

Tracing the History, Heritage and Scenic Beauties of Martand and Chatbal Destinations in Twin Parganas of Mattan And Kuthar

Shaib Mohd

Research Scholar, University of Kashmir, Dept. of History, Uttersoo, Anantnag

Abstract- Martand site is very popular throughout the world. It can also guide the further growth of tourism in district Anantnag very easily. It has a potential to contribute a big share in promoting heritage tourism of the valley. The people who visit this site feel an aesthetic pleasure. Some tourists have been asking for archeological guidebooks, photo cards of this monument. This paper tries to trace out the historical background and heritage attractions of Martand site and also it tries to place Chatbal as nascent picnic attraction for tourists to enjoy hustle free vacations at this virgin spot which has emerged as mini-phalgam in Pargana Kuthar. The scenic land of Chatbal is located on the remote corner of the east of the Pargana Kuthar. Moments after stepping into the land of Chatbal, tourists will definitely fall in love with the striking beauty of the place. The best way to explore the town of Chatbal is to take nature walks and experience a strange yet pleasurable kind of closeness to the lofty mountains, lush green surroundings and the sound of streams running down the rugged body of mountains. For people looking out for some adventure, Chatbal offers thrilling trekking routes as well. So this study is an effort to highlight the potential products for tourism in twin Parganas like Kuthar and Mattan.

Index Terms- Pargana Kuthar and Mattan, Martand, Chatbal, Heritage, Tourism, Rural, Eco- Tourism.

I. INTRODUCTION

Pargana Kuthar is located in the south-east of district Anantnag. It comprises of a cluster of villages on its north, south, east and west. The area features hillside villages and also the villages lying in lower plains. It was one the Parganas of Kashmir in Mughal period.¹ The Kuthar valley is very rich in terms of its scenic beauty and archaeological wealth. Although it has already been explored, scope for further exploration still remains there. Mattan Pargana is situated at the North- Western boundary of the Kuthar Pargana. It is on the top of the lofty plateau, at whose feet stretch the broad green plains of Mattan and Kuthar valley.² It is surrounded on every side by mountains

into which there are numerous inlets forming straths³ on a level with the plain, but all having a lofty pass at their upper extremity.⁴ The north area above the Anantnag town is Bawn. Nilmatpurana locates the *Gautamanaga*, named by the name of *Martandamahatmya*.⁵ Both Parganas (Mattan and Kuthar) presents its salubrious and invigorating climate during the summer season due to their close association with lush green forests and towering mountains. Study over the area reveals that apart from heritage tourism, it can easily promote eco-tourism⁶ because most of the historic or religious or scenic sites in the area are sandwiched in between the forests and lush green fields. Here the focus of the study is Chatbal and Martand site in twin Parganas of Mattan and Kuthar. Chatbal is all winded with high and low Range Mountains from all sides and silently presents a beautiful experience same is true with the historical heritage of Martand which has been identified as site of attraction for bollywood shootings popular Hyder movie was also picturized here.

³ A wide, Flat River Valley

⁴ Vinge, G.T. 1842. *Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo*, Vol. I, London: Henry Colburn, Publisher, Great Marlborough Street p.283.

⁵ Stein.M.A.2005. *Ancient Geography of Kasmir*, Srinagar: Gulshan Books, p.178.

⁶ Panda.Tapan. K.2004. *Tourism Management, Socio Economic and Ecological Perspective* (Hyderabad: University Press. p. 20. Eco tourism is a form of tourism involving to visit fragile, pristine and relatively undisturbed natural areas, intended as a low impact often small scale alternative to standard commercial (mass) tourism eco-tourism focuses on socially responsible travel, personal growth and environmental sustainability (for detailed information see *Rural Tourism Development: An overview of Tourism in the TipumPhakey village of Naharkata in Dibrugarh District, Assam(India)* by NitashreeMili, *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications* 2(12), Dec.2012.

¹ Majboor. Arjun. Dev. 2001-2. Section iv-Some Memorable Shrines in Districts –The forgottenTirthas in Shambles. *Vitasta* Annual no. vol. xxxv p.180.

² Kak, R.C, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir*, p.131.

