

Common Sense: A Key to Have A Successful Travel and Tourism

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“Life is not just the passing of time. Life is the collection of experiences and their intensity.” Jim Rohn (American entrepreneur and author)

Abstract

Human life is like a book, no one can know what is written on its upcoming pages. In simple words, human life is full of various types of uncertainties and possibilities. Common sense acts as an important key in solving the unresolved mysteries of these uncertainties and realizing the possibilities. Common sense emphasizes on simple and inclusive decision making as per the circumstances through normal use of discretion. It opposes excessive specialization and excessive philosophizing. For its development, knowledge generated through experience and practice is given priority as compared to technical knowledge. In the presented research paper, emphasis has been laid on adopting common sense related to tourism to ensure the success of travel and tourism. Descriptive research method has been used in writing the research paper, under which the behavior displayed and decisions taken by travelers and tourists in different situations have been included. Primary and secondary sources have been used in writing the research paper. Under primary sources, interviews and telephonic conversations with travelers and tourists have been made, while under secondary sources, information published in newspapers has been made the basis.

Key words

Travel and Tourism, Common Sense, Planning, General Knowledge, Decision Making

Introduction

“*Ashwatthama Hatah Iti Naro Va Kunjaro Va*” means Ashwatthama was killed. This statement was said by Dharmaraja Yudhishtira in the Kurukshetra battlefield in the context of the death of an elephant named Ashwatthama, which Guru Dronacharya understood as the death of his son Ashwatthama and as a result of which the morale of the Kaurava army broke down and the Pandavas could ensure their victory over Kauravas in this great war ‘The Mahabharata’. From this incident, we can learn when and how to use wisdom like the Pandavas. Similarly, many such stories are compiled in Panchatantra and Jataka tales in which common people have been imparted education regarding the use of wisdom as per the situation.

Many times such situations arise in our daily life which require the use of common sense to deal with them. Common sense is another name for prudence used according to the situation. Common sense is not a specific knowledge but it is a very general and practical knowledge created by the wise people of the society on the basis of long-term experiences. Common sense can be learned easily. It is the skill of considering the work to be done and its possible consequences or anticipating those consequences. Despite being common, it plays a very important role in our day-to-day tasks ranging from simple to specific.

Generally, it has been observed that sufficient amount of common sense is inherent in all of us, on the basis of which we are able to differentiate between conflicting aspects like right-wrong, good-bad, profit-loss, merits-demerits and are able to take better decisions. On the contrary, in our society which is moving towards modernization, more preference is being given to experts rather than generalists. As a result, our focus has become more on acquiring expert knowledge and less on acquiring common sense. Due to this, we are not able to use common sense properly in response to adverse situations and end up causing harm to ourselves.

Common sense is a behavior on the basis of which we are able to adapt ourselves according to the available circumstances. Generally, such situations arise when we go far away from our comfort zone, such as during travel and tourism. Often such incidents are seen during travel and at tourist places which prove the low or zero state of common sense among travelers and tourists. Due to lack of common sense, travelers and tourists commit some mistakes as a result of which they become victims of some untoward incident. In the upcoming phase of the research paper, some such incidents have been included which or whose adverse consequences can be prevented by proper application of common sense.

Accident happened during adventure sports

Due to the availability of adventure sports, hilly areas are the first choice for tourists. In such a situation, tourists from India and abroad come to these mountainous areas to enjoy paragliding, river rafting, bungee jumping etc. Amidst these moments of joy, tourists usually do not take proper care and caution about their safety and as a result become victims of an accident or suffer a huge financial loss.

A similar incident took place in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh, in which a tourist from Hyderabad lost his life due to not fastening his belt properly during paragliding (PTI 2024). However, the court held the paraglider pilot guilty in this case and he was punished. Action was also taken but it was also the responsibility of the tourist to check whether the belt is tied properly or not. In such circumstances, tourists can personally check that belt, helmet, jacket etc. are properly fastened. Apart from this, in case of dissatisfaction in any situation, paragliding in-charge can be informed.

Accident occurred due to injudicious use of technology

While on one hand technology has made human life convenient, on the other hand blind faith on it and using it indiscriminately can prove to be extremely risky and fatal. A similar accident happened in Kochi, Kerala where two doctors who were out for tourism were driving their car using GPS in poor

visibility conditions. As soon as the GPS provided direction towards the Periyar River, their car fell into the river and both the doctors died on the spot (Chakravarti Ankita, 2023). This incident warns people not to drive in bad weather conditions, to be especially cautious while driving and instead of relying only on technology, common sense can be learned to use one's senses well.

