

**STATE POLICY TOWARDS THE PROMOTION OF  
TOURISM FROM BRITISH RESIDENCY UP TO THE  
EMERGENCE OF MILITANCY IN JAMMU & KASHMIR**

**Mushtaq Ahmad Itoo**\*

**Abstract:**

The State of Jammu and Kashmir played a constructive role towards the promotion of tourism, especially from the period when the British Residency was established. The roads which are the lifelines of tourism were constructed by the State in collaboration with the British Resident, such as Jhelum Valley Cart Road, Banihal Cart Road, etc. Besides this the State also constructed large number of guest houses and hotels to accommodate the growing number of tourists. Moreover large number of tents and camping sites were provided to tourists. In addition to this the tourist resorts of the state were time and again repaired by the authorities.

**Key words:** British Resident, Visitors Bureau, hotels, houseboat, Dal Lake.

\* Department of History, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, 190006

Tourism does not exist in isolation. It has certain basic components without which it cannot operate. Although it consists of various components four of these are considered to be basic which are as<sup>1</sup> follows:

- (a) Accessibility
- (b) Accommodation
- (c) Transport
- (d) Attraction

**a) Accessibility:** Accessibility is a very crucial factor as it is a mean by which a tourist can reach the area where attractions are located. The tourism products which are linked by a network of efficient roads receive the maximum number of tourists. The distance factor also plays an important role in determining a tourist choice of destination. Longer distances cost much in the way of expenses on travel as compared to short distances. Clear directions at roads, stations, shopping areas, theatres and other places of attraction make a visit of a tourist very comfortable and memorable<sup>2</sup>.

**b) Accommodation:** Accommodation is very basic to any tourist destination. The term is loosely used to cover food and lodging. Accommodation may in itself be an important tourist attraction. In fact, a large number of tourists visit a particular tourist region or a town simply because there is a first class luxury hotel or a resort which provides excellent services and facilities. It has been seen that the tourism can be firmly established, when all the infrastructure of accommodation is maintained and updated to meet all the categories of tourists.

**c) Transport:** Another important component of tourism is transport. It holds a key to tourism. Transport network is to tourism what veins are to the body system. A tourist, in order to get to his destination, has to travel, and therefore some mode of transport is necessary to make possible this travel. The total transportation of any tourist could be divided into two stages<sup>3</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Jain, Yashodhara, *"Tourism Development: Problems and Prospects"* A.P.H Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 2008, P. 03.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., P. 05.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, P. 51

i) From the originating country (State in case of domestic tourists) to the visiting country (State) and vice versa.

ii) From place to place within the visiting country or state.

**d) Attraction:** Attractions and amenities are the most important in tourism industry as these are the bases to tourism. Unless these are there, the tourists will not be motivated to go to a particular place. However, since interests and tastes of tourists vary widely, they might choose from a wide range of attractions available at various destinations all over the world. The classification of the tourist attraction can be done in the following manner<sup>4</sup>:

i) Cultural:- Sites and areas of archaeological interest, Historical Buildings and Monuments, Museums, Cultural and Educational Institutions, Religious Places

ii) Traditional: - National Festivals, Arts and Handicrafts, Music, Folklore, Native life and Customs, Fairs and Exhibitions.

iii) Scenic: - National Parks and Wild life, Flora and Fauna, Hill Resorts.

iv) Entertainment:- Sports, Amusement and Recreation Parks, Cinema and Theatres, Clubs, Restaurants

v) Other Attractions: - Climate, Health Resort etc.

Besides the above mentioned components, there are other factors which help tourism industry to flourish. Hospitality is one such factor. A friendly and appreciative attitude on the part of the residents of the host city will make the visitor feel at home and help him enjoy his stay better. A satisfied tourist is an asset and helps promote a destination in a much more effective way than any tourist promotional campaign or publicity.

Establishment of information bureau is another important step in the direction of welcoming a visitor. Also trained and competent guides familiar with the tourist's language are essential. A guide provides correct information, and he is the link between a tourist and the industry and he himself is a key concept in the tourism industry.

If we look at the history of the Dogras, it is evident that they, in collaboration with the Britshers always initiated steps in order to strengthen the above mentioned components. It was in the year

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, P. 04

1846, when all the territories that constitute the present State of Jammu and Kashmir were welded into one political unit under Dogra rule. This rule, lasting about a hundred years, saw the stirrings of modernism in the State<sup>5</sup>. It was during the period of Dogras that the fame of Jammu and Kashmir as a beautiful land, with a great cultural heritage, reached to different corners of the cosmos. The State acquired much significance with the dawn of the British Empire on the political map of India. The close connection between the Dogra rulers and Britshers in india is the notable feature for giving boost to the travel trade in the State as large number of Britshers started visiting the State of Jammu and Kashmir especially Valley of Kashmir<sup>6</sup>. The contribution of Dogra rulers was commendable as they took various steps for the construction of roads, improvement of transport and communication facilities, development of tourism products and increasing accommodation facilities. For instance, a path-way between Jammu and Srinagar was built; telephone connection for the first time was set-up between Jammu and Srinagar, the 'Tonga Trip' was replaced by motor car and also aircraft landed at Srinagar airport in 1925 for the first time. These steps dynamited the hurdles and difficulties of travel and the State was thrown open to the ordinary tourists<sup>7</sup>. The State especially the Valley of Kashmir, which had remained in seclusion for centuries, now came into close and direct contact with the rest of India. During this period, State's Foreign Department was responsible for the look-after of the tourists.

With the development of motor transport and air travel, the number of tourists went on increasing and people began to attach themselves, for their living, with the tourists. The handicraft dealers, artisans, house-boat owners began to rely on the influx of tourists for the sale of their products and services. The increase in the number of tourists encouraged the State to establish a 'Visitor's Bureau' (V.B) for the purpose of providing the necessary facilities to the tourists, for the promotion of tourist traffic and for keeping a record of visitors<sup>8</sup>. The Bureau

<sup>5</sup> Mattoo, Neerja & Ali, Suraiya, "*Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh-The Trefoil Land*" Spantech Publishers Pvt. Ltd. , England , 1989 , P. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Mirza, N.A, "*Management of Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir*" Dilpreet Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000, P. 49.

