

XIX COMMONWEALTH GAMES AND ITS IMPACT ON TOURISM

Shweta Misra

Research Scholar – Singhania University, Jhunjhunu (Rajasthan)

Under the guidance of

Prof. (Dr.) Rama Pati Dubey

Director – DCET Business School, Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)

Abstract

Major sports events always have a significant impact on the movement of tourist at that particular destination. Events like ICC World Cup, Olympics, FIFA World Cup, Asian Games, and Commonwealth Games etc. always attract a large number of tourists and help in boosting the tourism not only in the city but also the country as a whole. The aim of this research paper is to study the impact of XIX Commonwealth Games held in 2010 in New Delhi on the tourism to India. India is originator of many religions, especially Buddhism and Hinduism and this adds attractions to participants and spectators with belief in these religions.

1.0 Introduction

The World Tourism Organization defines **tourists** as people "travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes". When people travel for a sporting event to a particular destination, it is termed as "Sports Tourism". Sports tourism is the fastest growing sector in the global travel industry with a net worth of close to USD 600 Billion per year. Heather Gibson suggested that there are three types of sports tourism which include:

- a) *Sports Events Tourism* – It refers to the visitors who visit the city with the purpose of watching the sporting event. This includes the maximum number of visitors to the city hosting the sporting event.
- b) *Nostalgia Sport Tourism* – It involves visits to the sports hall of fames and places associated with historical sporting events.
- c) *Active Sport Tourism* – It includes those who participate in the event.

The occurrence of a major sporting event in a city like New Delhi, which is also known for its rich cultural and historical value, helped the tourism industry grow in a significant manner. As per the information received from Bureau of Immigration, the total number of foreign tourist's arrivals at New Delhi airport during the period of Commonwealth Games was 75,606 while the total growth in the tourist arrivals in the city during the year was recorded at 9.90 percent.

2.0 Commonwealth and Commonwealth Games

Commonwealth is a traditional English term for a political community founded for the common good. Historically, it has sometimes been synonymous with "republic". More recently it has been used for fraternal associations of some sovereign nations. Most notably, the Commonwealth of Nations, an association primarily of former members of the British Empire, is often referred to as simply "the Commonwealth".

The "British Commonwealth" is a voluntary association of 54 independent sovereign states, most of which are former British colonies. The head of the Commonwealth of Nations is Queen Elizabeth II.

The *Commonwealth Games* is a multi-sporting event involving athletes from the Commonwealth of Nations. The event was first held in the year 1930 and takes place every four years. It was initially known as British Empire Games and was renamed to British Empire and Commonwealth Games in the year 1954 and the British Commonwealth Games in 1970, before finally getting its current title in the 1978 edition. The games are overseen by the Commonwealth Games Federation which also controls the sporting programmes and selects the host city. A host city is selected for each edition and 18 cities in seven countries have hosted the event so far. The motto of the Games is "Humanity – Equality – Destiny".



Seal of the Commonwealth Games Federation

Although there are 54 members in the Commonwealth of Nations, 71 teams participate in the Commonwealth Games as a number of British Overseas territories, Crown dependencies and island states participate under their own flag. Even the four nations of the United Kingdom – England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland send individual teams to these events.

The first Commonwealth Games were held in the year 1930 in Hamilton, Canada. Since then, the games have been held every four years with the exception of 1942 and 1946 due to World War II. The first event in which team games were introduced was in 1998 Games in Kuala Lumpur which saw introduction of sports like cricket, hockey, netball and rugby 7's. The 2002 Games in Manchester had a limited number of medal events for elite athletes with a disability which continued in the 2006 Games held at Melbourne.

The game has also seen a rise in the number of participating countries, events held and the number of participating athletes over the years as may be seen from Table-1 below. Number of participating countries has increased to more than 6 folds, number of events by about 4.5 folds and number of athletes to more than 10 times.

