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Emerging Aspects Redefining Tourism and Hospitality

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The Growth of Hyderabad as an Urban Tourism Hub

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Located strategically at an altitude of 540 metres in the Deccan Plateau and almost in the middle of India, techno-savvy Hyderabad, the capital city of the state of Andhra Pradesh, is an amalgam of a rich social milieu, distinct geography, composite culture, delicious cuisine, exquisite architecture in all its multitudinous hues and a history that dates over 400 years. At present Hyderabad is India's sixth largest metropolis with a population of more than six million. The original city of Hyderabad was founded in 1592 on the banks of the river Musi. The city was planned in such a manner that it would reflect the beauty found in the poems of its founder Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah who also wanted it to be a replica of Paradise, unparalleled in the world. The part now known as the historic Old City is home to the Charminar and the Mecca Masjid and lies on the southern bank of the river. Over the years the city expanded to encompass more areas that started to flourish as the new city, especially with the growth of Secunderabad and the neighbouring municipalities. Soon large and populous metropolitan areas developed with the construction of many buildings and landmarks at different locations. Hyderabad had emerged as a happening place that had arrived on the world stage with aplomb.

The city of Hyderabad has been home to the most spectacular historical traditions that have fascinated people far and wide. Travelers, historians and social scientists have, down the ages, made attempts to relive the several facets of this enigmatic city. The more one tries to discover this city, the more one is intrigued. Evolving into a preferred destination for IT majors, biotech behemoths and travel titans in India, Hyderabad has in recent times, become a hub for business cum leisure trips. Conferences, business meetings and exhibitions held in this over-four-centuries' old city have assumed new proportions adding another dimension to the city's future.

Large cities have always attracted visitors. But in recent years it is the visitor economy that has become the prime factor in positioning cities as attractive tourist destinations. The same has been the case with Hyderabad. Often it is the stimulation from the potential destination that acts as a strong motivation to travel to a particular place. Since image gives identity to a place, the destination's image in the mind of the probable tourist is then considered to be critical in making the choice. The branding of Hyderabad by the Andhra Pradesh State Tourism Department as a tourist's paradise through various marketing