

Tourism in Kshetra; A Substantial Sustainable Approach

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Abstract— Tourism is one of the biggest and fastest growing sectors in the global economy and has significant effect on the three basic pillars of sustainability i.e environment, socio-culture & economics in both ways positive and negative. As we are observing in recent decades, the tourism industry has shown the rapid growth in revenue generation and number of tourist arrival many of them through foreign exchange & ultimately contributing to the national economy. Generation of employment & business approach has given an extreme economy, social & environmental impact on almost every part of the world. But major impact seen in India due to religious belongings. kshetras are the emerging tourist spot due to its rich cultural potential and heritage value. This paper focus on all the kshetras in India including 12 jyotirlings, 3^{1/2}shaktipeeth, ashtavinayak & kurukshetra and its sustainable development approach to preserve tourism in kshetras. There are lot of scope for designer in architecture to preserve and develop this heritage in many ways, this paper deals with the importance and development of kshetras as a one of the crucial heritage and its sustainability in the field of architecture.

Keywords- Kshetra, Sustainability, Pilgrimage, sustainable heritage.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the tourism industry has shown sustained growth in revenue generation and number of tourist arrivals, mainly through foreign exchange earnings, contributions to national income, generation of employment, business opportunities and has left extensive economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts almost every part of the world (Dabour, 2003).

As a result, there is now increasing agreement on the need to promote sustainable tourism development to minimize its environmental impact and to maximize socio-economic overall benefits at tourist destinations (Ahmed, 2013). Hence, sustainable development is achieved if the economical, social and ecological development of a country is done in a sound and fair manner (Filho, 2000).therefore we can say that sustainable tourism can be achieved through the sustainable approach by architectural design strategies and policies.

Pilgrimage tourism in India has been practiced since time immemorial. It is the land which is blessed by several masters (gurus) for spiritual enlightenment (Gupta, 2007). It is land of religions and pilgrimage centers and is showing phenomenal growth in this phenomena (Chand, 2011).

in India there are many tourist destination already struggling with issues related to the sustainable development and architectural practices can be one the tool to overcome this problem in many ways.

INTRODUCTION ABOUT KSHETRA

Kshetra may denote a place where there is a temple or where there is held to have been a person or event of sacred, religious or Dharmic importance. The Kurukshetra specifically is the "field" or "precinct" where the Pandavas and Kauravas fought a religious war as told in the Bhagavad Gita section of the Mahabharata.

II. LIST OF IDENTIFIED KSHETRAS IN INDIA

The Indian subcontinent is full of Tirthas and Kshetras.

- 12 jyotirling.
- Somnath in Saurashtra (Gujrat)
 - Mallikarjun in Srisailam (A.P.)
 - Mahakaleshwar in Ujjain (M.P.)
 - Omkareshwar in Shivpuri / Mambaleswara (M.P.)
 - Vaidyanath in Parali (Maharashtra)
 - Nageswar in Darukavanam
 - Kedareswar in Kedarnath / Himalayas (Uttarakhand)
 - Tryambakeswar in Nasik (Maharashtra)
 - Rameshwar in Setubandanam / Rameshwaram (T.N.)
 - Bhimashankar in Dakini (Maharashtra)
 - Visweswar in Varanasi (U.P.) and
 - Ghrishneswar in Devasrovar (Maharashtra).



Figure: map showing 12 Jyotirlinga In India

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF JYOTIRLINGA



The present temple is built in the Chalukya style of temple architecture or Kailash Mahameru Prasad Style and reflects the skill of the Sompura Salats, Gujarat's master masons.

The temple is situated at such a place that there is no land in straight-line between Somnath seashore till Antarctica such an inscription in Sanskrit is found on the Arrow-Pillar called *Baan-Stambh* erected on the sea-protection wall at the Somnath Temple. This *Baan-Stambh* mentions that it stands at a point on the Indian landmass, which happens to be the first point on land in the north to the south-pole on that particular longitude.

Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga is one of the most famous Hindu temples dedicated to Lord Shiva. It is located in the ancient city of Ujjain in the state of Madhya Pradesh, India. The temple is situated on the side of the *Rudra Sagar* lake. The presiding deity, Shiva in the lingam form is believed to be *Swayambhu*, deriving currents of power (Shakti) from within itself as against the other images and lingams that are ritually established and invested with mantra-shakti. The presiding deity of time, Shiva, The Mahakal dominates the life of the city and its people, even in the midst of the busy routine of modern preoccupations, and provides an unbreakable link with past traditions. The idol of Mahakaleshwar is known to be dakshinamurti, facing the South on the day of Mahashivaratri, a huge fair is held near the temple, and worship goes on through the night.



Figure: 12 jyotirling In India

2. Ashtavinayak Temples.
3. 3 ½ shakti peethas.

The four Shaktipeethas of Maharashtra are well described in Devi Bhagavata Purana. Himavanta (Lord of Himalayan mountains), worshiped Jaganmata for a long time to get her as his daughter. Pleased by his devotion, she appeared before him and gave the boon. Himavanta was very happy. But, he was clever. He asked her another boon to give Bhakti and Jnana so that he can take care of her properly. Jaganmata told him that one who wishes Bhakti-Jnana from her is a real devotee and she will be more interested to bless them than any other. She told Devi Geeta to Himavanta. In the Devi Geeta she mentioned few important places on the earth which she likes a lot. Out of them the top most priority goes to the four Shakti peethas present in Maharashtra. They are:

- Hingula (Tulja devi) in Tulaja puram (Tuljapur)
- Lakshmi (Amba bai / Maha laksmi) in Kolhapuram (Kolhapur)
- Renuka in Matru pattanam (Mahur)
- Sapta shringi mata in Saptashringam (Saptashringi)

SIGNIFICANCE OF FOUR SHAKTI PEETHAS:

What does four Shakti peethas resemble? We can't tell why Jaganmata categorized these four shaktipeethas into a group. But many devotees gave explanations for this number four. The number four resembles the four parts of holy AUM. A kara, U kara, Ma kara and Mmm kara (Ardha matra). That is why they are also called as "Three and half Shakti peethas".

4. Major Seven Holy Cities In India. Ayodhya, Allahabad, Varanasi, Mathura, Pushkar, Naimisha Forest, Kurukshetra, Kedarnath, Badrinath, Dwarka, Puri, Lake Manasarovar, Nashik are some of the most important Kshetras.

III. IMPORTANCE OF CONSERVING KSHETRA

Kshetras are Most Magnificent Architectural & Cultural Treasures. It's a testament of some of the most important historical events of ancient & medieval India. Kshetra holds cultural, emotional & use values. Kshetras are Made for Tourist Destination In Order To Improve Economy through Employment.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Having the religious importance. Associated with myths and mythology. It helps to sustain the local culture of the place. Significant in its cultural, religious & historical strengths. Rich In heritage properties. Vast geographic area with inter linked history.

ISSUES AND DIFFICULTY IN CONSERVATION

Lack of infrastructure. Lack of community participation & concern for sustainability for underdeveloped region & negligent public limited presence of organized sector. Problems between states as to how the regions can be

developed through combined efforts. Impact of new large-scale development proposals on the world heritage property and its setting intervention and effects in important architectural and archaeological monument lack of social awareness regarding world heritage site. Financial resource problem

IV. CASE STUDY, KURUKSHETRA, HARYANA INDIA



Figure: map showing location of kurukshetra In India

LOCATION

Kurukshetra is one of the most ancient places of religious travel in the world. It is situated in the state of Haryana, India, 160 km north from Delhi and 91 km south from Chandigarh and known as The land of the Bhagavad-Gita.

The city is well connected by rail and road network and lies on the Delhi-Ambala stretch of the National Highway number 1.

