

“Study of Tourism Potential: A Case study of Bharatpur City, Rajasthan”

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Abstract - This paper discusses the relevance of tourism aspect in Bharatpur City in connection to its relevant region. Bharatpur city forms part of Brij-Mewat circuit. It is known as land of Birds's paradise due to presence of Keoladeo bird sanctuary which is internationally recognized Ramsar Site. Blessed with presence of various tangible and non-tangible heritage in form of built & cultural heritage, natural resources, history, festivals etc. The paper explores the importance, potential of tourism resources, and scope of development for holistic development of residents of the city and the region. It also throws light on the pertaining issues related to the aspect. The tourist trend analysis shows though the number of tourists are increasing but the international tourist shows declining trend. Thus at last paper suggests strategies, recommendations and brief proposals to overcome the issues and tap its potential for development of tourism, economic development which can enhance livelihood of the locals and the region. And contribute to further strengthen the tourism base of Rajasthan, India.

Key Words: Ramsar, tourism, tangible, non-tangible,

1. INTRODUCTION

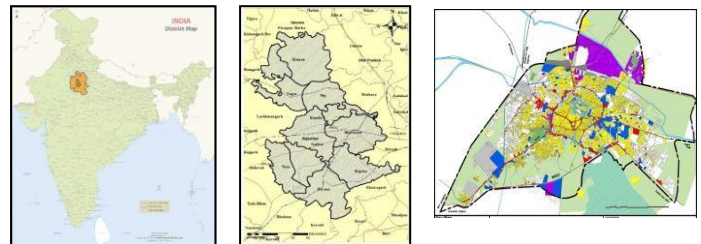
Travelling and tourism has been an integral part of Indian Culture & Tradition. Tourism industry is the most vibrant tertiary activity and multibillion industries in India. (Singh, 2016). Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure. (UNWTO, 2008).

Rajasthan is a vibrant state rich in culture colors of incredible India. It is best described as land of Kings and Kingdoms, architectural wonders, cultural extravaganza, fabulous history and warm hospitality. (Gti Travels, 2018)

Bharatpur district is one of the important and solitary districts not only in Rajasthan but also in India. The district is very close to Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan. It also reveals a treasure of great tourism resources. The tourism of district is depending on natural as well as cultural

resources, Keoladeo bird sanctuary is a tourist destination and attraction for tourist. (Singh, 2016).

Bharatpur is located in the Braj region of state Rajasthan, around 38 km from Mathura. Bharatpur is popularly known as the home of Keoladeo National Park. Bharatpur was founded by Maharaja Suraj Mal in 1733 AD.



Rajasthan, India Bharatpur, District Bharatpur, City

Fig -1: Location of Bharatpur City, Rajasthan

It is part of Taj Trapezium Zone, Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor and famous for its Industrial Clusters and mustard cultivation. There are 9 tourist circuits in Rajasthan, Bharatpur falls under one of the major tourist circuits called the Brij Mewat Circuit, forms part of Religious + Heritage circuit and Eco Tourism + Heritage circuit.

1.1 Aim

Aim of the study is to analyse scope of heritage and tourism development in Bharatpur City, Rajasthan.

1.2 Objective

The major objective of the study is to make a baseline analysis of the tourism sector of the city.

- ☑ To study the existing type of tourism in the district and Bharatpur City.
- ☑ To study the tangible and intangible cultural heritage that helps in formation of city's image.
- ☑ To understand the characteristic elements that are intrinsic to the City's identity.
- ☑ To promote Bharatpur as a tourist destination to develop untapped potential of the City.

1.3 Methodology



Fig -2: Methodology, Source: Author

1.4 Research Questions

- ❑ What are the major tourist and heritage destinations of the City?
- ❑ What are the major issues and potentials of tourism sector?
- ❑ How tourism can enhance quality of life and support economic development in the city?

2. TOURIST AND HERITAGE SITES

Heritage is defined with different meaning. It can be monuments and sites that embody the cultural, political, economic or social history of the community, state or nation.

Tangible and non-tangible assets of any group, society, caste that is inherited from the past generations forms part of cultural heritage.

2.1 Tangible Heritage

It refers to physical artefacts produced, maintained and transmitted intergenerationally in a society. Built heritage such as buildings and monuments, natural heritage which includes Nature Park, reserves, zoos etc. artistic creations, human creativity and cultural significance forms part of tangible heritage.

