UNIT 15  TOURISM DIMENSIONS-II

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15.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- explain the importance of Accommodation in the tourism industry,
- classify the different types of accommodation available for tourists,
- describe Amenities as a component of tourism,
- discuss Activities as a key component of tourism; and
- explain the new components of tourism – Ancillary Services and Ambience

15.2 INTRODUCTION

As discussed in the previous Unit, there are 5 components of Tourism, also known as A’s of Tourism and all of them need to come together to make the Tourism experience to happen. These components refer to the different types of services needed for a Tourism Experience to take place such as an Attraction which motivates a tourist to visit a site, the mode and means of journey to reach the destination /site, accommodation where tourist can stay in the destination, the amenities are the facilities needed by tourist such as sanitary and hygiene at the destination and activities refer to what the tourist does while visiting a site or destination like shopping, site seeing, adventure sports and so on. In the previous Unit we have discussed about Attraction and Accessibility as two A’s of Tourism. In this Unit we will discuss about the other A’s of tourism such as Accommodation, Amenities and Activities. This Unit will also discuss two new A’s being considered as to be included as new Tourism Component. These are Ancillary Services and Ambience.
15.3 ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation as a component of Tourism includes boarding and lodging. It is the room or the space provided to the tourists who come from a long distance and is the basic need of any tourist place. It is often said that when we travel to a destination we may carry our food, a home cooked meal with us but we cannot carry our accommodation with us. Even if we carry camping equipments or travel by a caravan, we would need a place with amenities to put up the tent or park our vehicle. The need and necessity of accommodation cannot be ignored in tourist destination as it plays a vital role in the field. All destinations earn more when the tourist stays over, as then it means tourist will be using food and lodging, even souvenir shopping, eating out as well as participation in activities and entertainment in the evening or early next morning. It is economically beneficial for a destination whenever a tourist stays over.

It has been observed that many destinations are blessed as excellent attractions are readily accessible but lacks tourist accommodation which results in less number of tourists visiting and staying over resulting in less economic benefit for the region. Accommodation occupies the biggest share in the total tourist expenditure, since studies have shown that with the wide range of lodging facilities available in a modern holiday destination the accommodation component usually comprises of 30-40% share in total expenditure of a tourist.

15.3.1 Growth and Development of Accommodation Industry

Accommodation industry is perhaps one of the oldest enterprises in the world with establishment of money as a medium of exchange. Historically accommodation was established along major transport routes to serve the transit market (people who are on their way to somewhere else). So, around the 6th BC came the first real impetus for people of trade to travel and the earliest Inns were ventures by husband and wife who used to provide modest wholesome food, quench thirst (mainly wine) and a large hall to stay for travellers against money.

Initially Inns were called “Public Houses or Pubs” and the guests were called “paying guest”. This type of accommodation with rural setting and was popular during the Middle Ages/Dark Ages (AD 400-AD 500) is one of the initial accommodation facilities in the world. It usually was a small rural lodging establishment that provides not only shelter, but food and sometimes entertainment for both the travellers as well as the local people. Inn’s have always been considered to be a place of comfort, warm food, and safety for the traveller on long journeys and need place to rest and sleep. These conditions remained for several hundred years. The advent of Industrial Revolution brought ideas in the business of Inn keeping. The development of railways and ships made travelling prominent and industrial revolution changed travel from social to business status resulting in better services at Inns.

During the era of 1750 to 1820 the English Inns gained the reputation of being the first in the world and were generally centred in London. The “Inns” were reserved for finer establishments catering to the nobles and the public houses visited or frequented by common men were called as “Taverns”. In France the establishments were known as “Hotelleries” and the less pretentious houses were called “Cabarets”. The name hotel is believed to have been derived from the
word hotelleries around 1760. In America lodging houses were called “Inn” or “Coffee House”.