<sup>7</sup> Shafi Mahmuda, "*Tourism Dynamics in a Developing Economy*" Gulshan Publishers, Srinagar, 1994, P. 98.

<sup>8</sup> Mirza, N.A, Op.cit, 6, P. 50

functioned under a director and a Gazetted officer, thus it was for the first time in the tourist history of the State that a separate agency was set up<sup>9</sup>. The industry was thus recognized as a commercial proposition and tourist statistics was for the first time kept in a formal manner.

**States role in the construction of Roads:** - The construction of roads greatly depends upon the physical features and the financial resources of a country. But the State of Jammu and Kashmir was unfortunately placed in a very disadvantageous position in this respect. It was on the whole mountainous and this fact made the building of roads both costly and difficult. There was also the problem not only of building bridges and culverts over the numerous rivers and streams, but also protecting them from land-slides and floods. Snowfall also in the higher regions during the winter was liable to create traffic blockade for days together. The result of all these natural difficulties was that transportation and travelling in the State was very difficult and the consuming. Up to the last decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century there was hardly any good road within the State or connecting it with the outside world.

The absence of adequate transport facilities in the State was first keenly felt when Kashmir was hit by a severe famine<sup>10</sup> during 1877-79. It was then realized that had there been a good road connecting Kashmir with the Punjab, the sufferings of the people could have been greatly mitigated by the importation of grain from there. Also at this time, the Government of India was greatly alarmed by the Russian advance in Central Asia<sup>11</sup>. This realization soon took a practical shape and the first great step in this direction was taken in 1881, when the construction of a cart road from Baramulla to Kohala was commenced by the State Government.

### 1) The Jhelum Valley Road:

The Jhelum valley road being a cart road, 196 miles long, on which one could travel in one day from Rawalpindi to Srinagar by motor car, and in two days by Tonga, was most commonly used

<sup>9</sup> Directorate of Tourism, J & K Govt., Srinagar, 'Record File', No. 17 A.

<sup>10</sup> Chohan, A. Singh, "Communications and Transport in the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir (1846-1947)" Radha Krishan Publishers, Jammu, 1998, P. 27.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. P.28.

by travelers. The road was started in the year 1881 and by 1888 it was completed between Kohala (the last boundary post of the erstwhile Kashmir State) and Domel (a place where Jhelum and Kishanganga rivers join, now in POK). The road from Domel to Baramulla was completed with the efforts of Col Parry Nisbet, who was appointed the British resident in A.D 1888. He fixed a two year deadline and appointed Speddings Mitchell and Co. as contractors<sup>12</sup>. Capable engineer Mr. Alkinson was brought in with hundreds of Pathan and Ahghan coolies for its construction. It was with the support of State government that the road was completed on fixed time in the year 1890 and was opened to wheeled traffic in the month of September by Maharaja Pratap Singh. It took two years from 1895 to 1897 to extend it to Srinagar. There was one *serai* at Gojra village near Muzaffarabad and another above Uri at the village of Paranpilla<sup>13</sup>. This picturesque road was easy to travel, as there were no formidable mountain ridges to cross. Following were the stages of this route to Kashmir from Rawalpindi to Srinagar<sup>14</sup>:

- i) Murre
- ii) Dewal
- iii) Kohala
- iv) Dulai
- v) Domel
- vi) Garhi
- vii) Hatian
- viii) Chakothe
- ix) Uri
- x) Rampor
- xi) Baramulla
- xii) Pattan
- xiii) Srinagar

<sup>12</sup> Hussain, M., "*Hundred years of Solitude*" An article published in a newspaper, *The Economic Times*, April 10, 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Koul, P. A., "*Geography of the Jammu and Kashmir State*" Light & Life Publishers, New Delhi, 1913, P. 20.

<sup>14</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, "*Rules for the guidance of and observance by visitors and residents in the territories of H.H, the Maharaja of J&K*", Jammu, 1888, P. 03.

## 2) The Shopian Road:

The Shopian or Bhimber or Pir Panjal route was once used by the Mughal emperors on their way to Kashmir. Due to this reason, it was also termed as the imperial road. Nowadays, this road is more famous as Mughal road. The traveler of today observes the ruins of the magnificent *serais* (inns) and other buildings, erected at intervals along the road for the accommodation of the monarchs and the numerous retainers that accompanied the court. The stages of this route to Kashmir were as under<sup>15</sup>:

- i) Bhimber
- ii) Saidabad serai
- iii) Naushehra
- iv) Chingus Serai
- v) Rajouri
- vi) Thana Mandi
- vii) Bahram Gala
- viii) Pushiana
- ix) Aliabad Serai
- x) Hirpor
- xi) Shopian
- xii) Ramuh
- xiii) Srinagar

## 3) Banihal Cart Road:

In the absence of road link between the two major provinces of Jammu and Kashmir, the people of Jammu who wished to go to Srinagar had first to undertake a long railway journey to Rawalpindi, with a natural change at the Wazirabad junction<sup>16</sup>. At Rawalpindi, they had to make transport arrangements for their onward road journey to Srinagar. All these factors tended to make the travel from Jammu to Srinagar and back weary and an uninviting one. To make up this deficiency, the State Government formulated a scheme in 1911-12, to widen the route from

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. P. 04

<sup>16</sup> Chohan, A. Singh, Op.cit, 10, P. 35

Udhampur to Banihal in order to make it fit for the cart traffic. In the next year this scheme was approved by his Highness Maharaja Pratap Singh<sup>17</sup>. An amount of Rs. 466,000 was therefore sanctioned for the construction of this road suitable for Ekkas and Tumtoms which included the following<sup>18</sup>:-

- i) Bridge metalling between Jammu and Udhampur—Rs. 70,000
- ii) Widening of road between Udhampur and Banihal—Rs. 316,000
- iii) Bridges between Udhampur and Banihal—Rs. 38,000
- iv) Shelters or rest houses at Batote, Ramban and Banihal—Rs. 12,000
- v) Improving present track from Batote to Kishtwar and making it fit for mule and camel transport —Rs. 25,000
- vi) Surveys—Rs. 5,000

By 1916 it was upgraded to cart road<sup>19</sup>. It gave a considerable boost to travel and trade and brought Jammu and the Punjab towns of Sialkot, Lahore and Amritsar much nearer to Kashmir. It quickly gained importance and popularity, so much so that in 1931 a huge number of 14,017 Motor Lorries, 3612 Motor Cars, 495 Tongas, 63 Ekkas and 197 Bullock Carts passed over it<sup>20</sup>. But as compared to Jhelum Valley Road very little traffic passed over it.