II. DISCUSSING THE HISTORY OF MARTAND (SUN TEMPLE) AND SCENIC CHARM OF CHATBAL

MARTAND:-The temple of Martand is situated at a distance of 5 miles away from Anantnag.⁷ In order to reach Martand temple one has to go 2 kilometers up from the Mattan to reach Ranbirpora Village on the Mattan *Karewa* (Plateau). It has latitude of 33°45' and a longitude of 75°16'. It is at an elevation of 5,817 feet from the sea level.⁸ According to local legend, Surya, the sun god of Hindu mythology was born of Aditi from a lifeless egg called Martanda. Aditi was the wife of Kashyap, the saint from whom Kashmir probably takes its name. Surya was her thirteenth child. The spring of Mattan is attributed to this legend. Lord Vishnu-Surya has been worshiped in his Martanda manifestation. The modern name of the Mattan seems to have been evolved from the Sanskrit Martanda (*Mart* =dead/ and < --- *anda*= egg) with the passage of time.⁹

Vinge mentions in his account that it is said that Kashyap Rishi after his desiccation work walked about in the greatest delight; that he accidentally found an egg (the mundane egg of the Hindus) shining most brilliantly, which he picked up. It broke in his hand, and from it flowed the springs of Bawan or Maha-Martand.¹⁰

Kalhana has given contradictory reference regarding the founder of Martanda for example at one place he has mentioned that king Ranaditya founded Martand.¹¹ And in another book he has mentioned the famous warrior king Lalita Ditya Muktapida.¹² The king appeared to be a worshiper of sun as an all pervading phenomenon.¹³ He defeated the Yashovarman the king of

Kanauj.¹⁴ So his power and valour naturally would have made him Lalitaditya Muktapida (Swelled with pride) and he paid homage to the fierce luminary by founding Martanda.¹⁵ Walter Lawrance is of the view that the temple structure must have been started somewhere between 370 to 500 A.D. and completed during the reign of Lalitaditya Muktapida.¹⁶ General Cunningham, however, on the strength of a passage in the *Rajtarangini* ascribes the building of the temple to Ranaditya, who reigned from A.D. 578 to 594. Hasan recognizes it with the name of *Martandashwar* and referred that it was built by Raja Ram Dev on Mattan *Karewa* in year 95 *Kaljugi*.¹⁷ He also mentions that Martand temple was repaired with fair amount of money by Raja Lalitaditya during his rule and was adorned with gold.¹⁸ Mr. Fergusson, nevertheless, doubts the correctness of this opinion and does not consider it to be clear that it is dedicated to the sun. He also thinks that it was probably built about 100 years after the temple at Awantipora, about A.D. 852 or 853.¹⁹ According to Stien the Martanda temple was built along with its enclosure wall by Lalitaditya Muktapida. Stein's view has been accepted practically by all scholars.²⁰

It occupies undoubtedly the finest position in Kashmir. This noble ruin is most striking in size and situation of all the existing remains of Kashmir Grandeur.²¹ The solid walls and bold outlines towering over the fluted pillars of the surrounding

⁷ Kak, R.C. op ct, p.131.

⁸ Bates.2005. *A Gazetteer of Kashmir*, Gulshan Books, p.270.

⁹ <https://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/martand-temple>

¹⁰ Vinge, G.T. 1842. *Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo*, Vol. I, p.359. (Two perennial bubbling springs gush out from its toe with equal volume of water at bawan and Anantanag. Along the toe of matan karewa, towards Mattan, Pehroo and Kanganhal viillage, one can notice clearly the pebble-beds and layers of shingle, about which some Geologists, believe that these are obvious beach-marks or shore-margin deposits of former Kashmirian lake satisar, as the tides of vast water body area besides hawing its shore are held mainly responsible for such deposits. See Atta Mohammad Mir. 2013. *Kashmir Dells and Dales*, Srinagar: Gulshan Books, p.41.)

¹¹ Stein, *Kalhana's Rajtarangini*, vol-I, p.141. (Ferguson mentions "actually recent excavations has shown that an older temple was incorporated into the new one. It is thought that the old temple was work of king Ranaditya a few centuries earlier. See... James, p. Ferguson. 2009. *Kashmir- A Historical Introduction*, City Book Centre, p.113)

¹² Ibid, p.466.

