport is always likely to attract domestic tourists in India but is unlikely that enough foreign tourists would be attracted to this country due to the lack of facilities. The exorbitant cost of infrastructure would also make it financially unviable for private entrepreneurs.

The most well-known places for skiing in India are Auli in Garhwal, Solang Nala in Kullu (Himachal Pradesh), Gulmarg in Kashmir, Narkanda near Shimla and a newly emerging slope at Kufri. Gulmarg in Kashmir is best equipped for all winter sports.

Hell-Skiing is a recent entry in the field of adventure sports. Groups of foreign tourists are taken directly to hotels in the mountain regions like Srinagar in Kashmir and Kulu, Manali and Manikaran in Himachal. From here they are lifted straight to the base of the snow slopes by a large helicopter. Again a small helicopter takes a group of three to four skiers with a guide to top of the slope from where they enjoy skiing. Safety norms are followed strictly and the guides have expertise in the field. Unlike many regions of the world where skiing can be done in selective season only, the Himalayan peaks can be used throughout the year.

You can obtain information on heli-skiing from:
Manager Tourism Cell,
Air India,
5th Floor, Hansalaya,
15 Barakhamba Road,
New Delhi-110 001

UP may be read as Uttarakhand.
iy) Rock Climbing: This is a fast emerging sport in India. The sport involves climbing straight flat rocks under guidance. The activity needs little equipment and can be performed in many areas which have rock formations. This is being undertaken in and around Delhi, on the Western Ghats, around Manali in Himachal Pradesh, on the Bangalore-Mysore highway, Mount Abu in Rajasthan, Garhwal hills and in Sonemarg in Kashmir. Most of the Tourism Departments of the States are promoting this in a big way. Haryana, Chandigarh, Maharashtra, Karnataka are a few examples of this kind. Many students are taking to rock climbing as an adventure sport and hobby.

13.5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF TOUR OPERATORS

Adventure tourism differs from ordinary tourism as it exposes tourists to some risks and generally takes them into regions which offer minimal facilities and comforts. Tour operators in adventure tours have to necessarily shoulder additional responsibilities towards comforts, well being and safety of the tourists. Lack of adequate communication facilities tend to increase the level of responsibilities and makes their job even more difficult. In addition, adventure tours are operated in wilderness or remote areas where ecological balance is fragile and can be disturbed easily by ingress of tourists in large numbers. It is the responsibility of tour operators to ensure that environmental damage is kept to the minimum and the areas are not littered to such an extent so as to make it impossible for other tourists to visit these areas.

The responsibilities of tour operators in adventure tourism can be listed as follows:

a) Provision of professionally competent guides who are familiar with local terrain, people and their customs.

b) To provide reliable transportation facilities up to the destination for tourists and equipment whether motorised, animal transport or men to carry these things.

c) Provision of clean, hygienic accommodation with a regard for sanitation which can withstand natural weather hazards whether huddled or tented.

d) To ensure that enough care is taken for disposal of waste material and avoidance of littering the camp area.

e) Minimise environmental damage by carrying along provisions which are biodegradable and can be disposed of easily by burning/burial etc.

f) To ensure availability of enough trained manpower for safety and minimising risks to the tourists.

g) Provision of sufficient back up of manpower, equipment, communication etc. to ensure search of any endangered tourist/crew.

Check Your Progress 3

1) Which of the Aerial Adventure Sports have a tourism potential in India and why?

2) What is White Water Rafting?
3) Between Mountaineering and Trekking which is a more popular sport and why?

13.6 LET US SUM UP

Adventure and sports have a tremendous potential in tourism. But not all such sports can be developed. There are financial constraints for infrastructural development and the numbers of takers for all are not many. Some like trekking, rock climbing, boating, horse riding, angling, etc. are gaining more popularity because of low costs and easy access.

The Unit has attempted to familiarise you with basic information. For further details you will have to contact various agencies like: Tourism Department Offices, Mountaineering, Rock Climbing or Trekking Clubs/Associations and Tour Operators who specialise in such areas.

13.7 KEY WORDS

Angling : fishing
Surfing : sport of being carried over surf to shore on boards
Winching : reel of fishing rod

13.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

1) Adventure sports are attracting large number of tourists and it is a new area in tourism. For details read Sec. 13.2.
2) See Sec. 13.2.

Check Your Progress 2

1) At hill stations horses and ponies are used for joy rides and carrying people and goods to difficult places. See Sub-sec. 13.3.2.
2) Bicycle provides a leisurely sightseeing with pleasures of cycling. See Sub-sec. 13.3.2.
3) See Sub-secs. 13.3.1 and 13.3.2.

Check Your Progress 3

1) Sky diving, hang gliding and para sailing. See Sub-sec. 13.4.1.
2) White Water Rafting is played on lakes etc. See Sub-sec. 13.4.2.
3) Trekking is more popular because it involves less vigorous training and even novices can try it without training. See Sub-sec. 13.4.3.