

## Exploration of Potential for Development of Dark Tourism in India

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### Abstract

Tourism is associated with words such as leisure, happiness and enjoyment. Tourism industry provides services which give some sort of leisure to the people. The preferences of tourists have evolved over the years. With people now focusing more on alternative tourism, rather than traditional mass tourism, development of Niche Tourism is imperative. Although India has shown much of a progress in developing niche tourism, one particular segment is still untouched i.e. Dark Tourism. Dark Tourism has gained immense popularity in 21<sup>st</sup> century all around the world. Changing taste and preferences of the tourists and development of concept of special interest tourism has forced the policymakers of tourism worldwide to incorporate this segment in their mission and vision. Several war-torn, poor countries which could not attract tourists because of lack of tourism enablers have started welcoming tourists for dark tourism as they enjoy competitive advantage. Indian tourism industry is yet to test its water before offering dark tourism as a product. A product could only be successful if the customer thinks it has capability to fulfil the expectations. If the customers have no knowledge about the product, however good it might be, it will fail. This paper attempts to address the potential of dark tourism in India by seeking the perception of general public on dark tourism and then addressing the problems that could be faced while developing the dark tourism segment in India. At last, suggestions are provided which could boost up the development of dark tourism product.

**Keywords:** *Dark Tourism, Special Interest Tourism, Multiplier, Destination incubation.*

JEL classification: L83

### **Dark Tourism: Concept and Sites**

As the sun begins to set, an unusual urgency, commotion, chaos is visible at the Bhangarh fort. Hundreds of young men and women experience adrenaline rush when they hear chilling stories about the history of fort from the locals. At a distance of about 750 Kms in Amritsar, Punjab, another group of visitor tours the infamous Jallianwala Bagh. The guide and the monument itself speak about how the cruel British Empire forces massacred hundreds of innocent Indians who were there to celebrate their festival. Some 2800 Kms to the south east of Amritsar is Andaman and Nicobar Island, which is home to Cellular Jail, a political prison set up by British to torture Indian freedom fighters. It is one of the top most tourism destinations in the island. The agony of history has become a tourism attraction now a day. All of the places mentioned above do not fit into the domain of what we generally associate with tourism, yet they are gaining immense popularity as tourism destination. These places seem to attract people from different age groups for different purposes. The aim of the visit to any of these places is to feel the power of faith, hope and a belief that through struggles once can overcome the problems in life. Such type of tourism is known as "Dark Tourism". The term 'Dark Tourism' was coined in by Lennon and Foley in 1996, faculty members of the Department of Hospitality, Tourism & Leisure Management at Glasgow Caledonian University. It is defined as tourism which involves travelling to places which have been associated with death and tragedy in the form of natural disasters, acts of violence or crimes against humanity. Although the concept of dark tourism is new, increase in numbers of tourists shows encouraging trends for the market.

India has covered leaps and bounds in tourism segments that were considered to be niche in the last decade. Certain of the segments which were niche such as medical tourism, are now the strengths of tourism sector in the country (Shekhar, kumar, & attri, 2017). But there are still some segments which are immensely popular worldwide but are yet to be tested in India. Dark Tourism is one of those untouched sectors. Developing Dark Tourism will be fruitful for the tourism industry in India. It will not only attract the foreign tourists, but will also help in retaining the domestic tourists going abroad for experiencing it. With the incoming of tourists, economic development of the destinations could be ensured. This would lessen the burden on government for doing the same. Also, if such destinations are located in the states which do not have much tourism potential because of geographical limitations, then development of dark tourism would let them enjoy the economic benefits tourism industry provides. To develop Dark Tourism, proper planning is a must and it should be done in a systematised manner. First, one must find out the

sites which are serving for the cause world wide. Second, similar sites should be identified within India and their history should be carefully explored. Third, a study should be conducted to assess

tourists attitude towards dark tourism. Fourth, Strategies should be formulated on the basis of results.