As before 1947, the main connection with the railhead at Rawalpindi from the valley was the Jhelum Valley Cart Road. Thus with the closure of the road following the tribal invasion in 1947, the Banihal road formed the main road link with the rest of India. A low-level tunnel opened in 1956 kept it open all the year round. The stages of this road from Jammu to Srinagar were as under:

- i) Udhampur
- ii) Batote

<sup>17</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, General Records “Correspondence relating to the construction of the B.C. Road and orders of his Highness for taking up the construction of the Road” Jammu, 1912, File no. 180.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Op.cit, 14, P. 23

<sup>20</sup> Chohan, A. Singh, Op.cit, 10, P. 36



- iii) Ramban
- iv) Remsu
- v) Banihal
- vi) Verinag or Qazigund
- vii) Anantnag
- viii) Avantipura
- ix) Srinagar

#### 4) Srinagar-Leh Road:

The road between the Kashmir valley and Ladakh is one of the only two roads that connect Ladakh with the rest of India, the other being Leh-Manali Highway. The road goes through the villages of Ganderbal, Kangan and Gund before reaching Sonamarg, the last sizeable settlement in the valley.

It was built after the 1962 Indo-Chinese conflict and was one of the most fascinating trips in the world<sup>21</sup>. It took two days from Srinagar to Leh (434 km) with a mid way halt at Kargil, which gave the visitor a marvelous introduction to this spectacular destination, while easing the acclimatization process to the high altitude low-oxygen atmosphere of Ladakh. Leaving the green Sindh valley at Sonamarg, the first pass to be crossed was Zoji La at a height of 11,578 feet which in the Great Himalayan wall is the gateway into Ladakh<sup>22</sup>. On the other side of the Sindh valley, Drass the second coldest habitation in the world after Siberia was the first village after having crossed the pass. The main stages of this road from Srinagar to Leh were as under:

- i) Ganderbal
- ii) Kangan
- iii) Sonamarg
- iv) Baltal
- v) Matayan

<sup>21</sup> Margret & S. Rolf, "Kashmir , Ladakh and Zanaskar- a travel survival kit" Lonely Planet Publications, Australlia, 1989 , P. 106

<sup>22</sup> [www.ladakh-tourism.net/Travel\\_Srinagar\\_Leh.htm](http://www.ladakh-tourism.net/Travel_Srinagar_Leh.htm) "Travel from Srinagar to Leh by Road"

- vi) Dras
- vii) Thasgam
- viii) Kargil
- ix) Shargol
- x) Kharbu
- xi) Lamayuru
- xii) Saspola
- xiii) Pituk
- xiv) Leh

#### 5) Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit Route:

This road was the main link between Kargil and Northern Areas of Pakistan (Gilgit and Baltistan) before<sup>23</sup> 1947. The road linked Kargil with Skardu, however with the annexation of Gilgit- Baltistan by Pakistan, the road has been closed. The main stages of this route were:

- i) Hardas
- ii) Gangani
- iii) Belargo
- iv) Bagicha
- v) Tolti
- vi) Parkuta
- vii) Mehdi Abad
- viii) Gol
- ix) Skardu

**6) Srinagar-Gilgit Route:** The route to Gilgit from Srinagar (359 kilometres), after passing through the lovely Gurais Valley beyond Bandipore, ascended the Burzil pass followed by Astor. Thereafter, the route had nothing to cheer the traveler, except a beautiful view of the Nanga-Parbat, till one reached the pleasant oasis of Gilgit<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> Ali, Wilayat, "Reopening Kargil-Skardu Road a Dream Only", The Kashmir Times, Jammu, 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2009.

<sup>24</sup> Bamzai, P.N.K., "Culture And Political History Of Kashmir" Vol. I, MD Publications, New Delhi, 1994, P. 12.

The main stages of this route were<sup>25</sup>:

- i) Bandipora
- ii) Tragbal
- iii) Gorai
- iv) Gurais
- v) Burzil choki
- vi) Chillum
- vii) Godhai
- viii) Astor
- ix) Dashkin
- x) Bunji
- xi) Minawar
- xii) Gilgit

Before the construction of this road, the communication between the Kashmir and Gilgit was maintained through a rough route, rather a track over the mountains, which was quite impassable for any means of transport except humans<sup>26</sup>. Thus the old route was not suitable even for beasts to transport goods from Srinagar to Gilgit which resulted in the notorious *beggar* (forced labour) in the State of J&K, as large numbers of labourers were forcibly employed by the State to transport goods of the tourists, soldiers and the government officials from Srinagar to Gilgit. In the words of E.F. Knight in his book *‘Where Three Empires Meet’*, “large numbers of the unfortunate coolies who are every year torn from their homes in different parts of the State to carry loads on the old road never return, but perish of cold or starvation by the wayside<sup>27</sup>”.

However the Russian threat of advancement into India through Kashmir precipitated the construction of the new road. In the words of C.A. Durand, “Russia had advanced practically to

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<sup>25</sup> Marquis, Bourbel, “Routes In Jammu And Kashmir” Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta, 1897, PP. 159-162.

<sup>26</sup> Knight, E.F, “Where Three Empires Meet” Longmans Green & Co., London, 1905, P. 287.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. P. 286.

the Hindukush, it was necessary to see that she did not cross it<sup>28</sup>". To meet this menace from the Czarist regime, the government of British India decided to improve the transport facilities from India to the borders of Kashmir. The construction of this strategically road was entrusted to Speddings Mitchell and Co. who started the work in the year<sup>29</sup> 1890. This mountain road ten feet in breadth and 190 miles in length was completed by the company in 1893, at a total cost of about 15 lacs of rupees<sup>30</sup>. With its construction and the subsequent reorganization of the transport service, the worst incidence of the forced labour made some relaxations.

