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Madhavgarh Fort: contemporary analysis of historical past and glory of heritage tourism

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Abstract

Heritage tourism is one of the major areas as compared to any other form of tourism. Heritage focuses on tourist destinations, natural and cultural values and goes beyond a simple interest in the past. Heritage Tourism boasts a wide variety of landscapes and settings; it explores the cultural and natural attractions of the people and highlighting the natural physical beauty, urban or industrial development. Heritage destination like Baghelkhand is a very rich in cultural heritage and has contributed towards its past. The Madhavgarh Fort of Satna is currently facing many challenges, but at the same times the scope for more opportunities. Every tourist has visiting this fort and to understand the social, cultural life as well as the advancement in material and technology of that era. A proper model should be adopted by the MPSTDC for the preservation and protection of this fort as it can be a major attraction not only of the district but also of the entire Baghelkhand region which can help in keeping the Satna district among the most favorable tourism sites. This research paper tries to highlights different aspects related to the history of monument and for the conservation of Madhavgarh Fort and also focuses on the development of heritage tourism which can achieve it.

Keywords: Heritage tourism, Glory, Madhavgarh Fort, Satna and MPSTDC

Introduction

Heritage tourism is very important segment of Indian tourism industry, as tourists from all over the world visit archaeological sites as well as heritage monuments. The Heritage tourism adds to the facility for education and research in the field of Indian heritage. The building of any special architectural and historic interest comes under heritage buildings (Sharma 2014) [20]. As India had undergone through many cultural, social influences by various rulers, it is having very rich architectural heritage. Visiting these buildings helps tourist to understand the social and cultural life as well as the advancement in material and technology of that era (Nilson and Thorell 2018) [15]. Tourism plays very important role in any nation's economy. It is considered the fastest growing market in the tourism industry (Timothy and Boyd 2006) [30]. Tourism in central India is a highly remarkable and counter part of Indian history and tourism. Thus, central India is part of Baghel dynasty; various rulers of Baghel dynasty were ruled in Baghelkhand. Satna district is a part of Baghelkhand region, it has repository of ancient heritage (Singh *et al.* 2020) [25]. Baghelkhand region have many forts, havelies and ancient buildings which are very ancient and tough for their unique artistry and shape. One of these, the Madhavgarh Fort is a unique building, located at Madhavgarh village (7 kilometers from Satna railway station). This fort was once the main center of the princely state of Rewa. The natural structure and surrounding geography of this fort make it special. The part of the gabled around the kiln and the texture and artistry inside it also attract tourists. It is said that in the 18th century, Madhavgarh Fort was built by Maharaja Vishwanath Singh Judeo of Rewa State and gifted it to his brother Laksman Singh (Singh 1919) [24]. Today this fort is a victim of neglect. Madhavgarh Fort has 400 hundred years old. There are many caves to go inside. These caves were used during battle. The king used to go to fight after getting out of these caves. If the fort is developed as a heritage place then tourists can come to see it. After the development of this place the local people to get the opportunity of various type of employment and the local businessman can also increases their business. By proper conservation of the fort, not only can it be decorated with historical memories associated with the fort, but by developing it into a great tourist center, it will add to the happiness of the local people as well as every native and foreign tourist passing through this historic fort wants to see his curiosity and natural beauty in his golden memories (Zahirovic-Herbert and Chatterjee 2012) [31].

Objectives

In terms of development, heritage and tourism are two sides of the same coin. That is why the management of heritage sites is connected with tourism. The main objectives of this research paper are as follows-

1. To evaluate the historical significance and glory of Madhavgarh fort in Baghelkhand region.
2. It is find out the exact condition of the fort in present scenario.
3. To examine the various aspects related to the development of heritage tourism.
4. It is also access the different ways in which this fort could be made famous and well preserved for the future.

Methods and Data collection

For this study the primary data have been collected from the archeology department and frequently visit Madhavgarh Fort. Where as the secondary data collected from published/unpublished literature on the study of forts management of Baghelkhand. Latest references available from the journals, newspapers, research publications and magazines and other relevant sources like internet. The observation method was adopted as it suits best in this situation. The scope of the study is to bring out historical and cultural significance of Madhavgarh Fort. Thus, both primary and secondary data have been used, apart from field study for this purpose with limitation of material availability.

Location and Connectivity

The Madhavgarh Fort is a historical site and it is located in a village called madhavgarh in Raghurajanagar tehsil of Satna district. Being built in Madhavgarh, it is called the Fort of Madhavgarh. This fort is currently known as a tourist destination. The fort of Madhavgarh is built on 1.440 hectares. While 1.560 hectares of land is lying vacant near by the fort. This fort is located 7 kilometers from Satna railway station; tourists can reach this fort easily. The national highway 75 is connected by road to reach the fort. This fort is reminiscent of the ancient times of the princely states of Rewa Riyasat (Baghelkhand).