### **Famous Dark Tourism Destinations around the World-**

Human history is full of misadventures. From large scale natural calamities to genocide, wars and epidemic spread, the civilisations have witnessed several unfortunate events. The sites at which these tragedies occurred, now serve as Dark Tourism destinations across the world. There is no need to look deep into the history, by just reverting 200 years, several sites could be identified which could be developed for the said purpose. Dark Tourism is not a new typology of tourism outside India. It has been effectively developed in countries such as Japan and United States to ignite the feeling of peace and patriotism in the heart of younger generation. From multiple studies, extensive literature reviews, website articles and history books, following places were identified from different parts of the world which are famous dark tourism destination-

- Auschwitz Concentration Camp, Poland- A network of concentration camp operated by Nazi's to execute Jewish population. About 1.5 million tourists visited these camps and museum in the year 2014. There are About 300 licensed guides-educators, trained by the International Centre for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust, helping visitors to get to know the history of Auschwitz.
- Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan- The two cities were destroyed in 1945 when US dropped atomic bombs killing thousands of people. These are considered to be the darkest places around the world. Thousands died in the bombings and more were injured. The scars of bombings are still visible in the life of the people there. The main attraction for dark tourists is the Atomic Bomb Museum along with the peace memorial hall.
- Ground Zero, New York City, USA- It is said to be the most infamous dark tourism site of recent times. At this place, in an attack on 9/11, twin towers were destroyed leading to death of around 3000 people. People visit this place as a kind of pilgrimage from the day the area was opened after the tragedy. Since its opening in 2011, the memorial has attracted around 30 million people and Museum has attracted around 8 million visitors since its opening in 2014. Visitors not only from US, but from different countries of world have visited the place.
- Cu Chi Tunnels, Saigon, Vietnam- The Cu Chi tunnels were the location of several military campaigns during the Vietnam War, and were the Viet Cong's base of operations

for the Têt Offensive in 1968. A visit to what remains of the Cu Chi Tunnels offers a poignant reminder of the hardships of war.

- Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Phnom Penh, Cambodia- The site is a former high school which was used as Security Prison 21 (S-21) by the Khmer Rouge regime. Here, Human skulls are stacked neatly in a stupa, a round-shaped monument surrounded by mass graves. Thousands of people were beat to death and buried in the fields near the camps. This place attracts on an average around 1000 people per day. This has caused several problems as tourist damage the monuments and the nearby area and efforts are limited for its preservation.
- Devil's Island, French Guiana- Opened in 1852, Devil's island was a famous French prison used for torturing and killing the political prisoners in France.
- The Zone of Alienation, Chernobyl, Ukraine- It was the place where nuclear explosion took place, leading to evacuation of place by thousands of people.

### **Destinations famous for Dark Tourism in India**

India has been blessed with history of civilisations, kingdoms and empires. These historical sites have been popular tourist destinations since long time. But, there are historical destinations which have been associated with death, tragedy and mysterious fortunes. These destinations lack tourists visit because of stigma of tragedy associated with them. There are sites which can be labelled as dark tourism destinations because of some recent human interventions such as terrorism attacks or some natural calamity like earthquakes. In India, several locations are identified which could serve or are serving the purpose of Dark Tourism. These destinations are as follows-

- Bhangarh Fort, Rajasthan- The ruin remains of what was once an astonishing palace. Although nothing has been confirmed historically, rumours and folklore have it that the entire village was destroyed over night because of the curse and the fort since then is haunted. It has gained attraction of tourists since the last decade.
- Kuldhara, Rajasthan- Kuldhara was an establishment of Brahmins. What lies today are the ruins of the once flourishing society. The reasons provided for the decline of the village differs but local legends have provided much needed publicity to attract tourists. It is believed that the residents cursed this place and since then despite efforts being made it can not be re established. In 2015, the Rajasthan government decided to actively develop the village as a tourist spot. The project is being undertaken as a public-private

partnership with Jindal Steel Works. The plan includes establishment of visitor facilities such as a cafe, a lounge, a folk-dance performance area, night-stay cottages and shops.

