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Revenge Tourism in India

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Introduction:

Revenge travel is a term that means traveling as a way of making up for lost time during the pandemic. There isn't one concrete definition or origin, but it generally refers to the frustration and anger that people felt towards COVID-19 for cancelling their plans and disrupting their lives. The term started as a prediction in 2020 about how people would respond when it became safer to travel, but that prediction has fully come true. According to a survey conducted in May 2022 by the American Society of Travel Advisors, travel is surging. Despite economic pressures, people are spending more money on travel over things like home improvement, technology, and sporting equipment (sorry Peloton). The same report says two thirds of people plan to travel before the year's end. After two years of being cooped up inside, Indians are also now travelling with a vengeance - 'revenge travel', as the phenomenon is called. And many, experts say, now prefer to travel within the country instead of flying to more expensive destinations abroad. When covid19 infection started in March 2020, the entire world got affected as nobody expected such a thing to happen in this modern age. Every sector of the world economy was affected adversely by this covid19 outbreak. The health sectors of all the countries across the globe were overwhelmed by this life threatening disease. As all the countries closed their borders to prevent the spreading of infection, the international travel almost stopped. As medical tourism is a combination of health care and international travel, this sector was bound see rough weathers due to global lockdown of economies. Now after almost two years of the covid19 outbreak and the introduction of covid vaccinations, the economies of the world are trying to breathe more easily. So now is the time to evaluate the prospect of revival of tourism in India in the light of this new concept- revenge tourism.

Objective:

The main objective of this paper is to study the effect of the revenge tourism on India's tourism sector and to see whether this new enthusiasm can bring sustainable growth to the tourism sector in India. **Tourism in India** is important for the country's economy and is growing rapidly. The World Travel and Tourism Council calculated that tourism generated ₹13.2 lakh crore (US\$170 billion) or 5.8% of India's GDP and supported 32.1 million jobs in 2021. Even though, these numbers were lower than the pre-pandemic figures; the country's economy witnessed a significant growth in 2021 after the massive downturn during 2020. The sector is predicted to grow at an annual rate of 7.8% to ₹33.8 lakh crore (US\$420 billion) by 2031 (7.2% of GDP). The pandemic and sealed international borders have made one very significant impact on the Indian travelers. Those travelers who used to

save money for foreign tours are now willing to spend that money on domestic travels. They are willing to spend money on home stays also just to ensure privacy and some kind of social distancing. Due to that same reason the offbeat places, remote hilly locations are fast moving to the top in the tourist hot favourite chart.

Tourism in India in pre and post pandemic period:

The World Economic Forum's *Travel and Tourism Development Index 2021*, which replaced its previous *Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report*, ranks India 54th out of 117 countries overall. The last edition of the *Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report*, published in 2019, had ranked India 34th out of 140 countries overall. The report ranked the price competitiveness of India's tourism sector 13th out of 140 countries. It mentioned that India has quite good air transport infrastructure (ranked 33rd), particularly given the country's stage of development, and reasonable ground and port infrastructure (ranked 28th). The country also scored high on natural resources (ranked 14th), and cultural resources and business travel (ranked 8th). The World Tourism Organization reported that India's receipts from tourism during 2012 ranked 16th in the world and 7th among Asian and Pacific countries.

As a measure to boost tourism, the Indian Government implemented a new visa policy in November 2014, allowing tourists and business visitors to obtain a "visa on arrival" at 28 international airports, by acquiring an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) online before arrival, without having to visit an Indian consulate or visa centre. In April 2015, the "visa on arrival" scheme was renamed "e-Tourist Visa" to avoid confusion. As a result of the new visa policy, 56,477 tourists arrived on an e-Tourist Visa during October 2015, compared with 2,705