The two state Government tourist complexes namely Parakeet and Neelkanth Yatri Niwas situated in the city. In addition to that a large number of accommodation facilities both private and government are there in Kurukshetra for pilgrims/tourists. Kurukshetra is one of those holy towns that have borne the imprint of Lord Krishna's footsteps. Tradition holds that the great 18-day battle between the Pandavas and Kauravas in which Lord Krishna played his enigmatic part, as described in the pages of the epic Mahabharata, was fought on the plains of Kurukshetra. It is said in the Puranas that those who visit this area or reside here even for a while, go straight to heaven after life. Kurukshetra is home of a number of tourist sites



Figure: Temple In Kurukshetra



Figure: Kurukshetra showing its history

HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

Kurukshetra is a holy spot and is also known as Dharmakshetra (holy city). According to ancient Hindu religious texts, Kurukshetra is named after the King Kuru, the ancestors of the Kauravas and Pandavas as illustrated in the Mahabharata. One of the reasons why Kurukshetra remains so important is because the Kurukshetra war of the Mahabharata was fought here and the Bhagavada Gita (One of the most important religious texts to Hindus) was preached in Kurukshetra during the war when Lord Krishna found Arjuna in a dreadful crisis.

PILGRIMAGE TOURISM SPOTS OF KURUKSHETRA

Brahma Sarovar: Among the holiest of water tanks in India, the Brahma Sarovar is an important place to visit in Kurukshetra. This large water body is edged with wide platforms, stairs and a wide 'parikarma'. A number of meditation chambers have been built for the convenience of religious tourists. It is believed that it is the cradle of Indian civilization because Lord Brahma, the Creator of the Universe, conceived the Earth here. A dip in the Sarovar bears the sanctity of performing Ashwamedha Yajna, absolves one of all the sins.

CHALLENGES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN KURUKSHETRA

Globalization has eminently affected the local culture & ethnicity, customs, traditions, handicrafts and folklores in adverse result

Excess of tourist arrivals can bring exploitation and degradation to an area's social cultural, economic and environmental arenas if mechanisms to control and manage its negative impacts are not in place.

Local communities are subject to large influxes from tourism traffic, noise and possible price increase in goods and services. There is lack of good quality hotels, resorts, transportation services; lack of guides & escorts, poor dissemination of information near major tourist spots is a hindrance in the development of sustainable pilgrimage tourism in city of Kurukshetra.

There are shortages in various fields such as qualified experts, funding, marketing, facilities and amenities, poor policies, economic and physical planning mechanism, lack of funds for expansion of tourism are seen as issues pilgrimage tourism development.

The infrastructure in Kurukshetra is of poor standard such as poor conditions of railway stations, bus stands, poor quality of

roads, dharamshalas, drinking water problems, lack of information & communication facilities and so on causes interruption in sustainable development of pilgrimage tourism in the area. Although Kurukshetra is famous destination for pilgrimage visits but there is lack of safety & security of tourism themselves and their luggage/baggage.

There is no provision of tourist police in the area which build the negative image of place in present and potential visitors.

RECOMMENDATIONS THROUGH CASE STUDY

As tourism development usually involves the financial, socio-cultural and natural resources of an area, it must be designed and managed in a way to achieve economic, social and cultural sustainability.

Some of the recommendations that would help to improve the tourism industry and make it more sustainable are:

1. The tourism industry in Kurukshetra has mainly concentrated on pilgrimage tourism and neglected other forms of tourism to a large extent. It should diversify into other areas, like farm and rural, tourism which have the potential for future growth and development.

2. Tourism development causes increased use of infrastructure like, road lines, railway stations, accommodation facilities, drainage and sanitation facilities etc. need to be enhanced immediately for faster tourism development.

Kurukshetra tourism needs to focus more on sustainability issues to cope up with the present competition among the destinations as it has enough potential to benchmark it as famous tourist spots. If we consider the recommendations given above, definitely it will become paradise for overall development of the region. Conducting similar studies on some other destinations or on some other forms of tourism can also give new heights to the pilgrimage tourism.

CONCLUSION

As above recommendations is derived from the study related to kurukshetra, similarly we can develop bench mark to resolve these problem to develop substantial sustainable kshetra as a tourist destination which ultimately helps in revenue generation of that place and ultimately to the Indian economy .As we are having various kshetras in india to explore architecturally.

Prominently role of an architect needs to be vital in all aspect, where we can provide an solution in terms through the designing and planning kshetra as a substantial place for visitors which includes designing of parks, spaces for social gathering ,tourist information center and convention centers, hospitals, shopping complex ,accommodation complex (resort, hotels ,guest house) and finally landscaping element adding the charm to its beauty to cater visitors in high level.

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