The history of Bharatpur dates back to 5th century BC when the Matsya kingdom flourished here. It was

majorly ruled by the Jat clan also dominant caste is Jat who practice of agriculture and the Brahmins. The main identified heritage sites and tourist designations in Bharatpur city are as follows. The table below shows the major tourism heritage sites in and around the city

Heritage Sites Within the City	Heritage Sites Around the City	Major Events
Loha Garh Fort, Bharatpur	Deeg Fort and Palace, Deeg	Jaswant Mela, Bharatpur
The Palace, Kishori Mahal Bharatpur	Kishori Mahal Kumher	Brij Festival
Government Museum, Bharatpur	Fort, Mahal & Vatika Weir	Kailadevi Mela, Jheel Ka Baada
Jama Masjid	Kaman Fort, Kaman	Poonchari Ka Mela
Ganga Mandir	Roopwas Fort, Roopwas	Kaman Utsav Kaman
Banke Bihari Temple	Rana Sanga Smarak, Khanva	Bhojan Thali Mela Kaman
Laxman Temple	Chakora, Roopwas, Deeg, Kaman, Bayana, Kumher,	Van Yatra Mela Deeg, Basant

Fig -3: Heritage, Tourism sites Bharatpur District
Source: Tourist Information Centre, Bharatpur, 2017

a. Keoladeo Ghana National Park

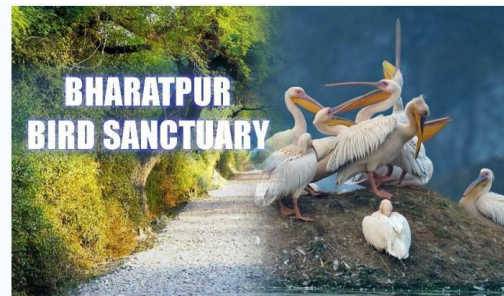


Fig -4: Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary

This internationally recognized Ramsar site is popularly known as Bharatpur bird sanctuary, which is situated approximately 2 kms SE of Bharatpur city. It spreads in an area of 2873 ha. This natural heritage is renowned for its large congregation of non-migratory resident breeding birds and important wintering ground of Palaearctic migratory waterfowl. This paradise of bird was developed artificially in a natural depression wetland with flat level land and centre has gentle slope. Approx. 375 bird species has been spotted so far at this unique duck shooting reserve at end of 19th century.

b. Lohagarh Fort

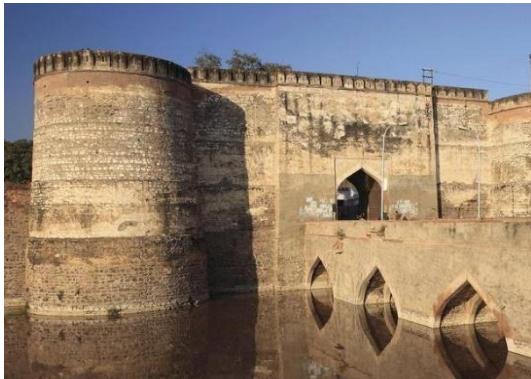


Fig -5: Ashtadatu Gate of Lohagarh Fort

It was built by Maharaja Suraj Mal the Jat ruler between (1755-1763 CE). Due to its unique design it withstand various attacks by British forces in 1805. It has 2 main gates Ashtadhaatu in north and Chowburja in South. The fort includes various monuments like Mahal Khas, Kishori Mahal, Jawahar Burj, and Moat, Gateways etc. which are state protected monuments and has national importance. It is surrounded by Sujana Ganga Canal and old city.

c. Bharatpur Palace and Museum

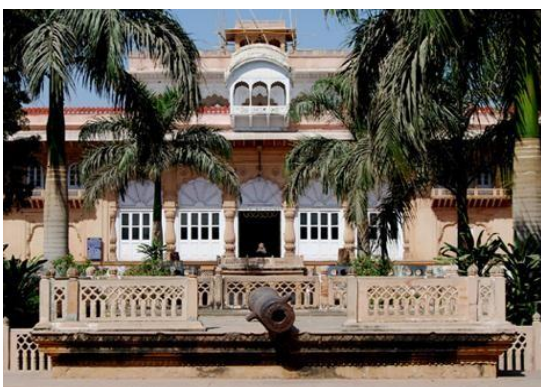


Fig -6: Bharatpur Museum

many traditional market with heritage gateways like Kumher gate, Mathura Gate etc. embedded with landmarks cum meeting places like Laxman Temple, Jama Masjid, Ganga Temple and Bijli Ghar. Street size here varies from 2m to 10m.

e. Ganga Temple

In 1845 Maharaja Bazalwant Singh started construction of this temple. The stone structure with 2 story height is built with confluence of Dravidian, Rajput and Mughal style of architecture style. Local people plays important role as they were asked to donate one month's salary in pay towards the temple.



Fig -7: Ganga Temple

f. Laxman Temple

The built heritage has architectural blend of Mughal and Rajput styles. Situated in the middle of Lohagarh fort, in 1944 AD transformed into museum. Kamra Khas building within fort was converted into museum which displays collection of coins, miniature paintings, stone sculptures, terracotta items, inscriptions etc. All this exhibits the rich art and crafts heritage of the region.

d. Old City Bharatpur City

Old city is a mixed land use area it has market lane, government offices, traditional houses. Along with Lohagarh fort which is the major attraction, the city has The temple is dedicated to Lord Laxman. The temple is famous for its elaborate carvings from pillars, walls, ceilings to arches entirely built in stone.

