



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM IN JAMMU REGION

Dr. Tirtharaj Bhoi

Assistant Professor
Department of History
University of Jammu Jammu-180006

Archaeology is now concerned not only with man as a social being, artist and craftsman but also as a scientist, technologist, philosopher and thinker. The author analyzes the observation of how archaeological sites influence the tourism industry in Jammu region. Tourism is currently the world's largest industry and the fastest growing sector of the market. It is usually viewed as being multidimensional, possessing physical, social, cultural, economic and political characteristics. Tourism in rural areas is slowly gaining popularity in recent times and villages across the country can serve as unique holiday spots to enjoy the culture and customs that the villages have to offer and experience the magic of community lifestyle. The archaeological research was going on in this region when de-facto transfers of monuments of national

importance from state to central government in 1958. The first excavation was from the manda conducted by ASI in 1976 at Akhnoor area. The research on archaeology was started; nevertheless the Jammu University has not any archaeology department till date. There is an increasing demand of study on monuments and rural tourism amongst the students of this region. The paper is an attempt to bring together the writings on archaeological sites, sites development and its role in the rural tourism.

Key Words: Archaeology, Tourism, Development, Jammu, Heritage.

Introduction

Tourism in rural areas is slowly gaining popularity in recent times and villages across the country can serve as unique holiday spots to enjoy the culture and customs that the villages have to offer and experience the magic of community lifestyle. There are different ways to



attract domestic and foreign tourists, we need to understand what types of services are required to attract and retain the customers. There is a large potential market for rural tourism especially for foreign tourists, which has not yet developed because government has not taken up any systematic approach to attract foreign tourists. The development of a strong platform around the concept of Rural Tourism is definitely useful for a country like India, where almost 74% of the population resides in its seven million villages. It is the rural areas where tourists make personal contact with average Indians and can learn about their activities, traditions and lifestyles. Any village can become a spot of tourist attraction, although many villagers are hospitable, and eager to welcome visitors. There is however, a segment of urban population that is interested in visiting the rural areas and understanding their lifestyle. This segment has been rapidly growing in the past decade leading to rural tourism as becoming not just a good business prospect, but a Rural

areas have emerged as a new focus for recreational and tourism activities in the post-war period within most developed countries as their accessibility and attraction for the domestic population, and to a lesser degree, the international visitors, has earned them the reputation as the 'play ground of the urban population'. As per Gannon, 'Rural Tourism' covers "a range of activities provided by farmers and rural people to attract tourists to their area in order to generate extra income for their business." Rural tourism is a complex multifaceted activity; it is not just farm-based tourism. It not only includes farm based holidays but also comprises special-interest nature holidays and ecotourism, walking, climbing and riding holidays, adventure, sport and health tourism, hunting and angling, educational travel, arts and heritage tourism and in some areas ethnic tourism.

The objective of the paper is to measure the potential of rural tourism in Jammu. The specific objectives of the study are:



(a) to analyze the major obstacles in the development of rural tourism in Jammu; (b) to explore the archaeological heritage of the region in relation to rural tourism; (c) to find out the impact of rural tourism on contemporary society.

Lane (1994) argues that the factors have to be considered in defining rural tourism such as Holiday type, Intensity of use, Location, Style of management, Degree of integration with the community. Thus rural tourism in its pure form should be (a) Located in rural areas (b) Functionally rural- built upon the rural world's special features of small-scale enterprise, open space, contact with nature, heritage societies and traditional practices (c) Rural in scale-both in terms of buildings and settlements

Adopted Methods:

The geographical area of the concern study is Jammu region is consists of ten districts. Standard archaeological tools and techniques have been applied for collection of empirical data. An interview schedule was designed for the

collection of qualitative information from respondent and obtaining information from the sites (people) to understand their perception regarding the development of rural tourism apprehension to archaeological site. Although the region is rich in archaeological heritage but much work has not been carried out to study the importance of archaeological heritage and its contact with rural tourism.

Development of Heritage:

An Archaeological Site is a place where the remains of an old civilization exist, sometimes visibly but mostly under the cover of earth. It needs a lot of careful digging and shifting which in archaeological terms is called excavation. After excavation, the site reveals the existence of human settlement with houses, streets, temples, potteries, tools and other implements, sculpture, painting, writing etc. This ancient human settlement discovered or unearthed during the modern times is called archaeological heritage.¹ Thus all



remains and objects and another traces of humankind from past times are considered elements of the archaeological heritage. The notion of archaeological heritage includes structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, moveable objects, monuments of other kinds as well as their context, whether situated on land or under water.