- The Residency, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh- Residency symbolises the freedom struggle of India and is considered to be place where the famous siege of Lucknow took place. The ruins serve as sight to remember the sacrifice of the brave who laid down their life while fighting for their freedom. Although it is not developed as a major tourist attraction, but local and domestic tourists often visit it on recommendations. The cemetery at the nearby ruined church has the graves of 2000 men, women and children. A light and sound show to display the history of the Residency is also played each evening.
- Jallianwala Bagh, Punjab- It is known for the massacre that took place in 1919 when Colonel Dyer ordered the police to fire upon a peaceful gathering of Sikhs who were there to celebrate Baisakhi. The government figures estimated death of 379 people and around 1200 wounded. This incident created a feeling of resentment for the British and strengthened the freedom struggle of Indians. Today, it is one of the major tourist attractions in the city of Amritsar.
- Cellular Jail, Andaman & Nicobar Islands- This place was used as political prison to torture freedom fighters during struggle of Independence. Although the island has various spots for tourism purpose, it is still a must visit place in every tourist list. People visit such place to know about the struggles of freedom fighters.
- Union Carbide plant, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh-In 1984, a gas leak from a Union Carbide factory led to one of the largest industrial disaster in modern era. Around 25000 people have lost their life due to the gas leak since 1984. Madhya Pradesh Government has planned to convert the plant into heritage site and aims to build a museum, library showcasing incidents related to the tragedy.
- Bhuj, Gujarat- About 10% of the population of this city in Gujarat died in the devastating earthquake in 2001. Once regarded as the centre for heritage tourism in the state, the city suffered huge blows because of the tragedy. The recovery was slow and till date it has not been fully redeveloped. A memorial park was built in remembrance of the deceased and is now a destination for purpose of Dark Tourism.
- Taj Palace Hotel, Mumbai, Maharashtra- This is relatively a new destination which was victim of a terrorist attack in November 2008. Bullet marks are still visible in the walls of the hotel. These attacks united the country as a whole and if planned properly, this place could be developed as a good dark tourism destination.

- Wagha Border Crossing Point and Ceremonies, Punjab- The border between India and Pakistan showcases every evening ceremony where troops from both the nations on their side of border march and display their might. The beating retreat ceremony has become a major tourism attraction in India which attracts foreign tourists as well as domestic tourists in large numbers. The crossing point is the remembrance of the partition of India into India and Pakistan which caused millions to leave their homelands and succumb to the hate.

## **Literature Review**

The availability of literature on dark tourism is limited. This is because not many countries have focused on dark tourism as they do on other segments such as religious, medical, cultural, leisure tourism. The literature is negligible if one talks about India. Walter(2009)studied the dimensions of psychology and sociology with respect to Dark Tourism and argued for mediation between different ideologies for an effective promotion of tourism. The study also acknowledged the role of media in promoting dark tourism and the emotional aspect of humans which necessitate the development of dark tourism as a product.Niemela (2010) examined out which factors motivate tourists to visit dark attractions. The key characteristics of dark tourists were identified and compared with the heritage tourists. Tourist experiences in dark tourism were also studied. The Maslow's model of Motivation was moulded to find out the motivational needs of dark tourists.Bittner (2011)acknowledged that although dark tourism sites have existed since the ancient time, yet the demand for the product is scarce. The researcher tries to determine whether dark tourism fits into the purpose of religious or heritage tourism or not. The study also highlights upon the economic benefits from promoting such tourism in Croatia. The study throws a light on the methods to develop and promote dark tourism products and the need for more quantitative research on the subject.(Verma, 2013)studied the initiatives taken b the authorities with respect to dark tourism in India and what all could be done for the same. Different sites that serve the purpose were identified and it was studied if they could be developed as tourism product or not. The study concluded by recognising the need for studying the phycology of Indian tourists before marketing dark tourism.(Podoshen, 2013)examined the reasons for which people venture into dark tourism. Various factors that motivate the tourists to go for dark tourism and the relationship between different art forms and dark tourisms were established.(ROBINSON, 2015)studied the motivations and activities of tourists at the different dark tourism sites. He concluded in his study that the major reason for people visiting dark tourism sites is Education and Curiosity. Also the behaviour pattern of tourists at dark sites was

compared to the behaviour of light tourists and striking contrast was found in terms of collecting artefacts, souvenir. The study also investigated for the issues in defining the term Dark Tourism.(Jeffrey, Vivek, Jason, Susan, & Jin, 2015)discussed the rapidly increasing fascination with dystopian dark tourism. The study was conducted in three specific destinations where

