A Report on

"Exploring Horsley Hills: Sustainable Tourism, Local Livelihoods, Natural Beauty and Responsible Travel a Special Radio Documentary by MITS Community Radio 90.8"

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Introduction

Tourism contributes to regional development by creating employment opportunities, supporting local businesses, encouraging cultural exchange and bringing visitors closer to nature. Destinations such as Horsley Hills in Andhra Pradesh offer opportunities for relaxation, sightseeing, outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism. At the same time, tourism development requires responsible visitor behaviour, adequate safety measures, environmental protection and support for local communities.

In connection with World Tourism Day, MITS Community Radio 90.8 presented a special radio documentary exploring the tourism experience at Horsley Hills. The programme captured the perspectives of public transport personnel, local entrepreneurs and tourists to understand the area's attractions, accessibility, economic opportunities and challenges.

The documentary included conversations of MITS Community Radio 90.8 Program Manager

Sri.M. Narasimhacharlu and Radio Jockey Sreesanth with Mr. S. Babji, a conductor associated with the Madanapalle Depot; Mr. Manohar, who operates a small tea shop at Horsley Hills; tourists who regularly visit the destination; and Mr. Rohit, an IT professional from Karnataka who visited Horsley Hills for the first time on 27th September 2026.

Through these conversations, the programme highlighted how tourism is connected with transport services, small businesses, affordable accommodation, scenic beauty, visitor safety and responsible travel practices.

Objectives of the Documentary

The main objectives of the programme were:

- To highlight Horsley Hills as a nature-based tourism destination in Andhra Pradesh.
- To understand the availability of public transport services for visitors.
- To document the experiences and challenges of small business owners who depend on tourism.
- To understand why tourists are attracted to the destination.
- To create awareness about responsible driving and road safety.
- To encourage visitors to protect the natural environment and maintain cleanliness.
- To highlight the relationship between tourism, employment and sustainable regional development.

Programme Approach

The documentary adopted a field-based interview approach. Instead of presenting tourism only from the perspective of sightseeing, the programme brought together the voices of people who contribute to and experience tourism in different ways.

The bus conductor discussed transport services, while the local shopkeeper explained the relationship between tourist arrivals and business activity. Visitors shared their experiences of scenic landscapes, affordability, sunrise views and recreational opportunities. A tourist travelling from Karnataka also offered practical advice on safe riding and responsible road behaviour.

This combination of perspectives provided a community-oriented understanding of tourism and demonstrated how radio can communicate local experiences to a wider audience.

Public Transport Connectivity

An important part of the documentary was the interview with Mr. S. Babji, a conductor associated with the Madanapalle Depot. The discussion focused on bus services between Madanapalle and

Horsley Hills and the importance of transport accessibility for tourists.

During the interview, Mr. Babji stated that services operate more frequently on Saturdays and Sundays, with five trips mentioned for each of those days. He also described morning and evening trips on regular days. The conversation referred to services beginning at approximately 6:30 a.m., with journey and return timings discussed during the interview.

These details reflect the interviewee's account. Visitors should confirm current departure times and availability directly with the relevant transport depot before travelling, as schedules may change. Public transport can make tourist destinations more accessible to families, students, senior citizens and visitors who do not have private vehicles. Reliable transport also helps connect local communities with tourism-related economic activity.

The discussion illustrated the importance of providing clear information about bus timings, return journeys and seasonal services. Better communication can help visitors plan their trips and reduce uncertainty about transportation.

The Value of a Pleasant Journey

Mr. Babji described Horsley Hills as a peaceful and enjoyable place for children and adults. He mentioned the pleasant environment, recreational facilities and swimming pools as attractions that visitors appreciate.His observations highlighted that the overall tourism experience begins with the journey and continues through the activities available at the destination.

Transport personnel also contribute indirectly to tourism by helping visitors reach their destinations and providing information about travel services. Their experiences can offer useful insights into visitor patterns and the practical requirements of tourism development.

Repeated Visits and the Attraction of Nature

The documentary also featured Aditya Yogendranath, a tourist who said he had visited Horsley Hills more than 20 times. His repeated visits demonstrated his personal appreciation of the destination. He highlighted several attractions, including natural scenery, convenient access from nearby areas, affordable food and accommodation, and the opportunity to enjoy the landscape without extensive travel planning. He also expressed appreciation for sunrise views and the changing atmosphere during the monsoon season. Cloudy skies and variations in the landscape made the destination particularly attractive for photography and nature appreciation.

His experiences suggested that visitors may return to a destination when it offers a combination of natural beauty, convenience and affordability.

The interview demonstrated that tourism does not always depend on expensive attractions or elaborate activities. Accessible natural destinations can also provide meaningful recreational experiences for families, friends and individual travellers.