Literature Review

Heritage tourism in India has registered an immense growth in the last few years, ever since additional initiatives were taken by the government of India to boost India's image as a destination for heritage tourism (Ashley 2016)⁴. India has always been famous for its rich heritage and ancient culture. So the onset of heritage tourism in India was long anticipated. The heritage which consist social, cultural and technological aspects helps in understanding the past of the country. Various states of India have very important heritage buildings. Ancient civilization, the temples as well as public utility buildings built by those people are included under heritage (Bagde 1987, Sahi 2001 and Suryawanshi 2016)^[8, 18, 28].

Heritage is a legacy of our past, a living and an integral part of our today's life (Ashworth 1994)^[5]. According to the NTHP (2008)^[13] traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historical and natural resources. Heritage as cultural and economic capital, vulnerable to exploitation of resources in many

ways, so the heritage must be develop as a part of tourism activities and also preserve for future generation (Ashworth 2000 and Nypan 2003)^[6, 16]. The current status about the Indian forts, Baig (2005)^[7] has emphatically stated if there is no more effect for preservation of the forts, these monuments would be end forever. Dube (1993)^[11] has conducted a study on the forts of India. The conservation of historical heritage includes the preservation of natural and cultural heritage and also helps to promote the sustainable use of architectural heritage and resources. The advancement in the social well-being will help in the use of renewable tourism resources. Sahi (2001)^[18] has strongly recommended for the pursuit of preservation of glorious heritage for ling time to develop tourism activities in our forts. Shukla (1968)^[22, 23] has written in his book Bhartiya sthapatya and Vastu Vidya is good exposition of the Indian architecture, town planning and fortification in ancient India. All forts of India have details of making good statue, style of palaces and picture making art and architectures. Negi (2003)^[14] emphasized the importance of tourism resources and identified the easily accessible resources like the old monuments and forts in order to capture the market of the originating country. Because, the host countries should offer several attractions, So that the cultured value of tourism in Indian sub-continent needs to be preserved and given publicity. Singh (1998)^[26] has described the importance of forts in tourism development. The Indian forts have easily accessible resources for historical knowledge of the monuments and tourism. The host countries should also provide several schemes to attract the tourists.

Therefore, the heritage is a mixture of both past and present generations and can be interpreted as a space that narrates certain events to create an identity (Garrod and Fyall 2000)^[12]. Heritage place has linked to the past which symbolizes some sort of gift to be passed down to current as well as future generations, both in terms of cultural traditions and physical objects (Timothy and Boyd 2003)^[29]. When the heritage is linked to tourism, local history and architecture of destination play the central role as an attraction for the visitor and representation of the community (Aas *et al.* 2005)^[1]. Moreover, heritage tourism whether in the form of visiting preferred landscapes, historic sites, building or monuments, is also experiential tourism in the sense of seeking an encounter with nature or feeling part of the history of a place (Zappel and Hall (1990)^[32].

Baghelkhand region have glorious past and cultural diversity make a potent blend which attracts various tourists each year to its heritage tourism attractions. The government of Madhya Pradesh and the Ministry of Tourism and Culture encourage heritage tourism in Madhya Pradesh by offering several benefits to the different region of states that are particularly famous for attracting tourists. Baghelkhand has rich heritage is amply reflected in the various places such as temples, monuments and forts that can be found everywhere in the region. Thus, Baghelkhand is one of the region possessing very ancient and rich heritage value at national and international level (Shastri 1998)^[21].

History of Madhavarh Fort

Baghelkand was the kingdom of Baghel Dynasty. On the basis of the lineage of the king's of the princely state of Rewa, it is known that Maharaja Vyaghradeva Singh Judeo ruled from 1213 to 1238 A.D. The King Jai Singh Judeo

was the 29th king of the princely state of Rewa, he was the ruled from 1809 to 1833 A.D. (Agnihotri 1972 and Singh 2002) [3, 27]. King Jai Singh Judeo had three sons, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, Laxman Singh and Balabhadra Singh. King Jai Singh Judeo was followed by King Vishwanath Pratap Singh Judeo of the princely state of Rewa who inherited the Fort of Rewa. In due course of time, two forts were built by King Vishwanath Pratap Singh Judeo for his two brothers, in which the first fort was built in Madhavgarh and the second fort was built in Amarpatan (Shastri 1998) [21]. In this way, the fort of Madhavgarh was given to Laxman Singh Judeo and the fort of Amarpatan was given to King Balabhadra Singh Judeo according to the working area of Rewa State. In this way, the area of the king's of the above three forts was divided according to their respective ways (Singh 1919) [24].