tourists engage with both death and dystopia. The researchers presented a model of dystopian dark tourism that integrates dark aesthetics, simulation, emotional contagion and the current global cultural fascination with both utopia and dystopia. The study concluded that the sudden increase in such tourism is due to the increasing insecurity about death, society and its relationship to violence and cultural production.(Fonseca, abra, & Silva, 2016)studied the typologies in dark tourism including war/battlefield tourism, Disaster tourism, Ghost tourism, Cemetery tourism etc. the study talks about the conflicting attitude of humans towards death which might affect the acceptability of dark tourism as a tourism product. It also talks for the emotional and psychological impact which it might cause to the persons visiting these places.(Dar & Reshi, 2016)explored the possibility of developing the dark tourism I the state of Jammu & Kashmir. The study concluded that dark tourism has negligible contribution in the GDP of the state. The study bats for effective marketing by identifying the tourists needs and developing the product accordingly. The study also touches upon the aspect related to marketing of such places as it involves certain ethical issues.(Singh, Kaur, & Singh, 2016)studied about the potential of dark tourism in India and identified possible challenges they find affect the Dark Tourism in India. The study concluded that lack of awareness is major reason for this sector not being exploited properly. The government has its own reasons for which it does not focus on this unconventional tourism.(Yan, Zhang, Zhang, Lu, & Guo, 2016)focused on the motivation-experience relationship and the regulatory function of emotional reaction of dark tourism. The study also identified implications of dark tourism. The study concluded that tourists' emotional reactions influence more heavily emotional tourist experiences than cognitive experiences do. The curious visitors are likely to engage cognitively by learning about the incident or related issues.(Light, 2017)conducted a literature review of articles on Dark tourism and Thanatourism and concluded that dark tourism can not be easily differentiated from heritage tourism. The study focused on evolution of dark tourism and the future prospects and challenges that lie ahead for it. The study also examines the characteristics of dark tourists in terms of the motives for visiting such places. The study emphasized upon the need for better understanding of dark tourists so that dark tourism product could be developed to its full potential.(Lennon, 2017)examined whether there exists any gap between theoretical aspect and application of Dark Tourism principles. The study also points out the dilemma of ethics and moral values while promoting the dark tourism

(specifically Thanatourism). The study emphasizes upon the need to change the attitude surrounding the dark tourism destinations.

## Research Objectives

In this paper attempt has been made to assess whether dark tourism could be developed as a tourism product in India. Further, the challenges that the dark tourism industry would face are addressed and necessary steps that should be taken to address these issues are discussed. The paper titled “Exploration of Potential for Development of Dark Tourism in India” seeks to address the following objectives-

- To study the attitude of tourists and public towards dark tourism in India.
- To locate famous sites that could be developed as dark tourism Places in India.
- To suggest measures that would help in development of dark tourism.

## Research Methodology

It refers to the process by which data is identified, collected, summarised, processed and analysed to solve the research problem. The methodology part in the paper has been divided into parts- data collection and data analysis.

**Data Collection-** For the study data has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources include reports from Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, World Travel and Tourism Council reports, UNWTO reports, Journals and articles published online, Electronic Media and from relevant literature. Primary data was collected by conducting a survey on 100 tourists of different age groups.

**Data analysis-** The data obtained from interviews was then run on SPSS; Nvivo 11 and MS Excel tools were used on it to carry out necessary tests.

## Analysis and Findings of the survey

After carrying out the analysis, the following results related to various aspects of dark tourism were obtained. The findings are in accordance with the objectives of the research paper. The following results were obtained for the various questions-

### Knowledge of Dark tourism

When asked about their knowledge for the term dark tourism, the following responses were recorded. A 5 point Likert scale was developed for this purpose with 0 means no knowledge of the term and 5 mean complete knowledge.

**Table 1 Knowledge of Dark tourism**

<i>Response</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>
0	42
1	12
2	14
3	19
4	10
5	03
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Drawn from primary data

Thus, it is very clear from the responses that majority of people lack information about the dark tourism. Around 68% of the sample had no or very little knowledge about dark tourism.

#### **Name of the Dark tourism places visited**

When enquired about the destinations the tourists have visited as dark tourism sites, following responses were recorded-

**Table 2 Name of the destinations visited by the tourists**

<i>Name of the Place</i>	<i>Type of place</i>	<i>No of Responses</i>
Bhangarh Quila	Haunted fort	08
Cellular Jail	Former prison	03
Jallianwala bagh	War Memorial	06
PuranaQuila	Fort	01
Humayun Tomb	Graveyard	01
Residency	War memorial/ Battlefield site	07
Nepal/ Bhuj	A Place where any Natural Calamity had occurred	01
Others (Hijli detention camp, Taj Mahal, Forts)	A place of holocaust, Museum Related With War and Death	11

Source: Drawn from primary data

Famous destinations like Bhangarh Fort in Rajasthan, Cellular jail in Andaman & Nicobar Island, Jallianwala Bagh in Punjab and Residency in Lucknow are places which have been

visited by many of the respondents. These places are the ones which we identified from various secondary sources. Apart from these places, various forts and tombs were

mentioned by many respondents. Hijli detention camp, golden temple, Puranaquila were others places mentioned.