¹³ The worship of the sun seems to have been brought into Kashmir by the Kushans, probably from Iran, as we have the evidence of its early introduction from the Rajatangini which mentions the building of a temple to the sun-god by king Ranaditya. Bamzai.P.N.K. 2008. *A History of Kashmir Political- Social- Cultural*, Gulshan books, p.199.

¹⁴ *Kalhana's Rajtarangini*, vol-I, p.132-133. (See also *Early History of India* by V.A. Smith, 3rd edition, 1914, p.372 and "Unsung Heroes 3: Lalitaditya", 23 Dec, 2014, <http://.ariseindiaforum.org> (*AriseIndia Forum*),

¹⁵ Sri Sathya Sai Bal Vikas, Jan 2012.

¹⁶ Lawrence, *Valley of Kashmir*, p.171. (Cunningham attributed the central edifice to King Ranaditya and to his predecessors and the colonnade to lalitaditya Muktapida. The two annexes on the north and south of the mandapa were built by Ranaditya and his queen Amritaprabha. - See Agrawal, R.C. 1998. *Kashmir and its Monumental Glory*, New Delhi: Aryan Books International, p.136)

¹⁷ Khuihami, H.S. *Tarikh Hassan*, vol-I, p.266. (According to Hassan, there was a town named Babul in the *Karewas* of South Kashmir built by Raja Ram Deva (Ranaditya). In front of his royal palace he built Martandeshwara temple. Khuihami, H.S. *Tarikh Hassan*, vol-I, Eng Trans. by A.R khand.70.

¹⁸ Ibid, vol-I, p-267.

¹⁹ Collet, J. 2014. *A guide for visitors*, Srinagar: Jay Kay Books, p.126. (A.C Arora highlights that this temple was built by Hindu king in the 5th century and modified and repaired by king Lalitaditya in the 8th century. For details see ...A.C. Arora. 2005. *Kashmir the Land of Celestial charms*, Gulshan Books, p.82.

²⁰ Agrawal, R.C. *Kashmir and its Monumental Glory*, p.136.

²¹ The Kashmiris excelled in architecture during the period ending the 12th century A.D. the archaeological remains at Awantipora, Martand, Taper, Mattan and Prihaspur are most remarkable existing monuments in. Kashmir... This splendid Architecture of Kashmir is our most treasured heritage. (Hassanian, Fida Mohammad Khan. 2012. *Historic Kashmir*, Gulshan Books, p.10.

colonnade give it almost an imposing appearance.²² It is usually called the "House of the Pandus" by the Hindus and by the local populace.²³ The temple of Martanda is dedicated to Vishnu in his incarnation as the sun.²⁴ It is also marked by a magnificent spring (traditionally represented as two, *Vimala* and *Kamala*) which in ancient legend connects with the birth of sun god Martanda.²⁵ There is an interesting reference that king Kalasha (1063-89)²⁶ of Lohara dynasty went to pray Martanda and to find peace.²⁷ In his last being ill and filled with remorse for his past deeds, he went to the temple of Martanda where he offered a gold image of the 'God' for prolongation of his life.²⁸ He was a follower of Shivism²⁹ and thus finally breathed his last at the feet of Sacred temple of Martand in 1089 A.D.³⁰ Hashra his son, respected this temple in the course of the ruthless confiscation to which he subjected the other rich shrines of the country.³¹ Kalhana praises "the wonderful shrine of Martanda with its massive walls of stone, within a lofty enclosure".³² It ruins still the most impressive specimen of ancient Kashmir architecture. Kalhana distinctly mentions the town "swelling with grapes" which Lalitaditya founded near his temple.³³ But no trace remains now. It is probable that a canal then supplied water from the Lidar to the naturally arid plateau on which the temple stands.³⁴ This canal seems to have been repaired by Zainul-Abidin whose irrigation works on the Martand are described at length by Jonaraja.³⁵

It is referred as *Martandesa* by Jonaraja.³⁶ Abul Fazal notices the large temple of Matan and the well or pit close by which a Muhammadan legend represents as a place of captivity of the angles Harut and Marut.³⁷

²²Bates, A Gazetteer of Kashmir, p.270.

²³Ibid. p. 270.

²⁴Ferguson. 2009. *Kashmir- A Historical Introduction*, City Book Centre, p.113.

