

# Conservation of Forts in Maharashtra through Appropriate Tourism Development Policy

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Janjira Fort

Understanding the symbiotic relation between tourism initiatives and heritage of a region

**T**ourism in the form of activity influences the regions where it is developed and received with economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions. In most of the development programmes and studies, focus is given only on the economic and social dimensions whereas environmental dimension is underestimated or ignored. Therefore, it is essential to maintain the balance between tour-

ism and the environment which helps to develop the policy for tourism development of an area and imposition of the special limits. Thus, the tourism does not lead to the degradation of the environment and in long terms to the tourist disdain of an area, but it helps in its protection or its conservation. In other words, the environment influences the tourism and vice versa. The environment of the region is nega-

tively influenced most times by the increase of tourism, whereas the growth of tourism depends on the quality and characteristics of the environment. Thus it becomes necessary to conserve and preserve the forts in Maharashtra which would not only develop tourism but also raise the economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions of the Maharashtra state.

Maharashtra is the third largest state of India, both in area and population. It is located on the west coast line along the lush green Konkan region. Nestled in the Western Ghats and the Sahyadri mountain range are several hill stations and water reservoirs with semi-evergreen and deciduous forests. The Vidharba region of Maharashtra, with its dense forests, is home to 350 odd forts, beaten by the sea waves, lashed at by the torrential Deccan rains, or scorched in the blazing sun, stand imposing with ramparts and crumbling walls.

Nowhere in the country would you encounter such a profusion of forts and such variety. Sited on an island, as Murud-Janjira or Suvarnadurg, or guarding the seas as at Bassein or up amidst the Sahyadries, as at Torna and Raigad, whose ziz-zag walls and rounded bastions sit like a scepter and crown amidst hills turned mauve.

Tourism today becomes a major industry. Local people get employed and government gets foreign exchange. In 1989, nearly 13lakhs foreign tourists visited India. The number increased by 5.3% in 1990. India also made considerable progress in local tourism. In 1989, nearly 5crore Indians reported to have taken out tours to various places in the country.

Maharashtra is well linked by good transportation network to major cities/growth centers all over India.

There is a need to preserve and protect the forts and at the same time

there is a need to educate people and to create employment in order to fight poverty and misery. One way to deal with this problem is to find the carrying capacity. Any tourism beyond the acceptable carrying capacity should be strictly prohibited. The carrying capacity can be in relation to environment, social and economical. In the environmental approach, it is defined as the ability of natural resources and the ecosystem to support the tourism development. Shelby (1987) proposed more general definition for carrying capacity: The level of use of an area without exceeding the certain levels.

### **TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the meaning of the word "TOURISM" is a Business of providing accommodation and services for Tourist who visits a place for pleasure.

There are a number of reasons why carrying capacity can benefit Maharashtra,

1. The tourist destinations absorb the tourism growth before the negative results become perceptibility by host community.
2. Visitors will experience the quality service in the form of food, accommodation and transport.
3. It helps to plan the tourism in such a way that it is not a burden to any part of the area.
4. Material and technical infrastructure helps to save the energy, the guaranteed cleaning of waste and the taking of remedial measures for the protection of local environment and
5. It helps the management to plan the strategy which reflect a predetermined set of environmentally and socially desirable conditions

## **POPULAR FORTS IN MAHARASHTRA**

### **AHMEDNAGAR FORT**

Ahmednagar Fort is one of the best designed forts in the entire state of Maharashtra. At the same time, it is also counted amongst the impregnable forts of India. The fort is situated in the Ahmednagar district and dates back to the year 1559.

### **DAULATABAD FORT**

Daulatabad Fort is a magnificent fort situated in Maharashtra, at a distance of around 13 km from the Aurangabad city. It forms a part of the Daulatabad city, which was earlier known as 'Devigiri'. The fort, perched at a height of approximately 60 ft and dates back to the 12th century.