In modern times, Inns are usually found along the side of a country road or highway, and is more like a bar or restaurant that provide food and drinks and has a sleeping place for a few people only for a night or two. Usually, Inns fall somewhere between the level of a motel and a hotel in terms of amenities and space and can be cosier than an average hotel and used by travellers on long journeys who need a temporary place to sleep before continuing on their travels.

By 1800 the USA were the leaders in development of first class hotels. The real growth of the modern hotels took place in the USA beginning with the opening of first building as hotel, the “City Hotel” in 1794 in New York. 1907 witnessed the beginning of the first chain operations under the guidance of E.M. Statlers.

15.3.2 Growth and Development of Accommodation Industry in India

The origin and evolution of the hotel industry in India can be broadly categorized in the following three periods:

1) Ancient and Medieval Era
The beginning of the hospitality sector in India stands rooted in the Hindu philosophy of ‘atithi devo bhava’, implying that an unannounced guest is to be accorded the status of God. The origin of the hotel industry in India cannot be traced to a definitive point of time; although there is evidence of its presence even during the Indus Valley Civilization and Vedic Era. In olden days, travel was predominantly undertaken for pilgrimage and trade. The concept of char dharm (i.e., visiting religious places located in the four corners of India) among the Hindu community is an important indicator of significance accorded to pilgrimage by their ancestors. The lodging houses during those times were known as Dharamshala (dharma in Sanskrit means religion and shala school), providing accommodation facilities for travellers and guests involved mainly for pilgrimage and commercial activity. Here they were provided with a safe place to relax and spend the night. Famous Chinese scholars Fan Hien (AD 399–424) and Huen Tsang (AD 629–643), who came during the reigns of Chandragupta Vikramaditya and Harshvardhana respectively, have mentioned the existence of shelters for travellers.

In the medieval era, between the 11th and 13th BC, many ‘Sarai’ and ‘Musafirkhana’ were built, primarily as resting places for messengers of the postal system established by the Sultans.

2) Colonial Era
The organized existence of the hotel industry in India started taking shape during the colonial period, with the advent of Europeans in the 17th CE. The early hotels were mostly operated by people of foreign origin to cater to the needs of the European colonizers and later officials of the Raj. Among the first such properties were taverns like Portuguese Georges, Paddy Goose’s, and Racquet Court, which opened in Bombay between 1837 and 1840. Until 1900, almost all hotels were constructed and run as per Western traditions. The first Indian style hotels were Sardar Griha, which opened in 1900, and Madhavashram in 1908.
3) **Modern Era**

With the development of mass tourism, leading hotel chains and corporations have come up in accommodation sector. These chains have diversified their brands by price and image to appeal to a wider variety of markets. Some international hotel chains retain a strong hold on the global accommodation market as they work on policy to create a uniform marketing image to distribute their products.

Post-independence, there have been big leaps in the hotel trade in India as well. The Oberoi Group of Hotels and the Taj Group took over several British properties, maintained high standards of services and qualities, and expanded their business overseas. The later decades saw corporate like the ITC also joining the hotel industry with properties under ITC Welcome Group. The 1950s also saw the creation of Club Méditérannée and similar club holiday destinations, the precursor of today’s all-inclusive resorts. Over the last few decades, various well-known international hotel chains have come to India. These include Hyatt Hotels and Resorts, Inter Continental Hotels and Resorts, Marriott International, Hilton Hotels, Best Western International, etc.

**15.3.3 Types of Accommodation**

Accommodation is defined as “an establishment that provide facilities and services for sleep, rest, relaxation and entertainment for people who are temporarily away from their place of residence or work, in return for a fee” by Mensa, 2009. Accommodation can be subdivided and classified based on different criteria. Accommodation can be subdivided into sub-sectors depending upon the primary service provided like:

- **Lodging** comprises hotels, apartments, campsites, log cabins, lodges, villas, resorts, inns and tree houses etc.
- **Food service** subsector includes fast food operators, vending outlets, restaurants, functional catering/institutional catering etc.
- **Entertainment** subsectors comprise organizations that offer live or recorded music, discotheques, clubs, traditional entertainment music etc

These three services usually are all provided at the place of accommodation, but require different sets of skill sets of the service provider.