### 7) Minor Roads:

Besides the above mentioned roads, a number of feeder roads were also constructed to link the various parts of the State. In the Kashmir province, the more important of those included a Tonga road from Srinagar to Gulmarg, the Avantipur-Islamabad road and the Uri-Hajipur road. These roads were constructed at a cost of Rs. 67174, Rs. 53413 and Rs. 17230 respectively<sup>31</sup>.

Due to the opening up of Jammu and Kashmir for wheeled traffic, and the extraordinary development of fast motor traffic, the popularity of the State in general and valley of Kashmir in particular received a tremendous impetus. The impact of these roads was more on valley than the other two regions because Jammu was already connected with the Indian dominion, before the construction of these roads and road to Ladakh was not fully developed until nineteen sixties. Due to the construction of roads by the Government, the tourist figure to the State increased from 2,000 in the year 1920 to about 12,000 in 1930<sup>32</sup>. Formerly, when the journey was long and

<sup>28</sup> Chohan, A. Singh, "*Historical Study of Society and Culture in Dardistan and Ladakh*" Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, P. 169.

<sup>29</sup> Knight, E.F, Op.cit, 26, P. 286.

<sup>30</sup> Lawrence W. R., "Imperial Gazetteer Of India (Provincial Series) Jammu & Kashmir, Calcutta, 1909, P. 07.

<sup>31</sup> Kapur, M.L. & Kapur, Sindhu, "*Social and Economic History of Jammu and Kashmir*" Gulshan Books, Srinagar, 1992, P. 278.

<sup>32</sup> Annual Administrative Report of the Jammu and Kashmir State for the year 1931, P. 84

tedious and the means of conveyance uncertain, no tourist thought of visiting Jammu and Kashmir unless he had at least two to three months at his disposal. To visit the valley was little short of an expedition, and misadventures on the road and in the valley were not infrequent. After the construction of these roads the visitor could reach Srinagar in ten hours from the rail-heads at Rawalpindi and Jammu<sup>33</sup>. However there were certain rules for visitors while travelling in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. These rules were as under<sup>34</sup>:-

- i) Military or civil officers of the British Government, at any time and without passes could visit and reside in the territories of the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir.
- ii) It was necessary for other Europeans, Americans or Australians to have a pass, which was granted by the Resident in Kashmir.
- iii) Information as to the usual routes for entering and leaving Kashmir was obtained from the Resident.
- iv) Persons subject to these rules were not allowed to travel from Kashmir to Simla (or vice versa) across the hills, or the plains via Kishtwar, Bhadarwah and Chamba, except with the special permission of Maharaja obtained through the Resident.
- v) The Resident could prescribe limits of travel from time to time beyond which no one was allowed to go unless supplied with a special pass obtained from the Resident.
- vi) Visitors who wished to visit the Fort or Palace at Srinagar were required to give notice of their intention, on the previous day, to the Babu deputed to attend on European visitors.
- vii) Cows and bullocks were not slain in the territories of Maharaja and visitors were requested to take precautions that their dogs do not worry these animals.
- viii) Visitors were not permitted to take up their abode in the gardens on the Dal Lake viz. the Nishat, Shalimar and the Chashma Shahi. They were not allowed to encamp in the garden and pavilion at Achabal, as it was the private property of the Maharaja, nor were their servants allowed to make cooking places there. Also travelers in the interior were not

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, "Rules for the guidance of and observance by visitors and residents in the territories of the Maharaja of J&K" Jammu, 1888, File no. 85-E, PP (1-6).

allowed to encamp within villages but only at the ordinary stages and camping grounds; supplies were not usually available in any other place. The Nasim, Munshi, Hari Singh and Chenar Baghs were available for camping.

- ix) Servants of visitors found resorting for purposes of nature to places other than the fixed latrines were heavily punished.
- x) All boats were moored on the left bank of the river and no boatmen were allowed to remain at night on the right bank.
- xi) Visitors were prohibited from shooting the heron in the State.
- xii) The Resident in concurrence with the Maharaja could change rules from time to time regarding the routes (for entering, leaving and travelling in the State) and the rates to be paid for coolies, transport and other services.

On the one hand the number of visitors increased year by year and on the other hand, there rose the problem of accommodation. The visitors who were officers both civil and military, missionaries, doctors and traders, wanted to settle in the State permanently on retirement. They were keen on acquiring land and houses. Efforts were made both by the Imperial Government in Calcutta and political parties in England to bring pressure on the Maharaja to allow Europeans to acquire and own land in the State of J&K. But the Maharaja, backed by the leading nobles, stubbornly opposed the move<sup>35</sup>. Thus the visitors either built a rude hut or erected a thatch of pine branches over their tents, so as to have better protection against rain. But these were either burnt or destroyed by the carpenters or coolies at the end of the season to enable them to have enough employment next season. In Srinagar the Maharaja, who did not agree to let out any land to the Europeans or give them buildings on leases, provided them with cottages charging no rent. These dwelling units were built on the river bank in Harisingh bagh. As the accommodation provided by the Maharaja was insufficient for the growing number of European visitors, camping sites were provided for bachelors in Chinar Bagh and for married couples and single ladies in Sheikh Bagh and Munshi Bagh<sup>36</sup>. Some tourists preferred to set up camps in Nasim Bagh on the Dal. On Maharaja Ranbir Singh's death, the British Indian Government again moved in the matter of the acquisition of land or house property in the State by Europeans. The foreign

<sup>35</sup> Bamzai, P.N.K., Op.cit, 24, P. 709

<sup>36</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Op.cit, 34, P. 05

secretary put up a strongly worded note to the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin against the ban imposed by the Maharaja on acquisition of immovable property by the Europeans. The instructions given to the Resident on May 1885 were that, “the Government of India have a right to insist on his Highness giving to all classes of British subjects all those facilities for trade which are extended to Kashmir subjects in British India. Further the Governor General in council expects that the European traders be allowed to purchase or lease with complete freedom any private buildings which they may want for the purpose of legitimate trade for occupation, or any private land for the erection of such buildings.” However the active opposition in Bengal and Punjab compelled the British Indian Government to change its policy against Jammu and Kashmir, which is evident from a statement by the Secretary of State for India, Lord Morley in 1908 “No restrictions are imposed by the Government of India, but the Kashmir Durbar, I understand, had laid down conditions as to the acquisition of land and so forth. This is entirely within their rights. It would be wholly contrary to public policy for the Government of India to interfere with free discretion of the Durbar of a Native State in a matter of this kind<sup>37</sup>”.