²⁵Kalhans.*Rajtarangini*, p.465.

²⁶ Agrawal, R.C. *Kashmir and its Monumental Glory*, p.136.

²⁷Kalhans.*Rajtarangini*, p.466.

²⁸ Agrawal, R.C. p.136.

²⁹ Kalhans.*Rajtarangini* p.324.

³⁰ Ibid.p.325.

³¹ Ibid. p.466.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Agarwal, p.138.

³⁶ Kalhans.*Rajtarangini* p.466.

³⁷Ibid. p.466. (On the northern side of the temple, at the distance of 150 yards, stand a few apricot trees, and the residence of a Mojavar, or fakir, whose province is to superintend the existence of a well called the Chah-i- Babul, or well of Harut-Marut. Vinge believed that it was very deep and very old, having been dug long before the time of the Moguls. Harut and Marut were two angels. According to local Musalmans they were sent downwards from Almighty for the purpose of improving them the people of area. But having descended accidentally upon the house of a courtesan, they were surprised into an unhallowed liking for the society, and neglected the work of reformation to which they were appointed. Thus they were, therefore, punished by being shut

Francis Younghusband in his book *Kashmir* adds;

Of all the ruins in Kashmir the Martand ruins are both the most remarkable and the most characteristics. No temple was ever built on a finer site. It stands on an open plain, where it can be seen to full advantage. Behind it rises a range of Snowy mountains...It is one the most heavenly spots on earth...The temple of Martand is the finest example of what is known as the Kashmirian style of architecture,³⁸ and was built by the most noted of the Kashmir king, Lalitaditya, who reigned between the years 699 and 736 A.D.³⁹

It can be considered either a representative of all such great buildings and monuments or a combination and sum total of all the qualities. It gives an insight into the greatness of the people of Kashmir.⁴⁰ In terms of beauty and strength and in grandeur it is next to Egypt and Greece.⁴¹ This temple has been built with strong and square limestone. The temple has been built with strong and square pattern. It is now in ruins and there are many such ruins scattered. Anyone bereft of the love of nature could select such a special spot for the construction of the temple.

G.T. Vinge in his *Travels In Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo*, defines the Martand in the following lines;

As an isolated ruin, this deserves, on account of its solitary and massive grandeur, to be ranked, not only as the first ruin of the kind in Kashmir, but as one of the noblest amongst the architectural relics of antiquity that are to be seen in any country. Its noble and exposed situation at the foot of the hills reminded me of that of the Escorial.⁴² It has no forest of cork-trees and evergreen oaks before it, nor is it to be compared in point of size to that stupendous building, but it is visible from a

up in a well; and the Kashmiri as say that the Chah-i-Babul is the place of their imprisonment.... See vinge p. 361.

³⁸It is however, decidedly Hindu and not either Buddhist or Jain, while, the sculptures show, according to Marshall, a close connection with the typical Hindu work of the late Gupta period. This great temple of the sun at Martand became the model for all subsequent Brahmanical temples in Kashmir. See Sufi, G.M.D. 1996. *Kashir - Being a History of Kashmir*, vol. I, New Delhi: Capital Publishing House, p.52

³⁹Younghusband, Sir. Francis.2008. *Kashmir*,reprinted, Srinagar: City Book Centre, p. 60

⁴⁰Ibid. p.61.

⁴¹Ibid.p.61.; Mattan during the Dogra period was also considered a quiet green place, highly recommended by British Sahibs as a camp site. See Brigid Keenan, *Travels in Kashmir- A popular history of its people, places and crafts*, Delhi: Permanent Black, p.23.

