

“RURAL TOURISM : A CASE STUDY OF POTENTIAL AREAS AND PROBLEMS”

Geographical Environment of the Study Region

—The satpura foothill zone area is selected for the study. Those tourist places located foothill zone of in Jalgaon district has been considered for case study. The northern part of the district is occupied by Satpura mountain range, extended east to west direction and work as boundary between Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. This region having basaltic rock and land surface is covered by medium fertile soil identical physiographic factors, natural beauty, hot springs forest, religious, historical aspect, influence to develop natural tourist spots in the region. Region having monsoonal climate with summer, winter, rainy season. Large area is occupied by deciduous thick forest. This region is rich with various forest resources. Foothill zone of Satpura mountain is occupied by 78% rural, and 22% urban population. Among the rural population sizable proportion of tribal like Pawara, Bhil, Tadavi community. The region is agricultural prosperous region, 82% population in agriculture; most of farmers having high economic level but due to heavy agricultural work load they unable to enjoy natural beauty of surrounding environment. Occasionally they visit some of religious centers at the time of fair.

Tourist Spots—The study region is occupied by rural environment; numbers of tourist, picnic, historical, natural religious tourist spots are developed in the region. Unapdeo, Sunapdeo, Nazardeo (hot spring) Caugaon fort, Gavali Palace, Thoke Place, Chopada, Yawal, Dongarde (historical), Khandargarh (Caves), Pal (Natural), Manudevi, Nateshwar temple, Khanderao Mandir, Swaminarayan Mandir (religious) are the important rural and tribal centers developed as tourist spots as well as picnic spots are rural population. The hot springs of Unapdeo, Sunapdeo, Nazardeo attract the rural people as religious center for the residence of Lord Rama for one day. The hot water with sulphur use to solve the skin diseases. The temperature of water is 60°C. It has been noted that the tribals were using this hot water for boiling rice in old age. Chaugaon fort, Gavali Palace, Thoke Palace, Chopada, Yawal, Dongarde are the famous for historical monuments. The ancient architectural style, huge construction of fort, palace, walled settlements attract the tourist, schools, colleges, youth clubs, bhajani mandals, mahila mandals from rural area use to arrange one day picnic

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at these centers. Khandargarh caves were incomplete caves of 1st century. The pleasant climate identical basaltic physiography, ancient caves attract the tourist at this place. Manudevi a Goddess of the region, natural waterfall, thick forest, geographical features, meandering of rivers, are the main attraction of Manudevi temple in Satpura hills. Nateshwara, Khanderao, Swaminarayan mandirs are the religious centers of rural and tribal population. In the study region numbers of tourist spots having attraction of annual fairs. Due to religious and superstition background of surrounding region influence large volume of tourist during the fair. They get together and perform cultural programmes, religious programmes, pre-marriage ceremony, Bhongra Bazar are done during the fair of these places. (See table-1)

Volume of Tourist—In the Satpura hilly and foot hill zone area of the study region are variations in environment influence volume and nature of tourist at the various tourist places. To collect the information about volume and nature of tourist in the rural tourist spots intensive field work were undertaken by the investigators from last one year. The questionnaire survey at various levels, field visits, expert views and interviews, case studies, secondary data are the main source of data. All most all the centers are developed as picnic spots for rural and tribal peoples. As we observe in the table all most all the tourist centers are crowded during winter season i.e. more than 50% tourist use to enjoy the nature of beauty during winter season. During the field work it has been mark that pleasant climate, flooded rivers, greenery, vacation for schools and colleges, spare time to rural dwellers, are the main causes for sizable visits of tourist in the study region. The fieldwork, tabulated data shows that rainy season is the off season for tourist visits in the region. Less than 20% visitors use to visits during rainy season. Investigator has tried to know the causes behind this; expert view shows that all the tourist spots are located in isolated region; lack of motarable road during rainy season, rural population is busy in agricultural operations in rainy season. Rainy season is the most pleasant period at these tourist spots but due to above issue controls the visitors certainly one can overcome these problems and attract more tourists during rainy season, develop the economy and increase the local job opportunities for local population. In the summer season extreme

heat, shortage of protected drinking water, deciduous nature of forest badly influences lower flow of tourist in summer season in the region. Manudevi temple is a Goddess of Khandesh region. During the rainy season Goddess temple is over crowded due to religious and superstitions background of the region. Natural waterfall, greenery, attractive physical features, ancient temple, and unique annual fair attract the temple area. Rural, tribal and students are visiting this place as to picnic spot. In the study it has been mark that 60% tourist spots having, annual fair. Large volumes of tourists from surrounding areas use to attend the fair. One or two days annual fair develop a marketing, amenities, for visitors and more than five time visitors use to attend the fair.

Amenities and Problems of the Tourists—Boarding, lodging, accessibility, restaurants, protected water, marketing, public utilities, guide and published material, recreational facilities are the basic facilities attract the tourist. One can say all the tourist centers in the study region are the one day tourist spots or picnic spots there are no need of such facilities. The table shows the regional variations in availability of amenities at the tourist spots in the region. More than 60% tourist places do not have basic amenities like hotel, rest house, parks, protected water, market, guide, library facilities. During the fieldwork it has been markable that only 20% tourist spots having metaled road. Rest of the centers having un-metaled roads, market, protected drinking water, Telephone facilities i.e. Chopada, Yawal, Savada, Faizpur. In the study region not a single tourist spots having guided. Pal is one of the important natural tourist centers of the region. Development of this center is done by Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation. Numbers of amenities are available for tourist at this place. This important base of tourist occupation as a market, communication, protected drinking water, lodging, boarding, transportation, guide, public utilities are not available is more than 60% tourist places. Lack of all the basic amenities for the tourist it is badly influence attraction of tourist in the region. To develop various facilities in the region certainly influence to increase the tourist industry in the region. Tourist can stay and enjoy the nature of this region. Development of all these amenities creates number of employment opportunities for the local

population. Maximum utilization of local resources, development of small scale occupation, marketing, guide, other sources of job opportunities are useful for socio-economic development of the region.

Potential of Tourist Spots—The surrounding region of the tourist spots are occupied by dry land. Lack of tourist centers in nearby area certainly developed for those tourist spots located on the foot hill Zone of Satpura Mountains. All the natural, historical, religious spots of the region are crowded during the winter season. Lack of drinking water supply, unaccessibility lower amenities for tourist, badly influence transport, occupation during the rainy and summer season in this region. All the facilities and amenities should be developed in this region certainly large numbers of tourist attract to these places to enjoy the natural beauty and environment during rainy and summer season. In the tourist view survey it has been mark that they are interested in to stay such natural spots but lack of accommodation and other amenities restrict them. Government, social organization, commercial organization can develop various amenities and creates employment opportunities in this region. There is great future for the development of tourist occupation in this region. Large volume of job opportunities can develop in the region by the establishment of amenities in the region. Development of amenities, attract the tourist, development of other activities in the region has influence socio-economic base of the tribal region. Government, MTDC and private sector agencies are able to develop these tourist spots.

Conclusions—The natural environment and cultural environmental factors are responsible for the development of tourist spots in the study region, seasonal variations in environment influence volume of visitors in the tourist spots. Agricultural operation period, inaccessibility, lack of tourist amenities during rainy season, lower proportion of tourist in the region. Winter season is popular season for tourist attraction. Lower amenities for tourist influence lower development of tourist industry in the study region. These are great future for further development of tourist industry in this region if various amenities can be developed in this region. Large employment opportunities can be developed due to tourist industry in the region.

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