Religious pilgrimage and kunds are also tangible heritage.

g. Moti Mahal and Jama Masjid

h. Market Streets (Kumher Gate to Bijli Ghar)



Fig -8: Market streets of Bharatpur, city

1. Stretch 01 : Kumher Gate to Laxman Mandir
2. Stretch 02 : Laxman Mandir to Jama Masjid
3. Stretch 03 : Jama Masjid to Ganga Temple

4. Stretch 04 : Ganga Mandir to Mathura Gate

5. Stretch 05 : Mathura Gate to Bijli Ghar

2.2 Intangible Heritage

a. Handicrafts

Bharatpur, Weir, Kaman are known for various handicrafts patchwork, hand quilting iron utensils and rich culture.

b. Pottery and Bangle making

Bhartpur is one of the pottery centres of rajasthan known as Pottery Land many traditional circuits and families exists in old city who are continuing and reviving this cultural heritage. Bharatpur keeps the delegate process of bangle making alive although the practice is declining overtime.

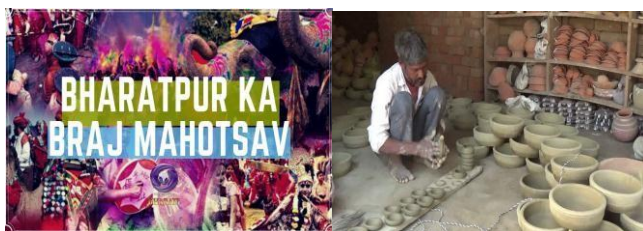


Fig -9: Brij Mahotsav

Pottery Bharatpur

c. Brij Holi Festival

One of the most important festivals is the Brij Mohatsav. As Bharatpur is part of Brij- bhumi it is famous here as well, which is dedicated to the Lord Krishna. It is also organized to attract tourists from different parts of region and nation.

d. Gangaur

It is celebrated all over Rajasthan and MP, it is all about worshipping goddess Parvati. Gangaour is as 18 day festival celebrated with full zeal and excitement.

e. Jaswant Exhibition

Jaswant exhibition is held during Dussehra every year. The expo hosts wrestling competitions, cattle fairs and other expos which are welcome by the masses with zeal.

f. Cuisine

Bharatpur is famous for its sweets like khajla, Ghever and pheeni. Also for snacks like daal kachori etc.

3. ANALYSIS

Bharatpur has both national and international footfall. Though the overall tourism is increasing in Bharatpur the foreign has been declining steadily. In 2013 43166 tourists visited Bharatpur as compared to 17413 in 2018, marking a decline of 247%. International tourism composition is highest 20% from Germany, 9% tourist UK, 9% France, 6% USA, 4% Japan, 3% Australia, 2% from Italy, Canada, Switzerland etc. still no measures for welcoming international tourist.

Of the total footfall highest number of tourist visits Bharatpur bird sanctuary which is UNESCO recognized world heritage site and Ramsar site. Where people visit Bharatpur preferably between months of Dec, Jan and Feb. The highest number of Tourists visiting National Park is on Christmas and New Year (22,709) and has 1,51,065 people annually visiting the park.

Most Tourist prefer using/hiring the car and visiting the city but use public transportation or by foot to explore the city..

There are 84 Hotels, 9 PGHs and 4 Dharamshala's in Bharatpur which accounts for 1,240 rooms and 2,416 beds. On an average, there are 56 beds per thousand tourists in district Bharatpur. Therefore, Bharatpur district lacks in accommodation facilities which needs to be addressed for better tourism. Only 10-15% of the accommodation during March – Oct are booked in the slack season, whereas the occupancy is 85-90% during the peak months of Nov- Feb.

Other than accommodation infrastructure and basic amenities like restrooms toilets, drinking water facilities hygienic food places, PT & IPT and pedestrian, cyclist infrastructure need improvement.

Old city and area around fort lacks accessibility, public amenities, street furniture, signage, and green spaces.

4. ISSUES AND POTENTIALS

THE BHARATPUR CITY has various social, environmental and infrastructure issues such as lack of accommodation, pollution, lack of connectivity etc. But some of the major issues of the area are as follows.

- ❑ Short duration of stay, rarely people stay overnight which impacts employment and livelihood.
- ❑ Various environmental and other issues has disturbed migratory bird pattern and number of migratory birds has reduced which directly impacts International tourist footfall.
- ❑ Potential of various tangible and intangible heritage remains untapped which has scope of improvement like pottery.