In last half century, accommodation sector has evolved and changed and the market has seen a proliferation of accommodation range and types from basic camping and backpacking facilities to mega - resorts and holiday villages. At times accommodation itself is an important tourist attraction, as in the case of specialty resorts. Non-traditional type of accommodation such as holiday village, youth hostel, apartment houses, tourist cottages, and camping and caravan sites are also in trend. Accommodation sector can be classified into two categories based on the level of services provided as well as the way the sector is structured. It is classified as:

1) **Organised Sector / Serviced / Traditional Accommodation –**

   It refers to the services provided by the Hotels, Motels, Resorts, Lodges, Pension Houses, etc wherein service of lodging and food is provided to the guest.
2) **Unorganised Sector/ Self Catering/ Supplementary/ Alternate Accommodation** – It refers to the premises that offer accommodation but not the supporting services like Youth Hostel, Dharmshalas, Camping, Caravan, Guest Houses, home stays, others

15.3.3.1 **Types of Accommodation – Organised Sector**

Among the various forms of accommodation, **Hotels** are one of the most significant and widely recognised service providers of overnight accommodation for tourists and business travellers. It is a place where tourists can find food, shelter, provided he/she is in a fit position to pay for it. Hotel is defined by British law as a place where a bonafide guest receives food and shelter provided he/she is in a position to pay for it and is in a receivable condition. It is also defined as an establishment whose primary business is providing lodging facilities for the general public and which furnishes one or more of the following services - Food and Beverage Services; Room Attendant Services; Safety and Security to guest and his belongings, Laundry Services; and use of Furniture and Fixtures.

New trends and innovation are observed in the accommodation and hotel industry which gives many new bases for the classification of Hotel. Types of Hotels can be classified as:

1) **Classification on the basis of Room Charges:**
   i) **Budget Hotels** – Budget hotels are hotels with low or economical room rents. Budget hotels can be both independent or belong to chain/group properties.
   
   ii) **Mid- Market/Mid- Range Service Hotels** – Mid Market hotels offer modest services such as room services, round-the-clock, coffee shop, transfer facilities and so on, without the lavishness and personalized attention of luxury hotels, and appeal to the largest segment of travellers.
   
   iii) **Luxury Hotels** – A luxury hotel is a hotel that is upscale and typically costs more than the average accommodation. Luxury means lavishness and opulence and these hotels provide services that are personalized and individualised to give the guests the feeling of luxury.

2) **Classification on the basis of Size:**
   
   i) **Small Hotels** - Hotels with twenty five (25) rooms or less are classified as small hotels.
   
   ii) **Medium Hotels** - Hotels with twenty six (26) to hundred (100) rooms are called medium hotels.
   
   iii) **Large Hotels** - Hotels with hundred and one (101) to three hundred (300) guest rooms are regarded as large hotels.
   
   iv) **Very Large Hotels**: Hotels more than three hundred (300) guest room are known as very large hotels.

3) **Classification on the basis of Location:**
   
   i) **Business / Commercial / Downtown Hotel** – A business hotel is located in the Centre / Heart of the city or within a short distance from business centre (i.e. commercial hub of the city with shopping areas, theatres,
public offices etc). These hotels are meant for the business travellers and the room rates are usually higher since they have to recover investment on land a well as for the extra facilities provided to business travellers.

ii) Sub-urban Hotel - Hotels near the outskirts of the city are referred to as Sub – urban hotels. These hotels are built to provide all the facilities of a business hotel but away from the hustle and bustle of the city; usually with moderate room rates.

iii) Resorts Hotel – Resort Hotels are hotels located at scenic tourist destinations such as hill station, sea beaches and countryside. These hotels usually have a natural ambience, pollution – free environs and are located away from cities. These hotels combine stay facilities with leisure activities such as golf, wellness, etc. and thus the room rates vary from moderate to high, depending on the additional service offered.