To this ban may be attributed the development of the houseboats which became a unique institution in Kashmir. Due to lack of suitable accommodation, the visitors, whose number was increasing year after year, were put to great inconvenience and thus the *doonga*, an indigenous boat was by and large transformed into a modern houseboat for lodging<sup>38</sup>. Thus 390 houseboats which were plying for hire were registered by the year 1946<sup>39</sup>. Each boat had its own charm; some were with one bedroom and others with two or three bedrooms and open air decks, for sunbathing. It was duty of the Visitors Bureau to inspect these boats and to see whether they were properly water tight and safe for visitors. The interior of the houseboat was furnished with embroidered rugs, fabrics and walnut furniture in the Victorian and Edwardian style which added much to its charm. After 1947, the Kashmiri Hanji people have built, owned and maintained these houseboats.

<sup>37</sup> Bamzai, P.N.K., Op.cit, 24, P. 709

<sup>38</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Op.cit, 34

<sup>39</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, “Annual Administration Report of the Director Visitors Bureau” Jammu, 1946, File no. 18/adm/47, P. 04.

Along with the growth in the number of visitors to the State there grew up an infrastructure to cater to their needs. State government came forward and provided all types of accommodation for the sojourn of any class, right from the affluent to the most economic class. All the important tourist resorts and hill stations in the State were provided with accommodation facilities, whether it was in the form of inns, huts, houseboats, tents or hotels. Waiting rooms were provided for both ladies and gentleman at Domel, Suchetgarh and Banihal for the convenience of visitors<sup>40</sup>. Sweepers were appointed at these waiting rooms and Chowkidars were made responsible for the condition of these rooms. Latrines were provided at these waiting rooms in addition to the Jhelum Valley Cart Road and the Banihal Cart Road<sup>41</sup>. In order to accommodate the increasing number of tourists, the concept of 'paying guest' was introduced in the State. However it was obligatory for every person who wished to open a boardinghouse establishment or to keep paying guests to the number of four or more to obtain the permission of the Resident of Kashmir<sup>42</sup>. Every year the State government adopted certain measures in order to increase accommodation facilities for the visitors. For instance in the year 1941 following steps related with lodging were taken by the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir<sup>43</sup>:-

- i) A hut costing Rs. 4,000 was constructed at Patni Top and furniture to the value of Rs. 600 was put in it. A Chowkidar was also appointed to look after it for a period of seven months @Rs. 12/-Per month.
- ii) Tents to the value of Rs. 1,000 were kept available at the Sanasar camping ground for use of visitors and a tourist hut was also constructed there at a cost of Rs. 1200.

<sup>40</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, "*Recommendations of the Unemployment Commission*" Jammu, 1937, File no. 222/VB-296, P. IV.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, "*Delegation of powers to the Chief Engineer P.W.D with regard to the grant of permission to take in paying guests at Gulmarg*" Jammu, 1926, File no. 15/PW-16, P. 02.

<sup>43</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, "*Annual Administration Report of visitors Bureau and Tourism*" Jammu, 1941, File no. 02/adm/41, P. 02.



- iii) Furniture was provided in the pavilion of the tennis court at Pahalgam for the facility of the members of the club.
- iv) In pursuance of the policy of providing a chain of hikers huts at convenient distance from each other, two more huts were constructed at *Vovjan* and *Panchtarni* on the way to Amarnath to facilitate the movement of those who would go either on pilgrimage or trek to Amarnath cave.
- v) Necessary improvements were carried out to the camping grounds at Verinag, Achabal and Kokernag in order to develop them and to make them suitable camping grounds for visitors.
- vi) Four *Kanals* and two *Marlas* of land were acquired from Zamindars for extension of Achabal camping ground.

However while residing in the State of Jammu and Kashmir there were certain rules which every visitor had to follow. These rules were as under<sup>44</sup>:-

- i) All buildings and huts become the property of the State at the end of the tourist season.
- ii) All matters connected with the supervision, repairs, alterations, allotment and collection of rents of the huts were under the control of the Director of Public Works.
- iii) Visitors could not erect huts or buildings without the permission of the Director of Public Works.
- iv) Applications for the huts for the next season were made before the 15<sup>th</sup> April to the Director of Public Works, who allotted them in accordance with the priority of application. However those visitors who had built or added to huts in the preceding season were considered on priority.
- v) No hut was allotted to applicant unless he paid one month's rent in advance. Moreover from the date of application, the visitor had to occupy the hut within one month, if he failed to do so the hut was re-allotted to other applicant.

<sup>44</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, "Rules for Visitors to Gulmarg and Reservation of huts by the Darbar" Jammu, 1894, File no. 41, P. 01.

- vi) At the end of the season the visitor had to give a fortnight's notice to the Public Works Official regarding the vacation of a hut. In the absence of such notice being received, rent was continued to be charged for a fortnight after the hut was vacated.
- vii) The rent of each hut or building was fixed at the beginning of each month with reference to the accommodation it afforded, and the condition of building. Rent was paid monthly in advance, and if the visitor failed to pay it before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the hut was re-allotted to another applicant.
- viii) A visitor was not allowed to sublet a hut, allotted to him.