⁴²Monastery and site of Escorial Madrid – Built at the end 16th century on a plan in the form of a grill, the instrument of martyrdom of st Lawrence, the Escorial Monastery stands in an exceptionally beautiful site in castile. Its austere architecture, a break with previous styles had a considerable influence on Spanish architecture for more than half a century. It was the retreat of a mystic king and became, in the last years of Phillip II's reign, the centre of the greatest political power of the time. (See Kaul, Gwasha Lal (A Historical Survey- Kashmir Through the Ages 5000 to 1960), Gulshan Books, p.196.

great distance and the Spanish Sierra⁴³ cannot for a moment be placed in competition with the verdant magnificence of the mountain scenery of Kashmir.⁴⁴

Every old building of whose origin the poorer classes of Kashmir don't have general information. They certainly believe them to have been the works of the Pandus.⁴⁵ There are three halls in the building, called *Ardhamandap*, *Anturla*, and *GarbhaGriha*.⁴⁶ On each face is a central cell, larger and higher than colonnade in which it is placed. The temple is enclosed by a colonnade or peristyle, which is 60 feet long and 38 feet wide. Its internal dimensions are 220' by 142'.⁴⁷ Ferguson further mentions the total number of pillars was 84 which was a sacred number to the Hindus, according to one explanation, the product of the number of days in the week and the number of signs in the zodiac. It has Grecian impact which is interesting.⁴⁸ Lawrence writes that its roof was of pyramidal form, and that the entrance chamber and wings were similarly that over the inner chamber must have been the loftiest the height of its pinnacle above the ground being about 75 feet.⁴⁹ B. Hugel doubts that Martand ever had a roof, but as the walls of the temples are still standing the numerous heaps of large stones that are scattered about all sides could be have belonged to the roof.⁵⁰ But Ferguson thinks that the roof and gateway were probably pyramidal in shape, but both have disappeared, perhaps because they were made of wood.⁵¹ Mirza Hyder, describes it in his history "In the temple building there are chiseled stones up and down with no material for joints. The stones were laid one upon another without lime and *Surkhi*. Even the opening between the stones cannot hold a sheet of paper, and every stones measures 3-8 yards in length and one yard in thickness and width from one to five yards. The human mind is surprised to see as to how these big stones were carried and lifted during construction of temple".⁵²

The vandalism of Martand sun temple started during the rule of Sultan Sikander of Kashmir is also confirmed by various historians/chroniclers including Jonaraja, Ferishta, author of Baharistan-e-Shahi, Mohibul Hasan etc. Ferguson says that the temple is said to have been despoiled by Sikander *But-Shikan* at

the end of the fourteenth century.⁵³ In A.D. 1558-90, Abul Fazal mentions that some of the idolatrous temples were in perfect preservation; and Farishta himself describes many of these edifices as being existence in his own time, or about 1600 A.D.⁵⁴ Hassan adds "it took one year for Sulltan Sikander to dismantle it and was tired to demolish the original temple".⁵⁵ At least the interior of the temple was set on fire and its pictures were in a pell-mell condition. The author of the book visited this wonderful temple. On some pillars the gold paintings still exist as written by the author.⁵⁶

Visitors who want to see this grand heritage can also travel to Achabal across the plateau lies over an easy level road. And the direction is extremely striking and pretty. The road after a mile or so makes a sudden descent to the valley of the river *Ārpath* which is crossed over a bridge. The adjoining land is cultivated for rice and has been planted with orchards. The road from Martand to Kuthar is a pleasing to walk. The people from different places used to celebrate *Eid* festival at this grand heritage site, thus presents a beautiful display all around the Ranbirpora. The people of Whole district have vogue and affection towards this site.

III. CHATBAL- A SCENIC SITE

The scenic land of Chatbal is located on the remote corner of the east of the Pargana Kuthar. We can take the Achabal-Chittergul road to reach the destination. The duration of the journey is 80 minutes approximately from Achabal Mughal Garden. Chatbal is an offbeat holiday destination. It is a place where travellers tired of the hustle bustle of life can enjoy candle light dinners, snuggling up under cozy blanket and staying away from the routine hustle and bustle. A peaceful holiday destination, Chatbal doesn't offer a range of exciting tourist attractions yet. What it offers in abundance is peace, serenity and unspoilt natural beauty. About two years back in 2013, the government had approved a project and announced allocation of funds to develop Chatbal into a tourist spot.⁵⁷

On a crispy day when the weather is pleasant, taking a trek on the mountains surrounding the Chatbal is a rewarding experience. Trekking through paths lined with apple and walnut trees on both sides, trekkers will feel close to nature and fall in love with the surroundings.⁵⁸

The Department of Tourism should take into notice the need of separate Tourism Authority for the development of Chatbal as natural health resort on the analogy of Pahalgam. The Government should try to assess the developmental structure of Chatbal as an emerging tourist spot in Kuthar valley. Adequate

⁴³The Sierra Nevada (meaning Snowy Range in Spain) is a mountain range in the region of Andalucía Province of Granada and Almeria in Spain.