iv) Airport Hotel - Airport Hotels are Located on or near the airport premises and other ports of entry. These hotels provide all the services of a commercial hotel, for layover passengers, crew members, visitors to the airports etc. who need a stopover en route on their journey. All airport hotels are transit hotels but not all transit hotels are airport hotels.

v) Motel - The word motel is formed by merging two words ‘motor’ and ‘hotel’. They are located primarily on highways and provide facilities such as modest lodging, food and drinks, garage facilities, a parking lot, and re-fuelling for vehicles to highway travellers.

vi) Rotel - Rotel stands for “Rolling Hotel”, i.e. a hotel which rotates on wheels, also known as Motel on Wheels. Caravan-like vehicles which can offer accommodation and also act as a vehicle of transport from one destination to another are examples of Rotel. The best example of Rotel in India is are the luxury trains like Palace on Wheels - a fully air-conditioned, well furnished, with attached restaurant and bar. The fare is inclusive of train ticket, food, alcoholic beverages and sightseeing.

vii) Flotel – Flotels are hotels located on the surface of water either on a lake, river or sea and can be luxurious hotel away from the mainland built on the top of water or semi-submersible platforms. Usually they provide accommodation, along with food and beverage facilities to guests like luxury cruise liners, house boats of Dal Lake, and so on.

viii) Lotel - A Lotel is a hotel equipped with a heli-pad for helicopter landings.

4) Classification on the basis of **Length of Stay**:

i) Transit / Transient Hotel – Transit hotels provide rooms to those guests who are en route to another destination and want to use the facilities only for a short period of time. The length of stay may be as less than a few hours and therefore these hotels have 24 hours check in and checkout time. They are usually near ports, highways and airports – related to a particular form of transport.
ii) Residential Hotels / Service Apartments – Also called apartment hotels where room is sold on a long term basis, usually for weeks or months or even years at a stretch to a single client. These are housed in buildings designed for or containing both apartments and individual guestrooms or rental units, under resident supervision. An inner lobby forms the entrance through which all tenants must pass to gain access to their apartments, rooms or units.

iii) Semi - Resident Hotels: Semi-resident hotels are generally patronised by people who are staying at the location while in transit to another place. The duration of stay may range from weeks to some months. They incorporate the features of both transient and residential hotels.

iv) Extended stay hotels: Extended stay hotels are types of lodging with features intended to provide more home-like amenities. These hotels typically have self-serve laundry facilities and offer discounts for extended stays, beginning at 5 or 7 days. Extended stay hotels are aimed at business travellers on extended assignments, families in the midst of relocation, and others in need of temporary housing.

5) Classification on the basis of Facilities and Service Provided

i) Boutique Hotel – "Boutique Hotel" is a term originating in North America to describe intimate, usually luxurious or quirky hotel environments. Boutique hotels are furnished in a themed, stylish and/or aspirational manner and provide an exceptional and personalized level of accommodation, services and facilities. Usually, they are smaller than a mainstream hotel, and have guest rooms ranging from 3 to 100. The target markets of these hotels are discerning travellers, who place a high importance on privacy, luxury and service delivery, typically corporate travellers.

ii) Star Category Hotels – Classification of hotels is undertaken by Ministry of Tourism, under which a committee forms known as HRACC (Hotels and Restaurants Approval & Classification committee) that usually inspects hotels in every three years. Specification based upon number of AC rooms, floor area, accessibility, eco – friendly practices, fire fighting, bar license, and other facilities and services provided by the hotel is reviewed and a star category is assigned to the hotel. The categories are from 1 star o 5 stars.