The Experience of a Local Shopkeeper

The documentary interviewed Mr. Manohar, who operates a small tea shop at Horsley Hills. His account provided an important perspective on the economic relationship between tourism and local livelihoods. Mr. Manohar explained that his family had been associated with the shop since his childhood. After a temporary closure of approximately one to two years, the family resumed the business. The shop serves visitors with tea, coffee, bajji and other simple food items. During the interview, he explained that tourist arrivals influence business activity and that the number of visitors varies according to the season and prevailing conditions.

His experience illustrated how small businesses in tourist destinations can depend on visitor spending. Food stalls, tea shops, accommodation providers, transport operators and other local services may all benefit when tourism activity increases.

Customer Service and Visitor Satisfaction

Mr. Manohar emphasised the importance of serving customers well. He explained that shopkeepers should try to understand visitors' needs and provide helpful service whenever possible. For example, in addition to tea and coffee, a shopkeeper might offer a simple food item to a hungry visitor or provide drinking water when needed.

This perspective highlights the role of customer service in tourism. A positive interaction with a local business can improve a visitor's experience and contribute to a destination's reputation.

Small businesses can strengthen their position by maintaining cleanliness, providing fair service, communicating clearly and responding to visitors' practical needs.

Financial Challenges Faced by Local Businesses

Although Mr. Manohar described tourism as an opportunity, he also mentioned financial difficulties associated with lower tourist numbers. He indicated that he sometimes undertakes other work because the income from the shop is not always sufficient.

He also suggested that reasonable electricity costs would help reduce business expenses.

His comments demonstrate that tourism-related businesses can face financial uncertainty, particularly when visitor numbers fluctuate. Small enterprises may be affected by seasonal demand, operating expenses and limited opportunities to diversify their income.

The documentary therefore highlighted the importance of considering the needs of local entrepreneurs alongside the development of tourism infrastructure.

Tourism as a Source of Employment

The documentary presented tourism as more than a recreational activity. As discussed during the programme, visitors can create demand for food, accommodation, transport and other services, supporting small businesses and employment opportunities. However, increased tourist arrivals alone do not guarantee stable livelihoods. Local businesses also need suitable infrastructure, affordable operating conditions, good customer service and responsible management.

Supporting local entrepreneurs can help ensure that tourism contributes more meaningfully to community development. The interview with Mr. Manohar gave the documentary a valuable livelihood perspective by showing how tourism activity affects the daily experiences of people who live and work in the destination.

Horsley Hills as a Nature-Based Destination

The documentary portrayed Horsley Hills as a destination valued for its natural surroundings, scenic views and peaceful atmosphere. Aditya Yogendranath described the location as convenient to reach and attractive for repeated visits. He appreciated its natural environment and the opportunity to enjoy the scenery without travelling a very long distance. He particularly liked Gali Banda viewpoint and recalled visiting to see the sunrise. He also expressed a preference for the monsoon season because of the changing cloud formations and photographic opportunities.

These observations illustrate the importance of preserving natural landscapes as tourism assets. Visitors are often attracted to destinations because they offer an opportunity to relax, appreciate nature and temporarily move away from busy urban environments.

Affordability and Accessibility

Affordability was another theme discussed in the documentary. Aditya described food and accommodation as reasonably priced based on his personal experience. He stated that his group

of seven people had obtained a room for approximately ₹3,500. This figure represents the visitor's account of one accommodation experience and should not be interpreted as a current standard rate for all properties. Affordable travel arrangements can make destinations accessible to a wider range of visitors, including families, students and groups of friends. The documentary suggested that convenient access, reasonably priced services and natural attractions can encourage repeat visits and support local economic activity.

Visitors from Other States

The programme also interviewed Mr. Rohit, an IT professional from Karnataka who was visiting Horsley Hills for the first time. Mr. Rohit explained that he had discovered the destination through Google and found it interesting. He travelled from the Bengaluru area and appreciated the roads and scenic mountain views along the journey. His experience illustrated the role of online information in destination discovery. Digital platforms can introduce visitors to lesser-known destinations and encourage them to explore nearby tourist locations.

His interview also demonstrated the importance of maintaining safe and convenient road access for visitors travelling by car or motorcycle.

Tourism and Regional Development

The experiences shared by the interviewees indicate that tourism can connect natural attractions with local services, transportation and small-scale entrepreneurship. Visitors benefit from recreational opportunities, while local businesses may receive additional customers and income. Transport providers can also contribute to the accessibility of the destination. For tourism to generate lasting benefits, these activities must be supported by responsible visitor behaviour, safe facilities, environmental protection and consideration for the needs of local communities.The documentary encouraged listeners to appreciate Horsley Hills not only as a place to visit but also as a community whose economic and environmental well-being deserves attention.

Responsible Tourism and Visitor Behaviour

A significant message emerging from the documentary was the importance of responsible tourism. During the conversations, visitors raised concerns about litter, broken bottles and unsafe behaviour in certain areas. These observations suggested that waste and irresponsible conduct can affect the enjoyment and safety of public spaces.