After 1947, thousands of hotels, restaurants and hotel-cum-restaurant were constructed all over the State. In Jammu a tourist could get a variety of accommodation options, ranging from luxury hotels to humble lodges. The main hotels in Jammu run by the Jammu Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation (JKTDC) were: Jammu Residency (Jammu City), City Residency (Katra), Saraswati (Katra), Tourist Establishment (Patnitop), Yatri Niwas (Katra), Alpine (Batote) etc. Besides more than 10 hotels of B-category and a number of hotels of C-category there were 229 unregistered hotels throughout the division of Jammu. There were also large numbers of restaurants as well as hotel-cum-restaurants, serving different kinds of foods to the visitors<sup>45</sup>.

In Srinagar there were hotels to suit every requirement in terms of price, location and facilities. The most desirable location was the Boulevard Road, which overlooked the Dal Lake. Dalgate was fairly central for shopping and nearest to the Tourist Reception Centre. Hotel Cheshmashahi, Heemal, Brown Palace, Lake View Centaur were all the western style hotels and were located on the picturesque Dal Lake. Some good hotels were also located in Sonawar and Rajbagh, which were largely residential areas within two km from the TRC. Lal Chowk in the city's centre had also several medium category hotels such as Kongposh, Kashmir Residency etc. Also Kashmir was the first State to convert its Maharaja's Palace into a hotel. *Oberoi Palace Hotel* is now jointly being run by the Oberoi group and the ex-governor Dr. Karan Singh. This hotel provided all the standard facilities, e.g. shopping complex, a grand restaurant, swimming pool, foreign exchange facility, post and fax facility. Moreover many huts had been constructed by the J&K

<sup>45</sup> [planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr\\_jkch04](http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr_jkch04), P. 332.

Tourism Development Corporation at Cheshma Shahi and Pari Mahal<sup>46</sup>. Besides hotels there were thousands of houseboats moored along sections of the Dal and Nagin Lakes and River Jhelum, each decorated fancifully and named romantically. Many tourists were attracted to Srinagar by the charm of staying on a houseboat, which provided the unique experience of living on the water in a cedar-panelled elegant bedroom, with all the conveniences of a luxury hotel<sup>47</sup>. These houseboats were classified by the State tourism department into five categories, as follows:

**Table 2.0**  
**Classification of Houseboats**

Houseboat Category	No. of Houseboats	Dal Lake	Nagin Lake	River Jhelum	Naseem Bagh	Other Location	Total no. of Rooms
Deluxe	349	264	76	05	04	--	1007
A-Class	129	89	28	10	01	01	310
B-Class	124	85	17	16	--	06	299
C-Class	134	78	09	32	--	15	306
D-Class	351	186	43	79	--	43	772
Total	1087	702	173	142	05	65	2694

Source: - Data provided by Directorate of Tourism, J&K Government.

Ladakh offered a variety of accommodation to suit almost every pocket or preference. Most hotels were family-run establishments and as such, the services were more personalized than professional. Hotels were classified into A, B, C and economy category while guesthouses fall under upper medium and economy class. The guesthouse offered rooms in a part of a residential house or its annexe, where the guests could share the family kitchen for meals<sup>48</sup>. Apart from low

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. P. 333

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

tariff offered for accommodation ranging from very good to merely basic, the guesthouse system also provided an opportunity for the tourists to see and experience Ladakhi life from the inside.

In the newly opened areas of Ladakh such as Nubra, Changthang and the Drok-pa tourist infrastructure was not adequately developed and recently the State Tourism Department has started development of accommodation facilities like tourist complexes and hiker's huts at various places in these areas. Moreover the tourism department also provides tented camps in the Nubra valley and in Tso-Moriri Lake during the summer months<sup>49</sup>.

With the tremendous efforts made by the State government the overall bed capacity at the end of the year 1978-79 was 14,268 which fastly increased to 24000 in the succeeding year. Srinagar alone accounted for about 4,500 beds followed by 3,500 beds at Katra. In the seventh five year plan it was envisaged to enhance the tourist accommodation from 32,000 to 40,000 beds. In the year 1987-88 total bed capacity both in public and private sector<sup>50</sup> was 36,430.

### Transport Facilities:

Transportation in the modern world is the life blood of human existence. It is the chief requisite for the material prosperity of a country. Sophisticated, speedier and efficient means of transportation bring more people from foreign as well as inland, which stimulate the economic development of that place.

Wheeled traffic between Kashmir and Rawalpindi began in the year 1890, after the completion of Jhelum Valley Cart (JVC) Road<sup>51</sup>. The distance from Srinagar to Rawalpindi was covered in

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. P. 334.

<sup>50</sup> Bandu, Desh, "*Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh (Tourist Attractions & Tourism)*" Akashdeep Publishing House, New Delhi, 2005, P. 161.

<sup>51</sup> Koul, P. A., Op.cit, 13.

two to four or more days in Tongas and six to eight days in Ekkas. Bullock carts, which carried heavy goods, reached in fourteen or more days. While an Ekka was drawn by one pony and carried only two persons-a passenger and the driver, a Tonga on the other hand had four seats and was drawn by two horses. The horses were changed after every five miles or so. With the passage of time these services were also introduced in other routes of the State. It was in the year 1900 A.D that Kashmir Durbar with the approval of the Residency opened an Ekka and Bullock Cart service on the road between Srinagar and Gulmarg, in addition to the Tonga service<sup>52</sup>. After some years, however, Ekkas, Tongas and bullock carts were replaced by Lorries and cars, the modern means of cheap and speedy transport, which covered the whole distance just in one day<sup>53</sup>. The chief State run transport companies that provided these services in the State were<sup>54</sup>:-

- i) The Government Motor Mail Service
- ii) The North Western Railway Out Agency

Their Lorries and buses ran daily between Rawalpindi and Srinagar and their rates ranged as follows<sup>55</sup>:

- i) Rates of Motor Cars from April to July

Up Journey	Down Journey
Rs. 60 to 70 for full car	Rs. 10 to 15 for full car
Rs. 20 to 25 for a seat	Rs. 05 to 06 for a seat

- ii) Rates of Motor Cars from August to November

<sup>52</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, "Transport Arrangements for Gulmarg" Jammu, 1900, File no. 53, P. 28.