### **PANHALA FORT**

Panhala Fort is situated at a distance of approximately 19 km from the Kolhapur city of Maharashtra. Counted amongst the largest as well as most significant forts of the Deccan region of India, it stands perched at an altitude of around 850 m above the sea level.

### **JANJIRA FORT**

Janjira Fort is situated in the Murud town of Maharashtra. Infact, the Island Fort serves as one of the major attractions of the town. Murud served as the erstwhile capital of the Siddi rulers of Janjira in the earlier times. Today, Janjira is counted amongst the few sea forts of India and lies 2 km inside the town.

### **RAIGAD FORT**

Raigad Fort is a magnificent hill fortress, situated in the Raigad district of Maharashtra. It lies approximately 125 km away from Pune and serves as one of the major excursion of the city. The fort once served as the capital of Chha-



Raigad Fort



Shivneri Fort

Chhatrapati Shivaji, the Great Maratha king, built the fort in 1674.

### SHIVNERI FORT

Shivneri Fort is one of the most magnificent as well as historically rich forts of India. It is situated at a distance of approximately 90 km from the Pune city of Maharashtra. The fort dates back to the time period when Shivaji was not born yet. Shivneri Fort was built under the aegis of Sahaji.

### SINHAGAD FORT

Adding to the attraction of the Pune

city is the Sinhagad Fort, which lies in the vicinity of the city. The fort stands perched on a hill, at an altitude of approximately 700 m above the landscape that surrounds it. The height at which the fort stands has made it very popular.

### SINDHUDURG FORT

Maharashtra is known for its rich historical legacy. The land has been a silent witness to some of the most gruesome battles that have been fought in India. One such symbol of the rich historical past is the mighty

Sindhudurg fort. It is situated in the Sindhudurg district.

## CONSERVATION ETHICS AND IMPORTANCE OF STRUCTURAL ASPECTS

### 1. Ethics in Conservation :

*Standard ethics to be observed are,*

- i. The structural condition of the building, before any intervention and all methods and the material used during the treatment must be fully documented intervention.



- Initial inspections
- Continued documentation

### 3. Degrees of intervention :

- Prevention of deterioration (passive conservation)
- Preservation
- Consolidation
- Restoration
- Rehabilitation
- Reproduction
- Reconstruction

### 4. Values in Conservation :

#### *Emotional Values:-*

- Wonder
- Identity
- Continuity
- Spiritual and symbolic

#### *Cultural Values:-*

- Documentary
- Historic
- Archaeology
- Aesthetic and symbolic
- Architectural
- Townscape, landscape & ecological
- Scientific and technological

#### *Use Values:-*

- Functional
- Economic
- Social
- Political

## MATERIAL HERITAGE

Emphasis must be given to organic material and dissemination of conservation techniques.

- Conservation of oil paintings : miniature paintings, painting on cloth, wood, ivory, etc. textile, manuscripts, books, photographs, metal objects, ivories, leather, other art objects, artifacts and ethnographic material.
- Survey of areas and buildings : to document mural painting sites

- ii. Historic evidence must not be destroyed, falsified or removed for authenticity.
- iii. Any intervention must be the minimum necessary.
- iv. Any intervention must be governed by unswerving respect for the aesthetic, historical and physical integrity of the cultural property.
- iii. Not hinder the possibility of later access to all the evidence.
- iv. Allow maximum amount of existing material to be retained.
- v. Be harmonious in color, tone, texture, form and scale. It also should be easily identifiable.
- vi. Should sufficiently be qualified in various aspects and thus it becomes multidisciplinary.

### 2. Procedures of Conservations :

- Any proposed intervention should be:
  - i. Reversible
  - ii. Not prejudice for future intervention
- Inventories

and other historical structure with their conservation requirements along with proper photographic documentation.