❑ Social factors like lack of public participation and culture needs to be protected.

Instead of above mentioned challenges there is high scope of tourism development in the city due to its location, industrial clusters, mustard cultivation which can help to enhance agro based tourism. Eco and Nature based tourism due to presence of Ramsar site, bird sanctuary and other natural sites water bodies in the city. Cultural tourism and historical tourism and adventure tourism based on its rich culture and built heritage base.

5. PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The total number of projected tourists arriving in Bharatpur in 2039 is 3, 88,617. The domestic tourists are 3,00,843 and the number of foreign tourists is 87,774.

Bridging infrastructure gap and new development is need of the hour to fulfil existing infrastructure gap and cater future tourism, majorly with focus on Accommodation facilities, transportation, recreational activities, food etc.

For enhancing the tourism prospects of the city, additional facilities have been provided which are interpretation centre, café and restaurants etc.

So major proposals for tourism development in Bharatpur city are as follows.

❑ Grameen Haat

One Grameen Haat is proposed near the Kanni Gujjar Circle, where one under-used haat already existed.

Activities such as Handicrafts, Local Food Plaza, Fairs and Festival Ground, Open Air Theatre, Art Gallery can be the major attraction spots of the haat. Recreational activities can be develop around lake located behind haat.

❑ Heritage Walk

Based on the existing heritage base , walk trails and tourism circuits can be developed to experience the course of the city. It can be walking trail of 1.5 km and 2.65 kms. Religious circuit for the walk in old city area starting at kumher gate connecting Laxman Mandir, Jama masjid, Ganga Mandir and ending at Dev Ram kachori. Second heritage walk starting at goverdhan gate , following goverdhan , astadhathu gate, Jawahar Burj, Loha Garh fort, Lohiya gate, Mathura gate and edinding at Grameen village.

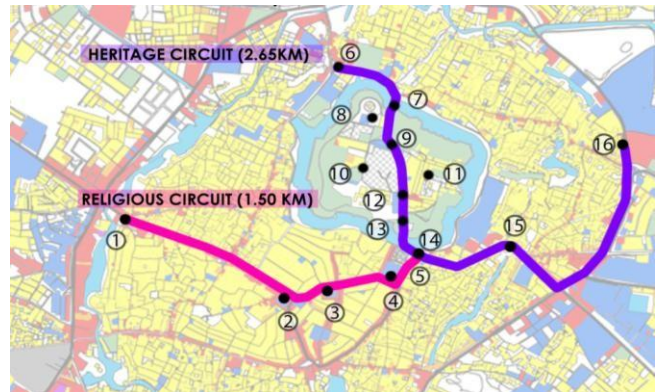


Fig -10: Heritage Walk Circuit

❑ River Front development

River front development around lohagarh fort canal to enhance tourism. 50 m buffer can be maintained around canal for its biological health maintenance which can be further redeveloped as recreational buffer. Graffiti and artworks of local artisans can enhance attractions.



Fig -11: Heritage Walk Circuit

Adventure sports can attract youth. Intermittent low-density, mostly ground floor structured commercial plazas, pay and use toilets, pedestrian tracks, stages for social events, food stalls, etc. can become part of redevelopment. This space is expected to be really vibrant at festive times, and in the evenings, with people from various walks of life coming together and enjoy the best community life, Bharatpur can offer.

❑ Agro Tourism

Agro tourism is a concept of developing and preparing villages for creating an alternative source of earning and sustaining their heritages. Bharatpur's potential of Mustard cultivation, honey and oil clusters can be linked to develop agro tourism at mustard farms. Came Rides, Rural games, puppet shows, Entertainment (Harvest Festivals), Camping and Tenting, Pottery. This also helps in creating additional income for the farmers and beekeepers.



Fig -12: Jor ki dhani, Agro tourism model

Govt. Schemes and Policies

This is the major driving force behind and development and no development can take place without Government will. Public Private Participation can also be promoted. With support of NGO, locals and various other organizations.

Public Awareness

Official Tour Guides

6. CONCLUSION

Sustainable tourism development which considers social, environmental and economic sectors can help Bharatpur to attain its youth and move ahead its infantile stage and play an important role in development of eastern Rajasthan. Need of the hour is to make efforts to elongate stay of tourists in the city to support livelihood and economic development. Environment shall be a prime consideration while carrying out development at eco sensitive areas like bird sanctuary, water bodies. Local to Global interventions are required for flora fauna balance such as migratory bird route. Which can increase international tourist inflow in the city. Undoubtedly city suffer some environmental and social issues due to poor infrastructure, lack of accommodation and restaurant facilities, environmental pollution, lack of awareness etc. Though the Govt. of Rajasthan is making various efforts to promote tourism development in city and state to tap full potential of its rich culture, intangible and tangible heritage and thus provide holistic and robust tourism and economic development.

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