<sup>53</sup> Chohan, A. Singh, Op.cit, 10, P. 30.

<sup>54</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, "Annual Administration Report of visitors Bureau" Jammu, 1937, File no. Crsp-8, Basta no. 40.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

Up Journey	Down Journey
Rs. 50 to 60 for full car	Rs. 40 to 45 for full car
Rs. 05 to 15 for a seat	Rs. 10 to 15 for a seat

## iii) Rates of Lorries and Buses from April to July

Up Journey	Down Journey
Rs. 115 to 120 for full lorry	Rs. 20 to 25 for full lorry
Rs. 07 to 10 for a seat	Rs. 03 to 05 for a seat

## iv) Rates of Lorries and Buses from August to November

Up Journey	Down Journey
Rs. 100 for full lorry	Rs. 30 to 50 for full lorry
Rs. 07 to 10 for a seat	Rs. 05 to 08 for a seat

Source: - Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, “Annual Administration Report of visitors Bureau” Jammu, 1937, File no. Crsp-8, Basta No. 40.

With the closure of Kohala Bridge in 1947, most of the buses, lorries and cars owned by The Nanda Bus Service, Dhanjibhoy & Sons, Haji Charag Din & Sons and other small transport operators got held up on the other side of the border<sup>56</sup>. The closure of the road also made it necessary to transform a longer and more difficult cart road through Banihal Pass into an all-weather highway in order to link Jammu with the valley of Kashmir.

In view of the importance of tourism in the economy of Jammu and Kashmir, the government started providing necessary and efficient facilities to the tourists. Thus the fundamental change in the organization pattern of the transport system was brought about with the formation of Jammu and Kashmir, State Road Transport Corporation (SRTC) in the year 1976. It played a vital role in developing the economy of the State right from the date of its inception and had made wide and varied changes in the transport structure by introducing comfortable and fast moving super

<sup>56</sup> [www.jksrtc.co.in/history.php](http://www.jksrtc.co.in/history.php).

deluxe coaches for the convenient movement of the tourists to the various tourist spots<sup>57</sup>. It operated services on inter-state routes in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi.

Besides road transport, railway network had been also extended to Jammu. Before 1947 Jammu was linked with Sialkot, by way of rail road. In the wake of Pakistani aggression this link was cut off and Amritsar-Pathankot rail route was extended to Kathua. However only about six kilometres rail network was in the State territory and it was not until 1972 when railway link was established between Jammu and Pathankot<sup>58</sup>. Thereafter trains directly reached to Jammu from metropolitan cities like Delhi, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. Most of them terminated at Jammu though some at Udhampur.

From Jammu there were buses also to take the tourists to Srinagar within 10-12 hours. On reaching Srinagar the tourist could also travel up to Leh by Jeep covering the 432 kms long journey in about 35 hours. Apart from the road and rail network the State had also three entrance points by air at Jammu, Srinagar and Ladakh airports. Air service had been considerably increased after 1947 and presently major airlines operate daily flights to Jammu and Kashmir from New Delhi and other major cities in India.

### **Role of Visitor's Bureau:**

The Visitor's Bureau was a Government Department created especially for the convenience of visitors of all nationalities. Its function was to satisfy all the reasonable requirements of tourists and in many cases, to anticipate their difficulties and needs and to make adequate provisions for them. The information regarding the following points was always kept available and up-to-date in the Bureau and was circulated widely in Srinagar through different leading agencies and by means of Notice Boards<sup>59</sup>:

<sup>57</sup> Raina, A.K., "Tourism industry in Kashmir" Shipra Publications, Delhi, 2002, P. 95

<sup>58</sup> Bandu, Desh, Op.cit, 49, P. 161.

<sup>59</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, "correspondence with Director Visitors Bureau regarding Visitors to Kashmir" Jammu, 1935, File no. crsp-2, P. 02.

- i) Rates of country provisions and transport both in Srinagar and the country side.
- ii) The condition of the weather and of the roads and bridges on the Jhelum Valley and Banihal Cart Roads.
- iii) List of Forest Rest Houses together with their rules and regulations.
- iv) List of Dak Bungalows on Jhelum Valley and Banihal Cart Roads with rules and regulations for their occupation.
- v) List of big and small game grounds available for shooting.
- vi) List of trout and other waters available for fishing and the rates of licenses thereof.
- vii) The information regarding all matters affecting the sojourn of visitors in the country was also obtained without any cost in the Bureau.

However its chief purpose was the publicity of tourism products and the registration of visitors. As tourism is an extremely sensitive and vulnerable product, subject to human motivation and behavior. Potential tourists always react immediately to world news. A piece of information or news flashed worldwide by the media, even if it is exaggerated has the power to generate a flow of arrivals to a certain country or create mass cancellations to another. Seen from this perspective all possible efforts were made to attract visitors to the State of Jammu and Kashmir and to make their stay pleasant. The booklet named "*Notes for Visitors to Kashmir*" was printed time and again from the Kashmir Mercantile Press and distributed free of charge to the principal travel agencies and to various Railway Publicity and Advertising offices throughout India<sup>60</sup>. Coloured posters and illustrated folders were also widely distributed. Besides this 100,000 picture postcards depicting interesting scenes in the State were printed every year and put on sale at most of the important Head Post Offices in India, through the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs<sup>61</sup>. Besides this a guide book named '*Kashmir*' was compiled with a view to supply additional and detailed information on various routes of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, rules and regulations applicable to visitors and a brief history of the Archaeological Monuments and various places of sightseeing in the State. Also the maps of Srinagar city and Gulmarg were kept available and a beautiful leaflet with the title page of '*Glorious Gulmarg*' with charming views

<sup>60</sup> Annual Administrative Report of the Jammu and Kashmir State for the year (1936-37), P. 77

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.



on the title page and a map of Gulmarg on the back was published for free distribution to visitors<sup>62</sup>. The 2<sup>nd</sup> important function i.e. registration of visitors was carried out by the Bureau at the customs post, Domel, Jammu (Tawi) and Suchetgarh<sup>63</sup>. List of the visitors was forwarded to the Assistant of the Resident in Kashmir, the Deputy Chief Secretary and the Governor of Kashmir. The Visitors Bureau had also a branch for registration of servants of tourists by which undesirable persons were prevented from having access to the life and property of visitors. The Director of the visitors Bureau was vested with magisterial powers which enabled him to dispose of disputes which occurred between the tourist or their servants or the local tradesman. No stamp was required to be paid in filling such cases which were settled out of court with fairness and to the satisfaction of both the parties.