Table-1: Growth of the Commonwealth Games from 1930 to 2010				
Year	Host City/ Nation	Participating Countries	Events Contested	Athletes
1930	Hamilton, Canada	11	59	400
1934	London, England	16	68	500
1938	Sydney, Australia	15	71	464
1950	Auckland, New Zealand	12	88	590
1954	Vancouver, Canada	24	91	662
1958	Cardiff, Wales	35	94	1122
1962	Perth, Australia	35	104	863

1966	Kingston, Jamaica	34	110	1050
1970	Edinburgh, Scotland	42	121	1383
1974	Christchurch, New Zealand	38	121	1276
1978	Edmonton, Canada	46	128	1474
1982	Brisbane, Australia	46	142	1583
1986	Edinburgh, Scotland	26	163	1662
1990	Auckland, New Zealand	55	204	2073
1994	Victoria, Canada	63	217	2557
1998	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	70	213	3633
2002	Manchester, England	72	281	3679
2006	Melbourne, Australia	71	245	4049
2010	New Delhi, India	71	272	4352

Source: Commonwealth Games Official Website

3.0 Commonwealth Games 2010

The XIX Commonwealth Games were held in New Delhi from 03rd to 14th October 2010. This was the first time that the Commonwealth Games were being hosted in India and only the second occasion when the Games were being hosted by an Asian country, the first being Malaysia in the year 1998. The event saw a total of 6,081 athletes from 71 Commonwealth nations and dependencies competing against each other in 21 sports and 272 events.

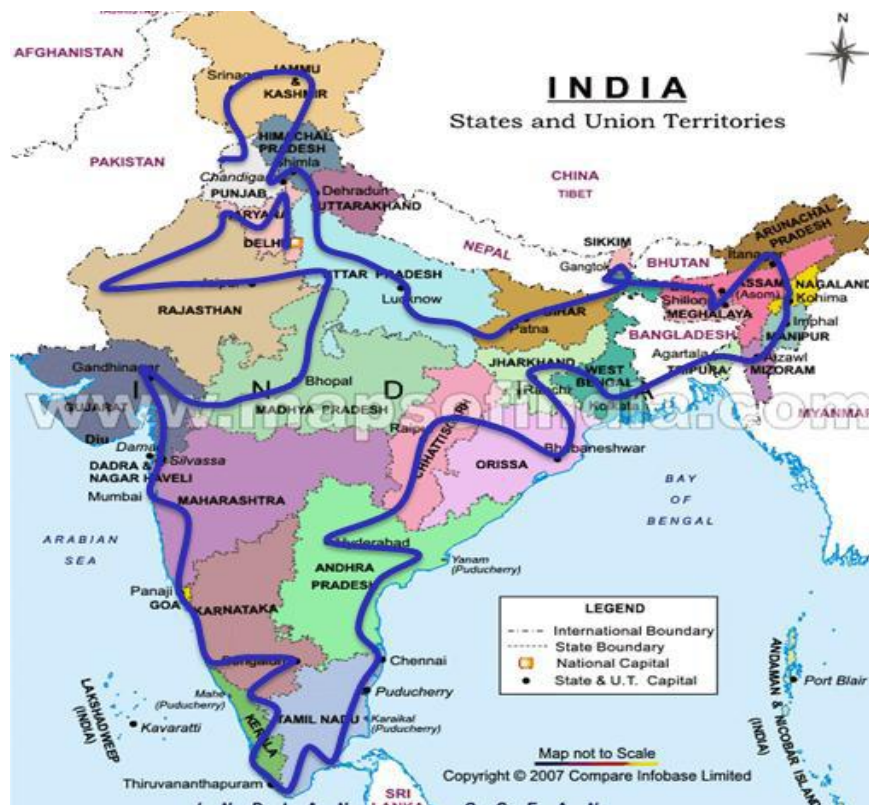


CWG Logo for 2010 Games along with the Mascot "Shera"

The official mascot of the games was “Shera” and the official song of the games was “Jiyo Utho Badho Jeeto” (Live-Rise-Move-Win). This song was composed by Oscar award winning composer, A. R. Rahman.

India won the bid for the 2010 Games at the Commonwealth Games Federation’s General Assembly in Montego Bay, Jamaica in 2003. The host city contract was signed in November 2003 after which an Organizing Committee was formed with the President of Indian Olympic Association as its Chairman.

The queen’s baton for the 2010 Games was officially handed over to the President of India, Her Excellency Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil on 29th October, 2009 by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. The baton travelled through all the Commonwealth countries before entering India on 25th June 2010, for its 100 days sojourn across 28 Indian states. It finally reached its destination – Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium on 03rd October 2010.



National Tour - Queen's Baton Relay

4.0 Infrastructure and Residential Arrangements

A residential games village was built near the Akshardham Temple in New Delhi keeping in view the accommodation facilities for the players who had come to participate in the event. This entire project was undertaken by the Delhi Development Authority (D.D.A.), with a budget of Rs. 1034.82 Crores. The games village was constructed in the vicinity of heritage and historical landmarks of the city. The games village was divided into three zones – Residential Zone, International Zone and Operational Zone.