⁴⁴Vinge, G.T. *Travels In Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo*, pp.360-361.

⁴⁵The monarch of the Lunar race of ancient Hindu kings, who was driven from India, in the course of their wanderings, they visited Kashmir, and erected numerous temples, notably the temple of Martand. This kind of legend, however applies to every old building in the East of whose origin there exists no reliable information, all being considered by the Hindus the work of these princes or their immediate descendants. (See Kenan. B. 1975. History of Kashmir and the Kashmiris: The Happy Valley, Delhi: Seema publications, pp.254-255)

⁴⁶Collet, J.A *guide for visitors*, p.92.

⁴⁷Ferguson, *Kashmir- A Historical Introduction*, p.113.

⁴⁸Collet, j.A *guide for visitors*, p.125.

⁴⁹Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, p.172.

⁵⁰*Ibid.* p.172.

⁵¹Ferguson, *Kashmir- A Historical Introduction*, p.114.

⁵²Khuihami, H.S. *Tarikh Hassan*, vol-I, p.266.

⁵³*Ibid.*, p.114.

⁵⁴Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, pp.166-167.

⁵⁵Khuihami, H.S. *Tarikh Hassan*, vol-I, p.267.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p.267.

⁵⁷ Sandeep Chetan reveals his overwhelming experience of Chatbal tour. 09 June 2014

⁵⁸ Sandeep Chetan's Travel blog, Travel photos and stories of his offbeat journey around India and the world.

facilities and suitable infrastructure like accommodation, roads, local transport, communication links and other essential amenities should be facilitated in order to ensure the visits of the tourists both from within and outside the state.

Through the proper development of Chatbal as a nascent tourism spot, can bring prosperity to the upper belt of the study area. Particularly the area above Shangus is considered as *kendi* (Barren). Thus rural tourism as supplemental income can contribute to the increase of wellbeing of this *kendi* area. The development of Chatbal will emerge as an important instrument for sustainable development including poverty alleviation, employment generation, and development of remote areas. The school children are interested for excursion and sporting activities. So the constructions of amusement parks need to be

taken up in order to capture the attention of the school children who often come to Chatbal for picnic. Despite that still children can be spotted racing down from the mountains and shepherds can be seen walking with flocks of sheep across the slopes of hills. The separate Tourism Development Authority for Chatbal and Achabal can gain prosperity to the area. KDA and Tourism Department together have taken the initiative for the construction of some huts at Chatbal. Over and above the spot should be included on the tourist map of the state that really can turn the fortunes of the people living in upper belt of the study area. They are living in stark and ridden poverty. Development of Chatbal around the concept of rural tourism will be an alternative package.



IV. POTENTIALITIES

The study area is also special because of the presence of grand heritage site of Martand. It is situated towards the north-west side of Kuthar. The State should develop adequate infrastructure at Martand and other sites of the Study area. The facilities which needed for tourists at Martand and other sites

include availability of hotels and restaurants, cafeteria, parking and small emporium of handicrafts or site museums besides guide books and other relevant literature about the site. Though it a protected monument under ASI, but pain sticking efforts should be taken for the development of this site as a full-fledged tourist site of the area. The roads should be facilitated in such a way so that the heritage tour towards Martand and other sites of Kuthar can provide easy and comfortable access. Keeping in view the

religious and cultural importance of this site, it can surely enjoy a wide scope and rich prospect to attract the tourists all around the globe. It is attracting the tourists every year but doesn't ensure a large scale tourist activity in the area. So the development of basic infrastructure for tourists and other accommodation units can create jobs for thousands of workers both skilled and unskilled of the area.

The Department of Tourism should introduce brochure shells- a folder with some photos or artwork. These brochures need to be displayed at the world fairs and send to the capital cities for global publicity. The government is unable to frame any such policy where these cultural and heritage sites are exploited to boost up the tourist industry of the land as it has been observed that cultural beauties are more attractive for tourists.