iii) Heritage Hotels – Heritage hotels are properties like small forts, palaces, or havelis, the mansions of the royal and aristocratic families who offer their own property to the tourist. These hotels offer a history and put their best efforts to give the glimpse of their region by serving traditional cuisine, entertained by folk artistes and offered rooms that have their own history. In India Heritage hotels are classified as Heritage, Grand & Classic.

iv) Casino Hotels - Casino hotels provide gambling facilities. These hotels attract the clients by promoting casino, arranging entertainment, accommodation and meals with all first class luxuries.

v) Conference Centres - A conference centre is a hotel which caters to the needs of a conference delegation. These hotels provide rooms to
delegates of conferences, a conference hall with the desired seating configuration for the meeting, food and beverage requirements during and after the conferences and along with other equipments needed by the delegates.

vi) Green Hotels - Green Hotels are environmentally-friendly properties whose promotes saving energy, water, and reduce solid waste. The basic definition of a green hotel is an environmentally responsible lodging that follows the practices of green living.

vii) Capsule Hotels – Capsule hotels are popular in Japan and pronounced as “capseru hoteru” in Japanese and usually are “men only establishment”. These lodging features small, box-like sleeping compartments (typically 6 x 3 x 3 feet) that are often found near railway stations as cheap alternative to rooms to overnight guests with a common bathroom. Each compartment is commonly equipped with an alarm, fan, radio/tv, and curtain, along with a fully made-up bed; the amenities include slippers, night robe, and a towel.

6) Classification on the basis of **Ownership and Management**:

i) Individual/ Independent Ownership – These hotels have the right to exclusive ownership and control of a specified hotel property and do not have any affiliation or contract through any other property. They are usually autonomous and they do not have any tie up with any other hotels with regards to policy, procedures and financial obligation.

ii) Chain / Group – A chain is defined as a group of hotels that are owned or managed under a single business arrangement, having its own headquarters, marketing agreements, sales agreements and internal operating procedures. A chain can have multiple brands under a single management agreement. This gives them the advantages of a large central organisation providing reservation systems, management aids, financial strength, expertise, manpower, specialities, merchandises and promotional help.

iii) Management Contract – Management contract is a contract between the owner of the property and a hotel operator (management contractor) by which the owner employs the operator as an agent to assume the full responsibilities for operating and managing the hotel. The operator can be a hotel chain with reputed name and look after the Branding of the property as well as provide and maintain a certain service quality standard. The contract has Renewal and termination clause.

iv) Franchise - Franchise is the authorization given by a company to another company or individual to market and sell its unique product/services and use its trademark, goodwill, brand image, and name according to the guidelines/rules as decided by the former for a specified time and at a specified place for a certain fee. Hotel chains are often operated under franchisee.

v) Time share - These are properties owned and rented on a long lease and also known as ‘vacation ownership’. It is associated with ownership of property to which multiple users hold the right; and price of the property
will depend on the week one intends to buy. These are hotels based on
the concept of advance purchase - that for a set number of days each
year and for a stipulated number of years the guest gets the right to
enjoy the stay. Usually the share holders are required to pay an annual
contribution towards the maintenance of apartments and can also rent
out the unit through management but cannot claim any right to
ownership of property

vi) Condominium: Condominium units also known as Condo are purchased
and owned by single owners; who shares the cost common to the
complex such as insurance, and Maintenance, etc. In condominium
hotels, the owner informs the management company when they would
occupy the unit and the management company is free to rent the unit
for the remainder of the year; and pay a major part of revenue to the
owner.