In this setting, the study is focused on the archaeological heritage of Jammu and its strength for development of rural tourism. Jammu like other regions is rich in historical remains in the shape of temples and heritage sites. Since long, Jammu was enchasing its tourism resources based on temples like Shri Ranveshwar, Shri Raghu Nath ji complex, Peer kho and many other temples of Devi's such as Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, Bawe Wali Mata, etc. For sustainable development of the isolated regions having Archaeological sites and Monuments, due care and respect is needed, as these are regarded as important assets for tourism. There is a

law governing these assets which is known as "The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. The main objective of this Act is to preserve the ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance, protection of sculpture, carvings and other similar objects. The Act is extends to whole of India. As the Act takes care for their protection and preservation, tourism takes care for its economic viability.

In Jammu, there is a wide scope for archaeological heritage from tourism point of view. Most of these sites are located in the forest, near rivers or along the hills. These sites once excavated by ASI were left for Tourism department for further maintenance but unfortunately, the present status of most of the sites in Jammu region is very deplorable. Some of these sites and heritages along with their location and few characteristics are given in the following table:



Table I: Important Archaeological Sites and Monuments

The archaeological sites and heritage monuments which are listed in the table are very important from both architectural and tourism point of view but these are not provided with enough resources for their maintenance and development.

Difficulties for Development:

The main problem areas that are hampering rural tourism development have been identified as that tourism has been inadequately resourced and funded in rural areas, a number of key rural tourist attractions are located in rural areas, and are not receiving the benefits stemming from the tourism industry. The limited involvement of local communities serves as a major constraint in developing tourism in rural areas. In order to address these challenges, the strategy inter alia aims to facilitate the coordination of rural tourism development initiatives among relevant

S. No	Site/Village	Block	District	Cultural Sequence	Cultural Assemblage
1.	Ambaran	Akhn oor	Jammu	Kushana and post kushana	Decorative terracotta figurine and human figurine, ornaments, terracotta skin rubber, beads, hooks, rings, semiprecious stone beads, etc.
2.	Mandan	Akhn oor	Jammu	Harapan	Jars with thick painted band on neck and shoulder, dishes, beakers and goblets, unfinished seal terracotta cakes, arrow-heads, potsherds, bowls, miniature pots, kushana pottery, etc.
3.	Sudh Mahadev	Udhampur	Udhampur	Early historical settlement & contemporary layers yield Gupta red ware	An inscription on shaft of metal trident, stone masonry wall enchased with diaper pebbles on either side, red ware vases, bowls, etc.
4.	Group of Temples	Udhampur	Udhampur	Post-Gupta Period	Remains of temples and small shrines.
5.	Harihar temple	Bilawar	Kathua	Circa 10 th century A.D.	Architectural planning, sculpture wealth and decorative scheme are noteworthy.
6.	Mata Vaisna Devi	Katra	Katra	19 th century (oral tradition)	Images of Mata Vaisnavi
7.	Bahu Fort	Jammu	Jammu	18 th century	Fort and park

stakeholders; create an enabling environment for rural tourism development to stimulate job creation



and identify and recommend strategic areas/nodes for tourism development in rural areas within the sector.

Implication of the work:

Jammu is a destination that has ample tourist potential. It has got the natural beauty, climate, historical monuments, but unfortunately the potential has not been tapped effectively. Tourism is mainly concentrated in areas such as Vaishno Devi (katra), Bahu fort (tawi), Shiv khori and few temples of the region. Lakhs of tourist visited these places every year but none of them have ever visited any archaeological/historical site because of their unawareness. These tourists visited such places and after that rush back to their home towns. There are still many beautiful places which are yet to be explored as this offers a tourist eye.

Rural Tourism is emerging as one of the best options available with its proven results in west, to promote “Incredible India” both for domestic and foreign tourists. Rural India has much to offer to the world. Rich in traditions of arts,

crafts and culture, rural India can emerge as important tourist spots. ‘Atithi Devo Bhava’ is more practiced in rural India. Those in the developed world who have a craze for knowledge about traditional ways of life, arts and crafts will be attracted to visit rural India if the concept of rural tourism is marketed well. Rural tourism has the potentiality of attracting both foreign and domestic tourists.-

Based on such evaluation, this study will help us to understand the impact of rural tourism in Jammu and thus aims to exploit the full potential of rural tourism in Jammu, explore new sites for the development of rural tourism. It brought into the notice of ministry of tourism the scope of rural tourism in Jammu.

Conclusion:

The region is prominent for its rich cultural heritage in the form of “Duggar Culture” has a great tourist potential. As this area is hilly and mountainous region, therefore, there is wide scope of investigating various archaeological heritages which would help in the

development of rural tourism. Moreover, the geographical landscape and ranges of ecosystem leaves a lasting impression on the tourist mind. But there are certain structural and institutional weakness like tourism infrastructure and superstructure, levels of development in terms of both archaeological heritage and rural tourism.

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