

Pilgrimage tourism

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PILGRIMAGE TOURISM IN TIRUMALA V. Thimmappa Research Scholar Dept. of History S. V. University Tirupati-517 502 India being a country of the pious is dotted with sacred pilgrimage centres. Thus, pilgrimage tourism in India is extremely popular. Great religions like Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism have originated on the Indian soil. The Hindu religion and place of worship are always unique to the rest of the world. To the outside world India is an orthodox country. The superstitions and the religious related aspects dominated the life in India. Despite this, Indian Philosophy preaches that every man should observe universal brotherhood and in order to achieve this noble objective, every true believer in God will have to visit sacred places and attend discourses of great people. Pilgrimage is recognized as widespread religious practice based on the belief that certain places are more powerful than others. Tirumala is one of the rare places in the globe where people gather in great number, from various parts of the world, irrespective of caste, creed, race, language and nationality. The temple beginnings are shrouded in great antiquity and its origins are still a matter of scholarly debate. Sangam literature, the earliest of Tamil literature (dated between 500 BC to AD 300) mentions Tirupati as Tiruvengadam which used to form the northernmost frontier of the Tamil kingdom. Tirupati was richly endowed by the kings and emperors of various dynasties. The Pallavas of Kanchipuram (9th century AD) Cholas of Tanjore (10th century), Pandyas of Madhura (14th century AD) and Vijayanagara kings (14th & 15th centuries) were committed devotees of Sri Venkateswara. Annually 2.5 Crore pilgrims have darshan of the Lord. In the 2009-10 a total of 2.5 Crores of pilgrims have had darshan of the lord. So the TTD trying to do their best to provide

amenities to the pilgrims. The pilgrimage tourism in Tirumala has emerged as an instrument of income and employment generation. In this article an attempt is made to study the impact of pilgrimage tourism on Tirumala.