The Visitors Bureau had sub branches at Katra, Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Nagin Bagh, Ganderbal and Rawalpindi. The Bureau at Rawalpindi functioned for the whole year while as the branches at other places were seasonal and were kept open from April to July. During the pilgrimage of Vaishno Devi the Deputy Director was deputed to Katra to give information and advice to the pilgrims<sup>64</sup>. Every year a number of copies of the pamphlet *Dev Darshan* prepared by the Dharmath department were distributed among the pilgrims free of charge.

After 1947, the nomenclature of the Visitors Bureau was changed to Tourism Department. Seeing the importance of tourism in the State economy, the department launched a vigorous drive through media for attracting tourists to the State. A number of publications were brought out by the department for being supplied to tourists. These include publications and pamphlets on Pahalgam, Gulmarg, Srinagar, Jammu, Amarnath, Vaishno Devi etc. Elaborate arrangements were made to conduct the yatra to Amar Nath Ji and Vaishno Devi Ji, which included transport,

<sup>62</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives Op.cit, 58, P. 03.

<sup>63</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, “*Administrative Report of Visitors Bureau and Tourism for the Year Samvat 1997-98*” Jammu, 1941, File no. 2/Adm /41, P. 05.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. P. 06.

accommodation, medical aid and security<sup>65</sup>. Immediately after independence following steps were taken to attract maximum number of tourists<sup>66</sup>:

- i) Arrangements in Rest Houses and Dak Bungalows at Jammu, Udhampur, Kud, Batote and Banihal were improved
- ii) Bus service between Pathankot and Srinagar was started and the entire distance of 267 miles was covered within two days. Bus seats were charged at the rate of Rs. 25 per head including all tolls.
- iii) Visitors Bureau and Municipal Committees at Srinagar and Jammu were authorized to supervise the arrangements for tourists in Hotels and houseboats. The fares of Shikaras, Tongas and Buses were also fixed.
- iv) A representative of the Visitors Bureau was stationed at the Srinagar airport to guide the incoming visitors.
- v) Thirty one permit issuing centres were established all over India for securing passes for entry into the State. As a result of this visitors could now obtain their permits from the capital town of their home provinces.
- vi) Sub-offices of the Visitors Bureau were opened at Delhi, Bombay, Amritsar and Pathankot where visitors could obtain any information regarding their itinerary. In addition visitors could also collect any information and assistance from the Trade Agencies in different parts of India.

With the establishment of Jammu & Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation in the year 1970, the State Government specified the duties and functions of the Department of Tourism as well as J&K Tourism Development Corporation. All commercial activities such as operation and management of accommodation in all the tourist centres at Srinagar and Jammu were entrusted to the JKTDC. And the Department of Tourism carried out the task of overall planning, promotion, publicity and marketing of travel trade. Regulation of travel trade in terms of J&K

<sup>65</sup> Annual Administrative Report of the Jammu and Kashmir State for the year (1969-70), P. 59

<sup>66</sup> National Archives of India, "Development of Tourist Traffic to the Jammu and Kashmir State" Delhi, 1950, File no. 10 (6)-K/50.

Registration of Tourist Trade Act, 1978 was also carried out by the department<sup>67</sup>. This act enabled the department to punish heavily those who violated the rules of this act i.e. who cause discomfort to the tourists. Also through this act rates were fixed for hotels, houseboats, lodges, taxi drivers, handicrafts and art related shops.

Over the years, the organizational structure of the Department has undergone a drastic change. At present it is administering its programmes through the following Agencies<sup>68</sup>:-

- 1) Directorates of Tourism of Jammu and Kashmir: - These are operating their offices in all the three regions within their respective territorial jurisdictions. Besides six offices outside the State located at New Delhi, Kolkata, Ahmadabad, Hyderabad, Chennai and Mumbai are looked after by the Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir.
- 2) Twenty Tourism Development Authorities viz Pahalgam, Gulmarg, Kokernag, Patnitop, Verinag, Aharbal, Wullar-Manasbal, Yousmarg, Dodhpathri, Leh, Kargil, Zaskar, Baderwah, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Poonch, Surinsar-Mansar, Lakhanpur-Sarthal and Lolab-Bungus Development Authority. Their main objective is to promote tourism products in their respective areas.
- 3) Sheer-e-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC): - It provides conference facilities and thus promotes conventional tourism.
- 4) J&K Cable Car Corporation (JKCCC): - It is responsible for the construction of passenger ropeways and chairlifts in the State. The Corporation is successfully running the prestigious Gulmarg Gondola project.
- 5) Royal Springs Golf Course Society (RSGCS): - It maintains the famous Royal Spring Golf Course located in the foot hills of Zabarwan. It receives golfers from all over the world.
- 6) Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering & Water Sports: - It is responsible for imparting training in adventure tourism and to conduct mountaineering expeditions in and outside the State. The areas that have been developed for adventure tourism are Sonamarg, Gulmarg, Aru (Pahalgam), Suru Valley (Kargil), Stock (Leh), Patnitop and Mansar.

<sup>67</sup> [www.jandkplanning.com/Economic\\_Survey](http://www.jandkplanning.com/Economic_Survey), "Tourism".

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

Thus we can say, the State paid much attention to the basic components of the tourism industry and the tourism products were promoted not only in Jammu and Kashmir but also in remote Ladakh. After 1947, the main thrust of the planned development was to stabilize and improve the facilities that were already there and to open new areas with a view to prolong the stay of visitors, and to disperse them over a wider area of the State, instead of their being confined to the golden triangle of Srinagar, Pahalgam and Gulmarg.