Madhavgarh is made up of two words Madhav and Garh. In which Madhva (in Sanskrit) means Vishnu or Krishna is another name and from the Bhagavad Gita, Vishnu is understood to refer to being the husband of the goddess of fortune (Lakshmi) and Garh (in Hindi) means fort that is Madhavgarh Fort. This fort was very important in terms of strategic security for the *Baghel Kings* of the princely state of Rewa. The river Tamas flowing from the fort served as a protection. In fact, this fort was built at this place in the 18th century.

Therefore, Maharaja Vishwanath Pratap Singh of Rewa, a nature lover and scholar, built the fort on the banks of the river Tamas under his kingdom and it handed over to his younger brother Laxman Singh. After that Laxman Singh Judeo later developed this stronghold and built a small court hall and a shady sit on the fort wall to see the beauty of the Tamas River. The river Tamas flows in here forcefully to rocky area, so the river's edge is shallow and wide, increasing its elegance. An ancient village madhavgarh was connected to this fort, which has developed after independence, but people of madhavgarh village fulfill all its needs go to Satna city because during that time here market did not grow.

Madhavgarh fort is an identity of baghelkhand

The Madhavgarh Fort holds special significance in the history of Baghelkhand. It was built by Maharaja Vishwanath Singh Judeo in the 18th century. It is said that the Madhavgarh Fort was built to keep the horses used during the battle of the princely state of Rewa. In this fort, not only the horses involved in the army unit of the state were trained, but here full arrangements were made for them. This fort was built in a village called madhavgarh to avoid the invasion of rebels and enemies over the protection of the princely state. The river Tamas flows from near the fort. This fort is presently in dilapidated condition on the main road from Satna to Rewa. The entire complex of this fort is 1.440 hectares, which is owned by MPSTDC. Now, presently the MPSTDC is trying to make Madhavgarh Fort a heritage palace. All necessary efforts should be made to beautify the fort.

Art and architectures of madhavgarh fort

The fort of Madhavgarh is situated on the banks of the river Tamas, due to which the fort looks very beautiful. This fort looks very enchanting with the bridge built over the river Tamas. This fort is built in Bagheli style. Very beautiful paintings have been made on the walls of the fort. The

entrance of this fort is very big and made of wood. This fort is spread over a large area. It is a fine example of Bagheli style art and architectures. This fort is a state protected monument of Rewa princely state. As a security purpose during that time this fort was also called the lifeline of this area. When the river is in spate, the fort prevents its water from flowing into the area. Overall, this beautiful fort with several palaces around the two courtyards reflects the distinctiveness of 18th century architectural style. The series of paintings made in the walls and roofs of many rooms of this fort is unique and very attractive. Outside the fort, also a chhatra complex is also built. In this chhatra complex, many chhatris of different rulers and some temples are also built here. All these chhatris and temples are very attractive (Agnihotri 1972) [3]. Therefore, some temples and mausoleums built in the long, empty ground outside the premises of Madhavgarh Fort are telling the saga of their past. The two temples of similar size, on is Shiva Linga which are set on very high platform (chawki). Both temples are located nearby the fort. First the platform is installed and then the high chawki and the Shivaling are installed on the large artistic watershed above the chawki. Apart from these two Shiva temples in the fort complex, there is also a great temple of Hanuman with mustaches, which is the responsibility of worship, maintenance and cleanliness of the local people. There is also a 14-15 foot wide tunnel in the outer part of the fort complex, the open ground, which is now filled, it is said that this tunnel was opened on Naro Mountain; the erstwhile king went from here to the mountain. Presently, this fort is in the hands of Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation.

Renovation of madhavgarh fort

The Fort of Madhavgarh built on the banks of Tamas River, just 7 km from the city, was to be developed for heritage tourism place. But due to the sluggish attitude of the Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation, no work has been done. It is worth mentioning that an action plan was prepared by the MPSTDC to make Madhavgarh Fort as a heritage place. This was later cleared by the government. But, so far no work has been started here in the name of development. Due to which indigenous and foreign tourists coming to Satna district are not getting anything except desolation. Many historians say that the people who come here get mesmerized due to the panoramic view spread around this fort. But the renovation of this fort is not being implemented by the MPSTDC.

The entire complex of Madhavgarh Fort is 1.440 hectares. According to this, there is enough land to redevelop the fort and tourist amenities. If the administration pays little attention, then this ruined fort can be rejuvenated and tourism will get a boost. But no attention is being paid by the administration for the rejuvenation of the fort. This is the reason why this fort is still crying tears of its plight.

Their condition has also deteriorated due to not keeping the idols of Hindu deity's right behind Madhavgarh Fort. There are more than half a dozen historical temples in the back of the Madhavgarh Fort. The condition of these ancient temples has deteriorated due to lack of proper maintenance. Cleaning the temples and idols of deities will remain an attraction for the locals as well as tourists. Behind the Madhavgarh Fort is a large Shivalinga of Mahadev and Nandi Baba also appears in his posture just in front of the Shivaling. Shivalinga is installed in two different temples.