### **How did you come to know about the place?**

Knowledge about a place can come from various sources. In the era of digitalization, it is not a difficult task to search for information. But people also rely on recommendations from known people to avoid uncertainty in the visit. Respondents provided the following information with respect to their source of information about destination-

**Table 3 Source of information about destination**

<b>Particulars</b>	<b>No of Responses</b>
Friends or family	28
Social media	10
Television or movie	5
Academic survey	5
Travelling agencies	1

Source: Drawn from primary data

Recommendations from friends or family remain the topmost source of information about such places. Social media acquires second spot in informing people about such places. Interestingly, travel agencies did not appear even in top 3 sources of information. One reason could be that many Indians manage their trips on their own. They do not hire a proper travel agent for the same. Other sources like television shows or movies and academic survey are among the sources of information.

### **What was your Duration of the stay at that place?**

The duration of stay at such places is very important for the policymakers. Economic contribution by tourists is no secret. Tourism not only impacts the economic development of an area by providing employment opportunities and infrastructure, the spending done by the tourists at such places is livelihood for locals. As per various online traveling agencies and previous studies, a budget traveller spends around Rs 2000 per day in India. If we multiply it by various tourism multipliers such as spending multiplier or employment multiplier of

tourism, it would show the economic contribution that dark tourism development can lead to.

**Table 4 Average Duration of stay at dark tourism sites**

Duration of stay	No of Responses
Less than 3 days	31
3-7 Days	12
7-14 Days	03
Above 14 Days	01

Source: Drawn from primary data

The responses show that the average length of stay at dark tourism sites is less than 3 days. This provides the policymaker a challenge to increase the duration to a certain level so as to reap the gains from tourism industry.

**What was the purpose of the visiting such a place?**

**Table 5 Source of information about destination**

Particulars	No of Responses
Adventure	15
Curiosity	14
Education	10
Remembrance	01
Artefacts	00
Empathy	00
Impulsive Decision	08

The survey reflects upon the changing attitude of Indian tourists. Earlier, where it was considered that tourism is for enjoyment and leisure oriented people now a day are more curiosity driven and seek adventure. It can be seen that many of those who visited such places were either seeking adventure or were curious to know about such place. A visit to such place for educational reason is also a reason to travel. To explore more about the place, lifestyles of local around it, many people visit the places several researchers travel to these places. A curious finding was that 16.7% people made an impulsive decision to travel to these places. This behaviour is different from what tourists have exhibited in India. Indians always plan their visits months before. Thus, changing behavioural pattern of Indian tourists could heap huge potential benefits to unconventional tourism prospects.

**Do you think Dark Tourism has potential in India?**

For a product to be successful, the perception of its prospective customers towards it must be positive. Every effort of policymakers will go in vain unless, people believe that their product has some potential.

**Table 6 Dark Tourism has potential in India**

Particulars	No of Responses
Yes	57
No	06
Can't say	37

Source: Drawn from primary data

A majority of people believe that dark Tourism could be developed as tourism product in India. Only 6% people believed that this type of tourism will not attract many tourists in India. A major proportion (38%) people were not sure about their choice. This might be because of the reason that they themselves don't know much about the concept.

**Do you think social media and movies play a role in promoting dark tourism?****Table 7 Impact of Social Media and Movies in promoting Dark Tourism**

Impact	No of Responses
1	06
2	09
3	31
4	31
5	21

Source: Drawn from primary data

A staggering 84% of the population agreed that social media plays a very important role in promotion of dark tourism. This also supports the claim that many of our respondents have acquired the information from social media only. Many people follow various pages on social media explicitly for getting to know about such places and they plan their travel on the basis of recommendations given there. As not only youth, but middle and old age people are getting tech savvy, they spend more time on social media also. Thus social media could prove to be a better channel of promotion for dark Tourism. Schindler's List, considered to be one of the best movies ever made in Hollywood, is based on holocaust of Jews in the hands of Nazis. The movie promoted the adverse conditions which prisoners were facing and this has boosted the dark tourism in Germany.

**Do you recall any initiative by authorities with respect to promotion of Dark Tourism?****Table 8 Knowledge about government initiative for Dark tourism**

Particulars	Frequency
Yes	26
No	70

Source: Drawn from primary data

A vast proportion of respondents do not remember any step taken by the government or authorities in respect of dark tourism promotion. All those who replied positive could not name the initiative or the initiative they named was not specifically for dark tourism promotion. This clearly shows the lack of interest authorities has shown particularly towards this niche tourism. It should be researched upon why the tourism promotion boards have been reluctant for so long in undertaking though unconventional but exciting tourism.