Accident happened while taking selfie

The lack of common sense among tourists can be most easily observed while taking selfies. While taking selfies, tourists become unaware of the circumstances around them for some time and become careless. This carelessness becomes the cause of their accident. Evidence of the adage '*Accidents happen as soon as caution is removed*' was seen in the form of a tourist couple taking a selfie on a rock in the middle of the sea in Bandra, Mumbai, where the couple lost their lives after being hit by strong ocean waves (Senger Shalini, 2023).

One such accident was seen at Ghatarani Falls in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, when a young man lost his balance while taking a selfie and fell about 50 feet, breaking his back bone (Amar Ujala, 2018).

Tourists need to understand that selfies are not bigger than their lives. Before taking a selfie, one can estimate the surrounding circumstances and the dangers arising from them and the next step can be taken accordingly.

Collection of arbitrary prices during tourism

Generally, it has been found that local shopkeepers, hotel workers and service providers at tourist places charge arbitrary prices from tourists and in return provide substandard goods and services. Due to lack of bargaining option available to tourists, they become victims of financial loss.

A similar incident happened with a private businessman resident of Bhilwara. During river rafting in the river Ganga flowing in Rishikesh, an arbitrary price was collected from him by the boat driver for taking photography in the middle of the river. This price was not included in the price decided by the businessman before rafting. Photography was essential for the businessman to preserve the memories of rafting. In such a situation he had to pay higher prices (S. Dangi, personal communication, March 07, 2024).

Using common sense, information can be collected from the videos available on YouTube, news published in newspapers, articles published in magazines etc. regarding the previous experiences of tourists regarding rafting. Apart from this, one can know about the experiences of other tourists who have gone rafting at that tourist spot. Based on this information, one can become aware of all the terms and conditions before rafting.

Snatching and stampede at tourist spot

Incidents of snatching and stampede with tourists at tourist places are not a new thing. In one incident, a foreign tourist going from Dhanushkodi, Tamil Nadu to Ernakulam, Kerala and his companion

had parked their car on the roadside to rest for some time when they were very tired. Within a short while, two youths riding a bike came near the tourist and started talking. While they were talking, they took away the gold chain from his neck and ran away (Johnbosco Arockiaraj, 2023).

During tourism here, if the tourist had not worn a gold chain, had not parked his car on the roadside to rest and had not allowed a stranger to come so close to him to talk, then this accident could have been avoided.

Tourists visiting Vrindavan and Mathura have to face snatching by monkeys every day. Monkeys snatch their glasses, purse, mobile etc. In such a situation, tourists need to be very cautious. Tourists can also roam around without keeping their belongings in their hands but keeping them in a safe back-pack.

Sad news about tourists getting injured or dying in stampedes keeps appearing in newspapers every day. Generally, areas prone to stampedes are religious tourist places or fair places. On special occasions these places become very crowded. In such a situation, tourists can avoid visiting those places on special occasions, especially if they are accompanied by small children and the elderly.

A tourist from Chandigarh, who was visiting Manali, Himachal Pradesh, died after slipping on a rock (Kuldeep, 2023). This accident could have been prevented if the tourist had simply anticipated the possibility of slipping on the rock surface and walked carefully on it. Special caution can be taken while using slippery roads during the rainy season. Before using the route, passengers can ensure whether guardrails are installed there or not. Walking barefoot or wearing slippers on slippery roads can be risky. In such cases, sports shoes can be worn. Apart from this, if it is not absolutely necessary, passengers can avoid using slippery routes and use some other safe route.

Tourism without studying contemporary conditions

It is often seen that tourists set out for tourism without knowing the contemporary conditions of the destination. Here, contemporary conditions mean political, social, religious, climatic and other such conditions.

Generally, citizens are aware of the voting dates announced in their area, they are not aware of the voting dates of any other area. A similar incident happened with Mr. Baghel, a resident of Patel Nagar, Bhilwara, when without knowing about the voting date, he had gone on a trip to Kerala with his family for tourism purposes. When he reached Kerala, he got information about voting taking place there that day. In such a situation, he had to leave one of the scheduled days of his journey without touring (V. Baghel, personal communication, March 14, 2024). If he had studied the political situation in Kerala using common sense and planned his trip accordingly, he would not have wasted even a single day of his journey.