15.3.3.2 Types of Accommodation – Unorganised Sector/Alternative
Accommodation

The unorganised sector is the one where a record of the number of tourists visiting
and their stay period is not always correct. Further no regulatory body or
association is found for all these accommodation providers in India. These
accommodations are:

i) Sarai/ Dharamshala - These lodging properties are mostly found at popular
pilgrimage places, generally constructed by welfare trusts, social
organisation, or even the state, and provide basic security and sleeping
facilities for a nominal fee.

ii) Dak Bungalow/Circuit Houses/Inspection Bungalow/First lodges - A legacy
of the British Raj, these were built as rest houses in the remote and scenic
locales for colonial official across the country; and now owned by the various
state governments. They can be availed through the local district
administration on low tariff with basic facilities.

iii) Lodges/Boarding House - Lodges are modest hotel situated away from the
centre of the city or located at a remote destination and are self-sufficient
establishment that offer standard facilities, such as clean and comfortable
rooms, food and beverage service. Boarding houses are establishment that
usually provide accommodation and meals at a specified period of time,
such as weekends, or for a specified time of stay.

iv) Youth Hostel - Youth travel for various reasons, such as education,
adventures, and recreation and these hostels were established to cater to the
youth who can’t afford steep hotel rents. Generally youth hostels provide
low-cost rooms or dormitory accommodation with common bathing and
cafeteria facilities.

v) Yatri Niwas - Yatri niwas provides low-cost, self-service accommodation to
domestic tourist in cities, but with an emphasis on modest comfort and
affordability. These properties are located at historical, cultural, and natural
sites.
vi) Railway/Airport Retiring Rooms - A retiring room is for the convenience of the transit travellers and are situated at major railway station and domestic and international airports. Booking for the retiring rooms are available to passengers with confirmed and current tickets, at reasonable rates and can be made through the station superintendent or the airport manager.

vii) Home Stay Accommodation: Home Stay accommodation is offered by individual household at various destinations. Guest normally pays for accommodation, while the rules for F & B services may differ from host to host. The guests prefer home stays over traditional hotels as they want to experience the culture of the destination.

viii) Camping Grounds /Tourist camps: Camping is one of the most popular recreational activities done close to nature staying in tents whereas Caravanning includes stay in recreational vehicles or caravans. Camping grounds are normally located within cities in open spaces and provide parking space along with water, electricity, and toilets where one can put up tent or park their caravan. Camping grounds have certain regulation regarding the quality of services and cost, and are usually set and maintained by municipalities.

15.3.4 Future Trends in Accommodation

Future trends in accommodation will be dominated by technology and artificial intelligence (AI). State-of-the-art Smart Rooms will be one of the next levels of guest experience where a room will know the guests and care about their preferences. They can control the room- temperature, light even the television as per guest preference. With more people using voice-activated devices in their homes, it’s only natural to use these same devices to make rooms more “smart”. The lights, temperature, and other features in a hotel room can be difficult to figure out and smart rooms alleviate that problem. Guests will be able to attune amenities like air conditioning, light, windows in every room, order guest services, chat with staff, order food to room, access all the information about the hotel, see flight schedules, and stay notified with alerts all on their smart phones or tablets provided by the hotel.

Information technology will improve service standards and operations. Hotel website will have calendar which will clearly shows which rooms are available when as well as an up sell panel, cross-sell panel and multi-room booking functionality along with easy and popular payment. Hotels will also be offering the same services through simple and eye-pleasing mobile app.

Many businesses within the hospitality industry have already begun to implement some friendly robots to help out with some of the housekeeping and other tasks that do not require a lot of face-to-face interaction. From a non-robotics point of view, AI is already being used extensively in order to provide flawless guest experience to the guests. AI will ultimately help the customer experience by improving the quality of any person-to-person exchanges.

Check Your Progress 1

1) What is the linkage between accommodation and tourism?
2) What is meant by alternative accommodation?

3) Write a brief note on future trends in the accommodation sector.

15.4 AMENITIES

Amenities are the services that are provided to meet the needs of tourists while they are away from home, on tourism activity. Most of the amenities are government services delivered by co-operation between local, state and national agencies. However, the role of private sector is equally vital particularly to keep a balance between needs of local residents and the services to be provided to the tourists.