Martand site can serve as a catalyst of change in the study area, not only this it can also serve a major contributor towards state income. The problem of unemployment can be cured through the utilization of this site for heritage tourism. It can employ large number of people and can provide a wide range jobs which can extend from skilled to the highly specialized. A study made in India (on the basis of 1977 census) estimated that 681,102 persons were employed in all types of hotel and restaurant establishments and 1015,594 persons in the transport sector alone.⁵⁹ Thus the concerned agencies should also come forward and to preserve the glory of Mattan and Kuthar valley.

Department of tourism can develop *trout hatcheries* in the study areas like it did in Pahalgam, Kokernag and Achabal. Different springs and rivers of Kuthar can be perfect spots for angling and fishing activities. These water bodies can be excellent choice for beats of Brown trout and *Mahaseer*. As we already know trout fishing in Pahalgam and other areas of the valley are even popular outside the country, tourists from far and wide flock to these places. So same can be cultivated for the study area as well. It has become a major attraction for tourists in the Kashmir valley. Fishing tour to Kuthar and Mattan can be adventure sport that has a universal appeal. Trout fish farms and other sports can be attractive to visit and stay in the study area.

So developing rural areas of Kashmir can benefit the rural people and can encourage the development of rural tourism in the Valley. In the hilly areas of the valley, the production of land is very low because of climatic constraints and practice of single crop cultivation. For example, the villages lying on the banks of river *Arpat* in Kuthar area grow only a single crop of rice throughout the year because of climatic compulsions. The people of these villages mostly depend on the agriculture. Due to less production, they face poverty. To solve the problem of poverty, there is a need to avail of the allied sources of income generating options for these people. They have land but with least production, that needs to be utilized for farm tourism. The area also holds archaeological sites, monuments, shrines or we can say, cultural and heritage sites and nature based attraction known for its picturesque sight. Such units can be established and developed in such a way so that they cannot become the sites of attraction only but also tourism products for tourists. In addition, these units can be made as spots of recreation for the local

people.⁶⁰ These types of innovations in terms of rural tourism can become the instruments of the rural economy. So the land and heritage already available can be utilized for the upliftment of the area.

In a region like Kuthar, blessed with historic and natural sites and locations, there is much scope for accelerating the process of tourism and percolate its benefits to every segment of society. New areas need to be identified and developed in order to attract more tourists. Rural tourism can be a good option for developing the rural economy of the region. Rural tourism would showcase the diversity and uniqueness of rural life, rural art and craft works, agriculture, thereby increasing the visibility and the appeal of locally grown products. The government can promote rural tourism to ensure sustainable rural development.

The findings reveal the places of attraction are located in pocket routes. Pargana is very well connected to the district Anantnag in south Kashmir. Shangus Chittergul road connects the study area from south side and from north it can be reached through Mattan Chittergul road, which in turn connects with Phalgam route if the sites of Pargana Kuthar can be properly managed and advertised and if somehow catches the attention of Amarnath yatra then area can witness a good number of visitors that would generate the economy of the area.

Mattan Kharewa and Rural Kuthar have much to offer beyond agriculture. It has a great potentiality for different growing segments of tourism like Cultural tourism, agro-tourism, religious tourism etc. rich in cultural heritage and natural resources. There is a scope of rural tourism in the study area. This area has the resources, and man power.

Majority of the respondents during interviews do not agree that enough has been done to promote rural heritage tourism in the Pargana Kuthar and Mattan Pargana. Therefore, the assertion that the State Tourism Authority and KDA are not doing sufficient to promote cultural heritage tourism was supported by the respondents as correct.

Various expectations were indicated by the community and such responses were showing willingness to engage in rural heritage tourism development for the sake of their economic upliftment. The people have shown a positive attitude and do believe that rural tourism resources in their local areas can bring change in their living conditions. The finding clearly established the fact that no development has occurred for the promotion of heritage attractions. It had been so, all due to the negligence of the authorities.

AUTHORS

First Author – Shaib Mohd, Research Scholar, University of Kashmir, Dept. of History, Uttersoo, Anantnag, shaibm60@gmail.com

⁵⁹Raina, A.K. Tourism industry in Kashmir, p.59.

⁶⁰ Lavksh, Misra. 1999. *Cultural Tourism in India*, New Delhi: Mohit Publications. p.267.