- Conservation of wall paintings : bas-reliefs, moldings, carvings etc. on palaces, forts, temples and other buildings.
- Survey of museums and private/ corporate collections : to assess the condition of objects, need for conservation treatment storage and display.
- Training in preventive conservation of art objects : training in repair, restoration and curative conservation of art objects and antiquities.
- Organization of workshops and exhibitions : to create awareness for preservation of cultural property.
- Organization of seminars : related to preservation of heritage.
- Publications : on conservation, surveys carried out, seminars conducted and projects undertaken.

## SUGGESTIONS & DISCUSSIONS

Information with respect to tourism experience, environmental impact and the need of carrying capacity

### 1. The findings are explained below:

#### A) Tourism Experience:

It is observed that most of the respondents enjoyed visiting all the different tourists' destinations of Maharashtra. They have visited these places during weekends and vacations. Some respondents had been to these places during weekdays also. Tourist's places are always crowded as they are more popular.

#### B) Accommodation Facilities:

Since the entire tourist places are so

popular that they are always crowded. So it is difficult to get accommodation during the peak season. In a survey, it was found that most of the tourists (98%) book the accommodation well in advance. Though it is done in advance but the tourists are not happy with the room layout of the hotel. To accommodate more people in a limited place the hotel owners provide less amenities as compared to the required standards. So it makes the place congested and

majority of the tourists arranged their own vehicles to reach to the sites, so this creates the traffic problem at the tourist places and they do not get enough place to park their vehicles.

#### D) Environmental Impact:

Most of the surveyed respondents (89%) experienced that there would be maximum negative impact on the environment as a result of developing tourism. They experienced that forests degra-



Fort Jadhavgadh

crowded causing inconvenience to the tourists. Due to this, majority of tourists (86%) are unhappy about it where as only few people are happy with accommodation as the stay is in the bungalows or farm houses.

#### C) Transport problems:

During the survey, it was found that all the buses and trains were crowded (79%), especially during weekends and

dation might take place in and around because of tremendous demands for area of hotels and restaurants. The degradation of surrounding environment and forests might lead to the loss of energy, wild life and beauty of the area. They further emphasized that ignorance and lack of awareness at these sites may lead to increased accumulation of solid waste, increased level of air and water pollution etc. At the

same time heavy rain fall at these sites (Raighad and Matheran) have swept away the soil from top towards down and made an area more fragile and unstable at the foundation level.

In Raighad already certain parts of the fort is falling off and destroying the landscape of the fort and the pedestrian path. It was also noticed that local microenvironment is also disturbed by the continuous visit at these places. In Matheran, on the name of developmen-



tal projects, certain negative impact is occurring which is destruction of natural resources, loss of traditional knowledge of indigenous tribal people etc. These people are becoming increasing vulnerable to exploitation on the name of development activities, where traditional wisdom and knowledge and natural resources have been expropriated for business interests. These are serious concerns for the survival of the

present world communities. According to PATA (Pacific Asia Travel Association), focus on organizing environment friendly tourism can contribute to the development of areas worthy of conservation as well as determine the level of development. It is not the tourist's volume which causes ecological and cultural damage but the absence of adequate thought-out policies to handle any form of growth. The environmental carrying capacity is quiet ecstatic and can withstand considerable tourism growth provided it is carefully planned and managed. Thus environmental impact assessment becomes an integral step in the consideration of any site for a tourism project.

**E) Consideration of carrying capacity:**

In every case it is necessary to do a detail study about the carrying capacity of any tourist location .The carrying capacity is determining the maximum number of people that a location could accomodate without beginning to deteriorate. It further determines the optimal number of people required so as to sustain it both economically as well as environmentally. Maharashtra should adopt a model development that suits the need of its people and is compatible with its socio-cultural milieu.