Amenities are the beneficial services added with attraction, accommodation and accessibility to create tourism. Without amenities, a destination will be a place, accommodation will be a local hotel, a transport will be local transport etc. Amenities are not buildings or construction. But they are the additional features / comfort things / benefits inside a property or building that are made to offer convenience and comfort to people. In other words, they are the things/services that provide comfort, convenience or enjoyment of the people. Therefore, the more amenities a building has, the more likely it will gain a competitive edge in attracting prospective tenants and guests.

Amenities in a hotel may include things or services such as high kitchen quality services, valet services, quality products, elevators, air conditioning, TV and computers for use, balconies, laundry services, swimming pool, playground, etc. In a destination, tourist amenities such as shops, visitor information centres, hotel and restaurants, approved guides, tourist police, roads, drinking water, toilet blocks, garbage bins, local conveyance, food and beverages are important for tourists to enjoy their visit to a destination in comfort. Moreover, people look for the amenities and services that are not found in the place of origin; and therefore if any destination offer better amenities like interesting shopping facilities, excellent food, luxury products etc, it becomes an added value for the destination.

Destination facilities/services are consumed by tourists during a destination life cycle such as travel information, entertainment, transport, catering, accommodation, language translation, security, banking, tour guiding, authority etc. These can be broadly categorized as:

1) **The destination infrastructure elements** - Though these are not developed specifically with tourists in mind they are essential for any city/destination; and are considered as necessary aid or support services for any tourist destination to be successful. These infrastructural elements are very basic to any destination and are also used by the locals; yet without these services, a tourist’s stay in the destination might not be comfortable. They include -
road, water, electricity supplies, communication facilities, sewage and water disposal, safety & security, medical services & hygiene. These support services help tourist to enjoy the stay in the destination as it creates tourism infrastructure.

2) **The destination added elements** - These are added elements to an existing attraction and include built environment which facilitate the satisfaction level for the tourists. Examples of these amenities or services are -

- Guiding /escort services:
- Travel agency for visa, tickets etc.
- Car and bus parking areas,
- Access roads and transportation network for excursions to surrounding areas.
- Stations, passenger terminals, and related amenities
- Major thoroughfares, toll highways equipped with facilities including toilets and emergency phones, signage, parking, etc.
- Adequate number of food service establishments or restaurants, coffee shops, cafés and bars with varied cuisine menus.
- Conference space
- Safety and Security to provide quality tourism as success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors
- Electricity, Water, Communication system

### 15.5 Activities

Activities are what the tourists undertake for fun and amusement at the destination. For example, boating, scuba diving, canoeing, camel riding, and visiting a place. Activities form the ‘fifth (5th) A’ component of Tourism Industry. Varied tourists with varied interests visit different destinations to indulge in activities which also define their length of stay. For example, in a hillside resort activities like nature walk, trekking, hiking, fruit plucking, bird watching, and other recreational activities are available for the amusement of the tourist and this might result in extending length of stay at the destination. The activities may be physical, for example, hiking and trekking or passive, like sunbasking. At times activities turn out to be major pulling factor superseding the importance of the attraction in itself. These activities can be categorized as below-

1) **Nature Based Activities** - These include elements such as nature walks, trekking, hiking, Wildlife Night-spotting, Bird watching, Cycling, Amphibians / insects / reptiles spotting, visit to biodiversity hotspots, sightseeing, sunrise viewing, and others are natural activities.

2) **Historical and Architectural** – These include visit to historical sites, story-telling sessions to describe legendary tales and folklore of the destination, dressing in traditional clothes, audio and video information, and other such activities related to historical and architectural sites.
3) **Cultural activities** – Participating in activities that represent the culture of the destination like traditional music & dance performances, Museums, theatres, Storytelling sessions, Light & Sound show, fairs and festivals, food festivals, etc.

4) **Sporting activities** – Sporting activities and adventure sports activities are popular and play a role in making a destination popular. Sporting and adventure activities like paragliding, snorkelling, wind-surfing and surf-boarding, can be found at almost any seaside destination. Some destinations offer even more exotic activities like the undersea walk, even mini-submarines, Kayaking, Hot Air Ballooning, skydiving, mountain climbing, Skiing, fishing, depending upon the location of the destination.