Unsettled environment always discourages activities related to tourism industry. According to the experience shared by a college student resident of Jawahar Nagar, Bhilwara, when he had gone to visit Haridwar and Rishikesh, he was not aware that riots were taking place in Saharanpur due to social rivalry

(S. Ojha, personal communication, March 11, 2024). In such a situation, while returning, his train remained stuck at Saharanpur station for 3 days and he had to live in an atmosphere of great fear. If he had kept himself informed about the news related to the riots, he could have diverted his scheduled journey and returned home by some other route and he would not have had to face this disruption during his journey.

It is very important for tourists to gather information about the climate and weather of the destination. If they fail to do so, their tourism may prove challenging. In mountainous regions the rainy season is usually disastrous. During this period, natural disasters like floods, landslides, cloud bursting and lightning occur. In such a situation, tourism related activities can be very risky. According to the experience shared by Mr. Srivastava, an MNC employee from Gurugram, Haryana, he had gone to Manali in the month of July last year to spend his holidays. At that time, a cataclysmic event of cloud burst took place there, due to the overflow of rivers, the flood took its monstrous form, landslides started happening at many places. In such a situation, he was stuck in Manali for 15 days beyond the days scheduled for tourism. Even though he was successful in keeping himself safe, he had to pay an additional fare of 15 days to the hotel (A. Srivastava, personal communication, March 01, 2024). A lesson can be learned from this incident that one should avoid traveling to mountainous regions during the rainy season and make one's journey risk-free.

Lack of caution while hiring a vehicle

There is a need to hire a two-wheeler or a car available for sightseeing at tourist places. In this regard, according to the experience gained from Mr. Pancholi, a businessman resident of Bhopalganj, Bhilwara, when he went to visit Goa, he had hired a scooter. While returning the scooter after the trip, the owner of the scooter was extorted from him by saying that the mudguard of the scooter was broken (N. Pancholi, personal communication, March 12, 2024). If he had done 360° videography or photography of the scooter while hiring it, he would not have had to face this strange problem nor would he have had to pay extra price. Such caution can also be exercised by tourists while taking a hotel room.

Health related problems during tourism

Before going to the destination, it is a primary condition for tourists to have information about their own health. According to the experience shared by a 69-year-old builder from Bhilwara who had gone on a trip to Amarnath, Jammu and Kashmir, he started complaining of hypoxia there. However, there was also a doctor in the team accompanying him, so his complaint did not turn into a major problem and he was able to return safely (H. Nehariya, personal communication, March 21, 2024). No guarantee can be given whether a doctor will be available or not during travel and tourism. In such a situation, it is better to visit high mountain places according to one's physical health.

Similarly, according to the experience shared by a Kanpur resident housewife who went to Auli, Uttarakhand, there was no availability of any kind of medical and health services near her stay site. During this time, due to her son's health deteriorating, she had to leave her trip midway and return home (D. Srivastava, personal communication, April 06, 2024). As a result, apart from health-related losses, she also had to suffer financial losses. It can be learned from her experience that the availability of medical and health services at the tourist destination can be ascertained in advance. Apart from this, emergency medical kit in normal circumstances and essential medicines in case of suffering from chronic disease can be carried with.

Gang rape with foreign tourist

A Spanish couple had come to Dumka in Jharkhand for tourism purposes. For night stay, they set up a make-shift tent at a place called Kunji-Kurumahat. The local miscreant youth had become aware of this. Three miscreant youths riding a bike went towards the tent and started beating the victim's husband. Thereafter they gang-raped the woman. Not only this, they also looted the couple's jewellery, cash and credit cards (Vignesh Radhakrishnan, 2024). Although 8 people have been arrested by the police in the case, but it is a matter of common understanding that it is better to stay overnight not in deserted areas but near any populated area or in a hotel etc. More caution can be exercised especially when dealing with women, valuables and cash. There is absolutely nothing wrong in tourists taking adventures, but possible accidents can be predicted.