Spread over an area of 11.0 Hectares, the games village had a total of 1168 flats comprising of 4008 Rooms. These flats were spread across 34 towers and were furnished by India Tourism Development Corporation as per standards prescribed by DDA. The room analysis for the games village is given in Table-2 below.

Table-2: Accommodation details in Games Village

Type of Unit	No. Of Units	No. Of Rooms
2 Bedrooms	31	62
3 Bedrooms	765	2295
4 Bedrooms	209	836
5 Bedrooms	163	815
Total	1168	4008

Source: Annual Report 2010-11, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

With over 100,000 tourists expected to visit the city, various land owning agencies such as DDA, HUDA, DMRC, GDA etc. worked in collaboration to meet the demands. ITDC converted its residential apartments in Vasant Kunj into hotel accommodation for the entire duration of the Games.

Hotel Ashok, Hotel Janpath and Hotel Samrat, all under the banner of Indian Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), were renovated and upgraded as “Games Family Hotel” as per a MoU signed between the Organizing Committee CWG 2010 and ITDC. All events and meetings of different constituent groups were held at the Hotel Ashok, which was the Games Family Hotel for the CWG 2010.

The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi also upgraded the city infrastructure which included up-gradation of a large number of flyovers, widening of roads, strengthening and re-surfacing of roads, street lighting and street-scaping of major roads. Apart from this, a major restoration of Connaught Place and Gole Market has also been carried out along with work on Barapulla Nallah for easy access from Games Village to the sports venues.

5.0 Accommodation Facilities in New Delhi

A large number of hotels and guest houses were opened in order to accommodate the visitors that were expected to come to the city for the 2010 Games. Hotels like The Leela Palace, New Delhi were opened at strategic locations in order to attract large number of guests.

A large number of existing hotels underwent renovation and refurbishment in order to prepare themselves for the event. ITDC spent around Rs. 300 Crores on the renovation of Hotel Ashok, Hotel Janpath and Hotel Samrat. At the Hotel Ashok, the renovation was carried out in the lobby, restaurants and the guest rooms. Also, a new lounge on the 7th floor and a new wine lounge at the Lobby level was built to cater to the niche clientele.

The Ministry of Tourism took a number of steps in order to increase the hotel accommodation capacity of the city. The outcomes of these efforts were:

- Availability of 9,099 new hotel rooms in the NCR region.
- 1,287 housing flats of the DDA under various categories at Vasant Kunj were upgraded and managed by ITDC. These flats were utilized for housing technical staff of the Games.
- 2,199 “Incredible India Bed & Breakfast / Homestay” units were arranged as additional alternative accommodations.
- 11,412 rooms were made available in licensed guest houses in NCT of Delhi.
- 50 units each of tented accommodation at Surajkund and Dundahera in Haryana were also arranged.

6.0 Major Tourist Attractions in New Delhi

Delhi is a modern city with a historic past. The tourist destinations in the city offer a huge range of attractions that include Mughal monuments, Colonial era buildings, traditional markets, skyscrapers, parks and gardens. Delhi is a city that combines the historic and the modern in its own unique way. Some of the tourist attractions of Delhi are:

6.1 *Rashtrapati Bhawan*: The president's mansion is situated on Raisina Hill in the centre of Delhi. This elegant building is famous for its architectural beauty and historic significance. The building also houses the famous Mughal Garden, which is open to the public in spring.

6.2 *India Gate*: Situated on Rajpath, in the centre of Delhi, is a 42-meter high arch, which was designed by Edwin Lutyens in memory of the Indian soldiers who sacrificed their lives during the First World War. The names of these martyrs are inscribed on the arch. The Amar Jawan Jyoti, an eternal flame, burns in memory of the “unknown soldier”, beneath the shelter of the arch.

6.3 *Red Fort*: This grand fort was built of red sandstones during the reign of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan. The Diwan-e-khas and Diwan-e-Aam, the weaponry museum and the sound and light show are all worth seeing at the Red Fort.

6.4 *Qutab Minar*: Built during the reigns of Sultan Qutub-ud-din Aibak and Iltutmish in the 12th century, this 72.5 m high pillar is a symbol of the Delhi Sultanate. There is also an Iron Pillar in the same compound, which was built around the 11th century. The pillar is made of 98% pure iron and has not rusted or corroded over all these centuries.