5) **Beach tourism activities** - Beach tourism activities include both water and land resource use like swimming, surfing, sailing, boating, snorkelling, wind surfing, water scootering, Parasailing, motorboat rides, scuba diving, etc.

6) **Entertainment** – Entertainment activities that a destination provides adds to the attraction of any destination. Entertainment activities like casinos, shopping festivals, amusement parks, entertainment and shopping complexes, cinemas, clubs, etc.

### 15.6 OTHER A’S OF TOURISM

Along with the above mentioned 5 A’s of Tourism, there are other aspects that are considered to be important for the tourism industry. Academicians are adding more A’s to the Tourism industry to understand the modern need and aspects of tourism industry. These new A’s of tourism are:

1) **Available Packages** –
   
   Available packages refer to the options of tour packages available for the tourist to visit a destination. For example a tourist wants to visit a particular sea side resort for the weekend but if that resorts only sells packages for a week then the tourist will be forced to choose a different resort for the weekend visit. This can be true for a package trip to any destination or even cruise trip. The Available package here refers to tour package that consists of – travel to destination using any travel mode, travel within the destination, accommodation, food and beverages, sightseeing, guide and escorting services, VISA and foreign currency if required, among others. Available packages is needed so that if one has leave or holiday for 3 days then tourist will choose the package that offers the most in three days. Thus, the possible tourist will overlook tour packages to a popular destination which requires more time; and vice versa. Available packages can make a destination popular or not.

2) **Ancillary Services** –
   
   Ancillary services refer to the added facilities provided to the tourists at any destination. Although the terms amenities and facilities are commonly and at times interchangeably used in tourism and hospitality to express benefits that are provided for people, they are not the same. The difference between amenities and facilities is that the amenities refer to things provided mainly for the enjoyment and comfort of the guests while facilities are the things and places that are constructed for a particular purpose thus, facilitating the
guests in their needs / necessities. Therefore, ancillary services answer particular needs of tourists, which they may or may not enjoy.

For example, hospitals are constructed to perform a particular function of medical support, and thus to facilitate people without the purpose of enjoyment. Ancillary services can range from providing healthcare, monitoring the security of the place, developing technological advancements, as well as providing relaxation and comfort to people.

In Tourism and Hotel industry, few ancillary services include travel insurance, medical facilities, telecommunication facilities, educational facilities, research facilities, health clubs, spas, community service centres, banquet halls, childcare centres, business service centres, movie theatres, parking areas, etc.

**Check Your Progress 2**

1) What is the linkage between activities and length of stay?

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2) What is meant by amenities?

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3) Write a brief note on new A's in Tourism.

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**15.7 LET US SUM UP**

In tourism, product is sum of a lot of synchronized efforts. Tourist components like accommodation are a fundamental element of tourist experience. This experience can be accentuated with amenities and activities at the destination as without these the attraction itself will have no meaning. Among all the components of tourism, accommodation plays a vital role, as it can lead to the increase in room nights which will in turn lead to economic growth at the destination. Accommodation in modern times comes with the promise of room, food and beverages services and other customised services. Activities give an identity to the destination while activities and available packages can influence the choice of a destination by tourist. Amenities and ancillary services on the other hand ensure that tourists have comfortable, enjoyable trip with facilities to avail, if necessary. The elements of tourist’s trip, consists of what he/she does and what services he / she avails on the way to the destination as well as while staying
there. New aspects of Tourism means that tourism is getting influenced by new factors and that continuously affects the tourism research and new A’s are being added as components of tourism.

15.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

1) See section 15.3 to answer
2) See section 15.3.3.2 and frame your answer
3) See section 15.4 and frame your answer

Check Your Progress - 2

1) See section 15.5 to frame your answer
2) See section 15.4 to frame your answer
3) See section 15.6 to frame your answer