**What are the various reasons hampering growth of Dark Tourism in India?**

On running the responses on Nvivo 11 software and conducting a word frequency analysis, it was found out that around 39% respondents cited lack of knowledge as the main reason for restricted growth of dark tourism in India. This lack of knowledge is due to lack of research about the topic and also because of lack of interest shown by the stakeholders in developing it as a proper tourism product. Other major reasons were lack of promotion by the government, which is a major attribute to the lack of knowledge among people, and psychology of Indians to stay away from place of death. This lack of interest to visit such places is attributed to human psychology to avoid pain and death. Also, lack of infrastructure development at such places also limits the flow of tourist to such places. Lack of infrastructure might also be because of lack of demand, so if demand increases, infrastructure can be developed and maintained easily.

**Conclusion & Suggestions**

Thus, it can be concluded that Dark Tourism is much unknown among the Indian tourists. This is mainly because of lack of desire of the authorities to develop strategies for promotion of dark tourism in the country. India has destinations as well as infrastructure to support dark tourism. Also, people acknowledge that this type of tourism has potential to be successful. This is very important for policymakers as optimistic view of tourists is necessary for the same. What is required is a long term plan or a vision through which Dark tourism could be incorporated as one

of the emerging niche tourism trend in the country. Following are the few suggestions which the authorities may consider for development of Dark Tourism in the country-

- **Increasing average Length of Stay**

Average length of stay of tourists is limited at such places. Thus, the agencies must focus on increasing the average length of stay to tourists. The more they stay, the higher they spend and more is the economic development of area.

- **Destination incubation**

New artificial destinations must be prepared or built from scratch to promote dark tourism. Destinations which have ruined over the years or because of some calamity in recent years should be prepared artificially to give same experience to the tourists. The policymakers should identify the destinations which are raw, unexplored and can be developed into proper dark tourism destinations. Firstly, the potential of these destinations should be identified with respect to the dark tourism index. Then commercial potential of these destinations should be sought. If everything is favourable, then plans should be made to fully develop and promote dark tourism in these areas.

- **Making destination market ready**

To ensure that these destinations perform at least as good as the other niche tourism sectors in the area, required amenities and facilities must be provided. Proper infrastructure should be developed while preserving the emotions associated with the place. Locals who have knowledge about the place should be trained to become the guides. This way the problem of unemployment in the country could be addressed. Also, as the place is being branded as a dark tourism destination, markets should reflect the incident or tragedy which has happened at that place. Artefacts, images, paintings should depict the trauma that was caused and should appeal to the emotions of the tourists.

- **Promoting dark tourism among domestic and local tourist**

As emotions play a vital role in Dark Tourism, authorities can promote dark tourism among the communities and locals whose ancestors were affected during the tragedy. It will be one of the ways to ensure that sufficient numbers of tourists visit the destination and infrastructural development could be carried out in the destination. It would also help in solving the “tourist-infrastructure” dilemma, which every under developed destination faces. Schools and colleges

should be instructed in the area to have at least one visit to such places for educational purpose. More focus should be on inviting domestic tourists rather than foreign tourists to such places.

- **Effective use of destination branding**

The biggest hindrance in promotion of Dark Tourism in the moral and ethical dilemma associated with selling of death. How to market death is one of the major issues which authorities have faced and it has compelled them to avoid including it in the key areas of tourism. With the use of effective brand positioning, this problem can be solved. Firstly, an image should be created for the destination and then that image should be effectively communicated to the desired audiences. Commercials used should be intriguing and should appeal to one's emotions. Advertising should not be such that it causes trauma or makes audience believe that they are getting emotionally exploited.

Apart from these, respondents suggested measures that as per them would help in development of dark tourism in India. As this concept is relatively new, not many states have promoted this type of tourism. Some states can take first mover advantage by developing dark tourism and attracting more tourists. For this, they need to identify the dark tourism sites in their state, develop a basic infrastructure near it, and develop an effective marketing programme to promote the place. Information about dark tourism sites and its importance should be spread by government with the help of educational institutions. Feeling of nationalism and patriotism could be promoted with the use of dark tourism. Sites such as Wagha border, Hotel Taj can be used for this purpose. Social media or digital innovations might play an important role in promotion of dark tourism in India. Social media should be used to advertise about destination. Documentaries, short films could be developed to spread the information as well as ignite the urge to visit such places.

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