Tourism destinations are shared environments. Visitors, local residents, business owners and authorities all have a role in maintaining cleanliness, preventing damage and respecting others. Responsible tourists should dispose of waste properly, avoid leaving glass bottles or other hazardous materials, respect public facilities and follow safety instructions at viewpoints and recreational areas. Clean surroundings are especially important in locations visited by families and children.

Protecting Natural Landscapes

Horsley Hills attracts visitors partly because of its scenic environment. Preserving this attraction requires care for natural surroundings and responsible use of public spaces.

Tourists can contribute by avoiding littering, respecting local rules and refraining from activities that damage vegetation or disturb other visitors. Tourism operators and local authorities can also support environmental responsibility through waste collection, appropriate disposal facilities, clear signboards and regular maintenance of visitor areas. The documentary's discussion of waste and broken bottles highlighted the practical need to connect tourism promotion with environmental management.

Road Safety for Motorcycle Tourists

Mr. Rohit shared a clear message for people travelling to tourist destinations on motorcycles. He advised riders to ride responsibly, remain aware of road conditions, avoid excessive speed and follow prescribed speed limits. His advice was particularly relevant to people undertaking long-distance rides or visiting hill destinations with changing road conditions. Safe tourism requires visitors to consider their own safety as well as the safety of other road users. Riders should wear

appropriate protective equipment, avoid risky manoeuvres and adjust their speed to road conditions. The documentary also featured discussion about avoiding dangerous behaviour around viewpoints and other hazardous locations. Visitors should remain within designated safe areas and follow instructions provided by local authorities.

Safety and Cleanliness as Tourism Priorities

The interviews indicated that scenic beauty and affordability are not sufficient on their own to ensure a positive tourism experience. Visitors also need clean surroundings, safe facilities and responsible conduct from fellow tourists.

The following practices can help improve the visitor experience:

- Maintain cleanliness and dispose of waste responsibly.
- Avoid breaking or leaving glass bottles in public spaces.
- Follow safety instructions near viewpoints and restricted areas.
- Ride motorcycles and drive vehicles responsibly.
- Respect local communities and other visitors.
- Protect natural features and public facilities.
- Support local businesses through respectful and fair transactions.

The documentary therefore conveyed a balanced message: tourism should be enjoyable for visitors while remaining safe, environmentally responsible and beneficial to the local community.

Alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The World Tourism Day documentary connects with several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

The interview with Mr. Manohar highlighted how tourist spending can support small businesses and local livelihoods. Tourism can create demand for food, accommodation, transport and related services. Supporting local entrepreneurship and improving business conditions can help strengthen the economic contribution of tourism.

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

The programme highlighted the importance of safe public spaces, accessible transport, clean surroundings and responsible visitor behaviour. Protecting public facilities and ensuring that tourism destinations remain safe and enjoyable can contribute to more sustainable communities.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

The discussion of litter, broken bottles and waste management directly relates to responsible tourism practices. Visitors and businesses can help reduce environmental harm by managing

waste properly and using public spaces responsibly.

Key Observations from the Documentary

The interviews generated several important observations:

1. Transport accessibility matters: Public transport services help connect visitors with tourism destinations, but current schedules should be communicated clearly.
2. Tourism supports local businesses: Tourist arrivals can create demand for food and other services, although small businesses may face seasonal income fluctuations.
3. Natural beauty encourages repeat visits: Scenic views, sunrise experiences and the changing monsoon landscape were important attractions for the visitors interviewed.
4. Affordability can improve accessibility: The visitor accounts highlighted the perceived value of reasonably priced food and accommodation.
5. Digital discovery influences travel: Mr. Rohit explained that he learned about Horsley Hills through Google before deciding to visit.
6. Safety and cleanliness are essential: Litter, broken bottles and unsafe riding can negatively affect tourism experiences.
7. Responsible tourism requires shared effort: Visitors, businesses and local authorities all contribute to maintaining a destination's appeal and safety.

Conclusion

The World Tourism Day radio documentary by MITS Community Radio 90.8 presented a community-centred view of tourism at Horsley Hills. By interviewing a bus conductor, a local shopkeeper and visitors from different backgrounds, the programme explored the relationship between natural attractions, transport accessibility, local livelihoods, affordability and responsible travel. The interview with Mr. S. Babji highlighted the role of public transport in connecting visitors with the destination. Mr. Manohar's account demonstrated how tourist activity can influence small businesses and the financial challenges faced by local entrepreneurs. The experiences shared by Aditya Yogendranath and Mr. Rohit illustrated the appeal of scenic views, affordable travel and convenient access, while also emphasising the importance of safety and environmental responsibility. The documentary conveyed that sustainable tourism must balance visitor enjoyment with local economic development, road safety, cleanliness and protection of natural surroundings. Through this initiative, MITS Community Radio 90.8 used community-based storytelling to raise awareness of tourism opportunities and challenges. The programme reinforced the message that responsible travel, support for local livelihoods and care for the natural environment are essential for sustainable tourism development.

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