Trust given during tourism becomes a reason for deception

According to the experience shared by the Jaipur resident art studio operator, during his visit to Jaisalmer, he was staying in a hotel recommended by his friend. The friend had cited his domestic relationship with the hotel owner. Keeping these relations in mind, the studio operator did not bargain with the hotel staff. Not only this, he did not complain about not getting better facilities in the hotel. While checking out, the hotel staff handed him a bill of twenty thousand rupees for only three days' stay. Frustrated, the studio operator talked to the hotel owner but after not getting any satisfactory answer, he complained about this to the police, then the hotel owner agreed to take eight thousand rupees (B. Srivastava, personal communication, March 13, 2024). Usually, tourists have such bitter experiences. In such a situation, the tourists can negotiate before staying in the hotel etc., before staying in the room, its video can be made as evidence, in case of any inconvenience, the hotel staff can be informed so that any type of fraud can be avoided. Apart from all this, use of Dharamshalas and hotels etc. run by government bodies can prove beneficial for tourists in many ways. Firstly, the fare charged in these hotels are less as compared to private hotels and secondly, since the government has control over the fare charged, the operators cannot collect arbitrary fare from the tourists.

Uncertain behavior of wildlife takes a toll on tourists

Generally, various types of wild animals like camels, elephants, horses, yaks etc. are used at tourist places to attract tourists. In such a situation, tourists also enjoy the ride of these wild animals with great enthusiasm. In some unusual circumstances, these wildlife start behaving erratically due to which unknowing tourists become victims of some major disaster.

Recently, such an incident happened in Amer, Jaipur, where an elephant named Gauri picked up a Russian female tourist sitting on her and threw her. The female tourist's leg was broken in this accident (Lavania Sudeep, 2024).

A similar incident occurred in Nainital, Uttarakhand, when the horse slipped on a very slippery track, resulting in a fracture on one of its legs and a female tourist riding on it suffering serious head injuries (Hindustan Team, 2023).

Many times tourists get photography done with wild animals. During photography, it can be kept in mind that wild animals get irritated by the focus of flash lights and noise of vehicles and start behaving abnormally and as a result they attack tourists.

Although the use of wild animals at tourist places cannot be justified from any point of view, tourists can also keep in mind that they should not use wild animals during tourism. Generally, the wild animals are used mercilessly at various mountain tourist places in our country, they are neither given adequate food nor adequate rest due to which their nature becomes irritable.

Commuters making mistakes regarding diurnal and semi-diurnal timings

Indian Railways timetable operates on a diurnal basis. For example, instead of 4:00 pm, it is mentioned as 16:00 hours. Many times passengers do not keep this in mind and instead of booking tickets for 4:00 pm, they mistakenly book tickets for 4:00 am. Due to this small mistake, they not only suffer financial loss but are also deprived of traveling on the desired date. While making tickets, passengers may especially keep in mind that the railway time table operates on a diurnal timing rather than semi-diurnal timing.

The incidents mentioned above confirm that by using prudence, caution, vigilance, awareness, which can be collectively called as common sense, small to big problems can be solved, possible untoward incidents can be avoided and by eliminating uncertainties the desired results can be achieved. In the subsequent phase of the research paper, those precautions taken under common sense have been described, using which travel and tourism can be made pleasant and successful.

Personal responsibility

While booking travel tickets and hotels, the names of passengers, dates of travel, boarding and arrival times can be carefully verified. While booking tickets, any kind of panic or haste can be avoided

and tickets can be booked sitting comfortably in a calm environment. Since the airport or railway station is crowded, there are long lines for check-in and security, and luggage is also being carried, passengers can reach earlier than the scheduled time.

Many times passengers sit in some other bogie and start arguing with other passengers over the seat. It is better to take responsibility yourself and sit on the bogie after confirming your bogie and seat.

Apart from this, special caution can be taken while boarding and deboarding the train or bus. This is the time when passengers, especially the elderly and children, become careless and get seriously injured.

Planned trip

A complete travel and tourism planning can be done to ensure a pleasant and successful journey. Under the plan, a check list of the items to be carried with you can be made so that no useful item is left out. By keeping in mind the principle of '*minimum luggage and maximum comfort*', one can avoid carrying unnecessary luggage while travelling.

An itinerary can be made and its route map can be kept. Important documents used during travel and hotel stay like boarding passes, train tickets, hotel tickets, Aadhar card, driving license etc. and their photocopies can be kept systematically. Complete up-to-date information can be maintained about the passport and visa regulations applicable to the country to be visited.

Travel insurance

Travel insurance is an essential element of any trip. Generally, travelers consider spending money on insurance as a waste of money. In such a situation, if they or their family members meet with an accident while travelling, they have no arrangement to pay the excessive medical expenses. That's why it is necessary to take travel insurance to be protected from any kind of accident or risk during travel. Apart from this, it is also necessary for the travelers to thoroughly check the instructions and information written on the insurance policy and ensure that the risk cover as per the travel plan is given in the terms of the insurance policy.