**2. Specialty is a tourism policy; law and development and a number of unique services on tourism could include :**

**a) Laws & Legal Frameworks**

- Reviewing existing laws
- Benchmarking against international best practice and model laws
- Drafting new legislation and regulations
- Consultation with stakeholders

and assistance with enactment

- Establishing and reviewing legal frameworks
- International convention review and ratification
- Arbitration, mediation, negotiation and dispute resolution

**b) Compliance, Security & Risk Management**

- Legal and regulatory compliance audits, plans and programs
- Tourism security reviews, plans and advice
- Risk management reviews, plans and advice
- Stakeholder, social and environmental concerns
- Lobbying and advocacy on law and regulation changes
- Due diligence
- Troubleshooting

**c) Governance, institutions & Administrative Systems**

- Strengthening governance and institutions in the public and private sectors
- Funding arrangements for National Tourism Administrations
- Registration, licensing and accreditation
- Self regulation including trade associations and codes of conduct
- Safety, security and risk management
- Quality assurance systems including hotel classification
- Assuring sustainability and environmental protection

**d) Policy, Planning & Development**

- Formulating and implementing tourism policies and plans
- Planning and development facilitation and standards
- Implementing tourism master plans

- Privatization, joint ventures, tenders, procurement and investment incentives
- Transactions (sale, purchase, lease etc) including project appraisal and due diligence
- Land titling and project structuring including TDZs and TDCs

#### e) Trade & Regional Cooperation

- Regional trade agreements
- Harmonizing regional laws
- Bilateral and multilateral agreements
- International passenger transportation

#### f) Education, Training & Capacity Building

- Education
- Training and capacity building
- Research and publication

## CONCLUSION

Tourism, if it is to be a vehicle of culture, prosperity and peace, must conserve without damaging, protect without plundering, and create without destroying. Carrying capacity in eco-tourism provides local benefits-environmentally, culturally and economically. Ecotourism is "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people." Our goal is to enable people to enjoy and learn about the natural, historical & cultural characteristics of the various forts in Maharashtra while preserving the integrity of the forts and stimulating the economic development opportunities in local communities.

The following implemented will improve the face of tourism in the coming years:

1. Development of infrastructure at the forts: Various tourism facilities

such as accommodation facilities, eateries, toilets, information centre's, etc. could be developed at all destinations. For this, the incentive policy proposed will encourage private partnership in tourism related activities and infrastructure development.

2. Accessibility to the forts and way-side amenities: Approach roads could be identified to various forts in Maharashtra. The roads should be assessed for suitability (carrying capacity, quality, etc.) and could be considered for further development. Wayside amenities should also be planned while developing roads.
3. Development Control Regulation at destinations: 'Development Control Regulations' could be prepared to work as guidelines for development at and around the forts.
4. Strengthening of Bed and Breakfast scheme: The Bed and Breakfast scheme creates facilities for travelers at remote region forts (where hotel accommodation is not available) and could provide income to the local people. With the increasing interest in the rural way of life and the advent of rural tourism, the Bed and Breakfast Scheme would offers excellent potential for the mutual benefit of the tourists and the local population. This Scheme could be strengthened to form a part of rural micro-financing projects.
5. Recreational facilities at forts: Entertainment facilities such as children's sports, horse rides, light and sound shows (based on feasibility) could be arranged at selected forts. Providing recreation and entertainment at the various forts could convert day tourists into staying tourists.
6. Public-Private-Partnership: Specific forts could be identified where public-private partnership is possible. Conservation plans could be prepared for the identified these forts.
7. Cultural Tourism: Distinctive aspects of Maharashtra's rich culture and tradition could be identified and promoted as an integral part of Maharashtra's tourism. Identifying and promoting the State's folk arts and organize folk dance and music programmers' at the forts could be arranged.
8. Crafts: Since Maharashtra has a number of exclusive handicrafts; the government could undertake the availability of the handicraft products at the various forts, which could promote the handicrafts industry in the state:
9. Information Kiosks: Government of Maharashtra could create kiosks at important airports, railway stations, bus stations and important forts to provide tourism information on an interactive basis with links to the tourism portal and on-line booking systems.
10. Creating Awareness: Create awareness among people about the importance of tourism, how to identify and plan tour options and on how to be an enlightened tourist. This could also include creating awareness about safety and environmental awareness. ■

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