The round dome of the place where the Shivalinga is installed and its carving makes every visitor crazy. But, the beauty of this place damaged day by day.

Development of basic Amenities in premises of Fort Area

Basic amenities are important aspect in heritage tourism as it triggers the popularity of the place; it also facilitates repeated visits and mouth to mouth publicity as a promotional aspect (Sandbor and Botre 2013) ^[19]. The basic amenities at Madhavgarh fort are first and foremost right of the tourist as every single visit to the monument gives impetus to the local economy. Basic amenities are important irrespective of their financial feasibility in project structuring (Dhotre and Joshi 2019) ^[10]. The all basic amenities within and surrounding areas of fort such as public conveniences of international standard, ease of Access aesthetics and cleanliness of this heritage site, backlight signage's, clean drinking water facilities, informatory and directional signage's, canteen with souvenir shop promoting local art and craftsmanship and barrier free monument and to get the accessibility for all type of tourist.

Madhavgarh fort is a glory of heritage tourism

Madhavgarh Fort is a perfect destination for the heritage lover. Tourist can enjoy the attractions of this popular tourist spot. With so much to lure senses and offer recreation at its best, get drenched in the spirit of adventure that tourist get to explore at Madhavgarh Fort. Enjoy together all the points of popular interests and bring back several memorable moments. Madhogarh Fort is not just the place for sightseeing, but it is also enables for tourist to steal a self-indulgent moment for it as well. So, check out the Madhavgarh Fort tourist spot for all the attractions that is on offer and visit this spot on weekends for a rejuvenating time. World standards, extraordinary architecture, innovative layouts, and well-thought execution make place a highly coveted point of tourist interest (Boniface and Fowler 1993)⁹. Tourists do not forget to carry their camera and capture special moments. This fort is the sure way to refresh and relax after a busy weekday. Explore interesting themes, fabulous designs, colorful landscapes, amusing characters, ambient music, props and merchandise available in nearby stores-all at one place. Therefore, Madhavgarh Fort is the best way to have a memorable time with kids and family. So, enjoy a fulfilling outing at Madhogarh Fort in Satna.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Madhavgarh Fort is a historical heritage, its pride and glory of Baghelkhand. The various tourists visiting in this fort say that it is most fabulous and popular place in Satna District. The government administration should pay great attention to it, so that not only the coming generations will know their entire history but also the promotion of historical assets. To make strategies for fort conservation will also benefited to our society. But, the present time, which is not being done due to this negligence because it is not the only historical building in Satna district. Such historical buildings were filled in Satna district which is in the same condition. Many tourists who came to visit the fort said very sadly that our ancestors have left historical heritage for the people of the country after doing such beautiful work, that we should preserve and promote such historical heritage, which we are unable to save.

Various tourist who visited the fort even said that when the exterior of the fort is so beautiful, then the art work inside will be highly appreciated. Seeing the exterior art work of the temple, there is a big desire to pleasantness inside the fort. But it is does not normally possible; because of this fort is not allowed to visit without permission. Thus, Madhavgarh Fort has great art and architectures. Such historical artistry is not seen anywhere else in India. Every visitor bowed for artists to build the fort. Visitors have also very happy to visit the fort but same time they have also surprised to see such degradation of this fort, because it is seen only in India.

In order to save the legacy of Madhavgarh Fort, it is necessary that it be fully protected. A few more ancient temples are built at some distance towards the back of the fort. Due to the systematic development of the idols of the deities installed here, they are now falling prey to neglect. Over time, people's faith in Hindu deities has become showy. This is the reason that Satna district administration is deliberately ignoring the existence of the ancient temple on the back side of the Madhavgarh Fort. The historic monastery temples of the Baghelkhand region are slowly being eradicated, yet the district administration, tourism department and state government work to protect the heritage rather than protect them. The effective and efficient renovation polices and plans of this Fort for its long term sustainability. The MPSTDC should be developed this heritage site as per the norms of Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan (2017) ^[2] project guidelines. So that, the facade, architectural features and general construction should have the distinctive qualities and ambience in keeping with the traditional way of life of the area. The architecture of the fort property to be considered for this category should not normally be interfered with. Any extension, improvement, renovation, change in the existing structures should be in keeping with the traditional architectural styles and constructional techniques harmonizing the new with the old. We hope that Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation will play its major role in saving the historical heritage of Madhavgarh Fort as a heritage tourism place.

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Conflict of interest

This research paper is based on the fieldwork conducted in the Madhavgarh Fort, District Satna. The authors have declared no conflict of interest. They have approved the final version of the manuscript contributing equally.

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