

Little benefit for tourism from CWG: NGO

Games would make the women and children more vulnerable to trafficking and abuse

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The government assessment on the hosting of the Commonwealth Games in October this year is largely overstated, a new report says and adds that the games will not do much good for the tourism sector.

“Mega events have little to do with bolstering tourism, and in fact can have a negative impact,” said Bangalore-based research organisation Equations (Equitable Tourism Options) in its report “Humanity-Equality-Destiny? Implicating Tourism in the Commonwealth Games-2010”.

“The Ministry of Tourism refuses to recognise that its policy making and implementation priorities have little substantiation for claims on millions of jobs, projection of millions of future tourists, and local economy multipliers,” said Equations' chief functionary Rosemary Viswanath.

The report also noted that the need for 40,000 rooms stressed upon by the tourism ministry was baseless. According to the report, “The Ministry of Tourism in asserting the need for 40,000 rooms in Delhi for the Commonwealth Games has been singularly lax in ensuring the quality of its research or data. What this has set off is a real estate bonanza. 39 prime properties have been auctioned by DDA for the purpose of construction of starred hotels to meet the demand for CWG of which only 4 were completed by April 2010.”

The government has estimated there would be 1,39,754 tourists during the 12-day event in Delhi. Around 69,000 are expected to be foreign, while the rest will be domestic tourists.

The report mentioned that the games would make the women and children more vulnerable to trafficking and abuse. “The Games have come with huge negative implications for the poor, the marginalised, and the vulnerable. Evictions and displacements on a massive scale in the Capital city of Delhi have seen almost no recompense or alternatives for those affected,” the report claimed.

Attacking the government, the report said that India did not debate - at any level of governance - the implications and consequences of the decision to host the Games. “Those who took the decision unilaterally are now washing their hands of the consequences – runaway budgets, human rights violations, misplaced investment priorities & returns, and misleading promises about impact and legacy,” the report added.

The NGO also demanded that the expenditure on the Games be made public along with its effect on social sector investment and access to basic facility for the poor.

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