Vehicle Inspection and Servicing

In case of using a personal vehicle, it can be thoroughly checked before going on a journey so that one does not have to face any vehicle related problem on the way. For this, fuel in the vehicle, air in tires, headlights, back lights, brakes, wipers, vehicle documents, FASTag balance etc. can be checked. Apart from this, by getting vehicle serviced from time to time, it will be ensured that the vehicle will not break down mid-way.

Dress according to climate and environment

Before traveling and tourism, it is important to keep in mind the environment and climate of the destination. The clothes used by travelers and tourists may also be unfavorable to the climate and

environment of the destination. Many times travelers carry heavy sweaters, jackets etc. with them to places where there is normal cold. In such a situation, they have to bear extra weight during the journey.

Many religious tourist places in our country appeal to tourists to come wearing dignified clothes. For example, in Lucknow's Imambara and Bhool-Bhulaiya, entry is given only to those tourists whose clothes are non-objectionable (Pandey Sanjay, 2019). In such a situation, the tourists can show respect for the laws and prevailing customs and traditions at the tourist destination. By doing this, unnecessary disputes can be avoided.

Extra vigilance during forest visit

Various types of wildlife live in forests. Some of these are of predatory in nature like tiger, bear etc. In such a situation, it is very important for the tourists to follow the rules of the sanctuaries and exercise special caution while visiting the forest from the safety point of view. For example, a bear's sense of smell is very strong. It can smell human urine from a distance of several meters and can attack the human when it reaches it. In such a situation, tourists urinating in the forest and spitting here and there during a forest tour can prove fatal.

Health friendly tourism

Usually tourists, due to their over-enthusiasm, avoid their health precautions and become victims of medical emergencies. In such a situation, tourists can choose those places where it is easy to reach and where seasonal disasters are less. During summer, one can travel to those places where there is less heat and in winter, one can travel to those places where there is less cold.

Apart from all this, before going to any remote tourist destination, own health can be checked thoroughly and the fitness certificate can be kept.

In case of suffering from chronic disease, essential medicines and medical identity card can be carried along. Information can be collected about hospitals and medical stores near the selected tourist destination. This information can prove useful in case of any medical emergency.

Avoid taking Lift

Taking a lift in a stranger's car while traveling can be risky in terms of committing a crime. The person giving lift may also be of criminal nature. In such a situation, tourists can use local public transport as much as possible. Local public transport means are operated by government bodies, hence traveling in them is neither risky, nor are they charged high and arbitrary prices like private transport means.

Contact with colleagues is important

During travel and tourism, in case the mobile phone goes out of the network area or its battery gets discharged or it gets lost or stolen, the numbers written in the diary can be used. Therefore, in case you do not remember the mobile numbers of fellow tourists, they can be written in a diary. Apart from this, power bank can be kept with to keep the mobile battery charged.

In case of any disaster arising during travel and tourism, tourists can share their live location with their family members at home so that they remain aware of the information. Apart from this, one can avoid going to those places where mobile network is not available or is not in mobile range.

Take care of valuables

It is common for valuables to be stolen or looted while travelling, hence it is very important to remain alert during the journey. In such a situation, for safety reasons, passengers can avoid wearing jewelry etc. during their journey. Apart from this, passengers sleep in the train by keeping their mobile on the charger. This is the time when the mobile gets stolen. One should not sleep while charging the phone. During the journey, passengers can wear those trousers which have a chain in the side pocket. Due to the chain being attached, mobile, cash, credit card, debit card etc. can be kept safe in the trousers. Due to this, they will neither fall anywhere nor be stolen.

Maintain a balanced behavior

Tourists should not travel and tour without being familiar with local information, nor should they allow local people to know about it. If this happens the journey may become painful. Gathering of general information about the destination by tourists is the primary requirement for developing a common sense related to tourism. Here general information means knowing the positive or negative aspects about that tourist destination. For example, before traveling to North East India, it is necessary to make a travel permit. No agent is required for this. It can be made very easily from the website of the tourism department there. Therefore, important information about the destination tourist place can be gathered by visiting its official website.

This can be avoided by trying to befriend everyone at a tourist destination. Apart from this, arguing or fighting with the local people can have serious consequences. Therefore, tourists can behave in a balanced manner with the local people.

Conclusion

In conclusion, any travel and tourism activity can be considered successful and enjoyable only when the set objectives are achieved without any risk or accident. This is possible only when travelers and tourists use common sense related to tourism in appropriate quantity.

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