6.5 *Humayun's Tomb*: Built by Humayun's wife, Hamida Begum, in 1556, after Humayun's death, this elegantly proportioned tomb is set on a platform amidst a garden and is believed to have influenced the design of the Taj Mahal at Agra.

6.6 *Bahai Temple*: This monument is commonly known as the Lotus Temple, because the white marble structure is built to in the shape of a lotus. It is a serene house of meditation, within which there are no idols and total silence prevails.

6.7 Jama Masjid: Built during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, it is the largest mosque in India.

6.8 Delhi Haat: It is a small ethnic India in the midst of greater India. The market is known for good, affordable food stores representing almost every state of India, Indian textiles, hand looms, knick-knacks and handicraft works etc.

6.9 Jantar Mantar: This centuries old monument was built for astronomical purpose and is a symbol of Indian civilization and their advancement in the field of astrology.

7.0 Major Tourist Circuits in India

The Commonwealth Games have not only affected the tourism in New Delhi but also in the various other cities which are in vicinity of the National Capital Territory. These include Jaipur, Agra, Amritsar, Lucknow, Varanasi, Bhopal, Gwalior and Shimla etc.

Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation had offered a large number of packages to promote the health tourism during the time of 2010 Games. Haryana Tourism Ministry had constructed 7000 rooms in the NCR region in order to accommodate the overflow of tourists during the Games period. The state of Uttaranchal, known for its adventure tourism, had also launched a number of schemes in order to attract tourists.

8.0 Impact of CWG 2010 on Tourism and Arrival of Foreign Tourists in 2010

As a result of the CWG 2010, India registered a substantial increase in the foreign exchange earnings (FEE) in the year 2010. The FEE for the year 2010 was Rs. 64889 Crore compared to Rs. 54960 Crores in the year 2009, which was a growth of 18.1%. Compared to this, the growth rate in FEE from tourism during 2009 over 2008 was only 8.3%.

The foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) in India during the year 2010 were recorded at 5.58 million as compared to the FTAs of 5.17 million during 2009, showing a growth of 8.1%. On the contrary, the difference in FTAs for the year 2009 over 2008 recorded a decline of 2.2%.

During the period of 14 days of Commonwealth Games, New Delhi airport alone registered over 75,000 foreign visitors. The breakup of the same is given in Table-3 below.

Table-3: Foreign Tourist Arrivals at New Delhi Airport

Foreign Tourist Arrivals at New Delhi Airport	
Date	Tourist Arrivals
01.10.2010	5577
02.10.2010	7527
03.10.2010	6164
04.10.2010	5023
05.10.2010	4520
06.10.2010	5462
07.10.2010	4786
08.10.2010	5141
09.10.2010	5824
10.10.2010	4953
11.10.2010	5007
12.10.2010	5207
13.10.2010	5354
14.10.2010	5061
Total (01st – 14th October)	75606

Source: Bureau of Immigration, India

However, in certain aspects, the impact of the event was not to the mark. Although the number of foreign arrivals in Delhi increased by 5% during the games, it was quite less than the national average increase of 9.2%.

The event also marked the opening of a number of hotel and tourist accommodations, not only in the city of New Delhi, but also in various other adjoining cities and states. The event also created a large number of employment opportunities, led to the overall infrastructure development of the city, improved the transportation facilities and had an overall impact on the society and economy of New Delhi.

The Archaeological Survey of India spent close to Rs. 25.73 Crores on the various monuments in the city. This included conservation and repair work, sprucing up of the monuments, environmental development and illumination of the monuments.

The city was also given a large number of flyovers, underpasses, an extensive coverage of the Metro rail system and additional fleet of low floor buses. The Delhi Government had assigned nearly 24% of its budget's share on the transport sector alone. A number of major roads in the cities were also given a facelift for the event which not only helped in smoothing out the transportation for the players during the event but also helped in the providing a better transportation services for the tourists that visited the city, not only for the event, but also in the future for the sole purpose of visiting the city.

9.0 Summary

The above study has been carried out to understand the overall impact of the XIX Commonwealth Games on the city of New Delhi. We have tried to cover not only the impact on tourism facilities but to some extent, also on the overall development of the city and its facilities. Sporting events have always helped cities to upgrade their services and get an overall uplift. Although the history suggests that not all the sporting events have been able to make profit, but they do help the city to a large extent. The data and the statistics presented in the paper also suggest that any major sporting event does leave a huge impact on the city where the event is organized as well as the country which has organized it. and its tourism sector.

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