

Vol III Issue VII August 2013

Impact Factor : 0.2105

ISSN No : 2230-7850

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Monthly Multidisciplinary  
Research Journal

*Indian Streams  
Research Journal*

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**RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595**

**ISSN No.2230-7850**

Indian Streams Research Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial Board readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

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## AN ASSESSMENT OF TOURISM POTENTIAL IN BHADERWAH (J&K)

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**Abstract:** "God's earth in all its fullness and beauty is for the people" – Thomas Cook

Tourism is one of the important economic activities of different countries, state, or region of the world. The present study deals with the tourism potential in Bhaderwah tehsil of the district Doda in Jammu and Kashmir, which is popularly known as the Mini- Kashmir. The natural beauty of the Bhaderwah attracts number of tourists from different part of the country. The beautiful valley of Bhaderwah having its own nature and characteristics. Due to some factors that are responsible for the low potential in tourism in the study area as well as scenic beauty of the region, attract large number of tourists increase day by day. But after the efforts of Mr GulamNabi Azad, Bhadarwah is being developed into a model tourist destination. Bhadarwah Development Authority set up by Govt. of J & K is acting as a nodal agency to bring Bhadarwah into the tourist map of the country. Apart from the natural scenic beauty, Bhadarwah also has numerous historical and religious places.

**Keyword:** Tourism, Potential, Bhaderwah, Beauty, attract, efforts Tourist and factors.

### INTRODUCTION:

Tourism as a modern term applicable to both international and domestic tourists it is the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal work and residence. Such a pleasure-seeking tourist is a traveller moving from place or visiting the same place repeatedly. Tourism includes all economic activities, which are organized to fulfill the needs of such travellers. Any travel for holidaying, business, or professional trips becomes a part of tourism if it is temporary, is undertaken voluntarily, and does not aim at earning any livelihood. In today's world, tourism is an important socio-economic activity. Tourism is now recognized as an industry generating a number of social and economic benefits. It promotes national integration and international understanding, helps in improving infrastructure, creates employment opportunities augments foreign exchange earnings, etc. Today tourism industry is the largest industry in the world and the biggest contributor to global economic development.

### OBJECTIVES:

In order to study tourism potential in Bhaderwah a research was designed as an exploratory study with the following objectives. The main objectives are:

- To study the spatial distribution of scenic tourist destinations in Tehsil Bhaderwah.
- To study the importance and distribution of pilgrim tourist sites in Tehsil Bhaderwah.
- To assess the potential of tourism in Badherwah.
- Impact of tourism on the economy of Tehsil Bhaderwah.

### DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY:

Research in the tourism field, like other fields of

investigation, is an indispensable aid to understand various phenomena in order to act more effectively. The empirical research is cumulative product of primary and secondary sources of data. The present study has been based on both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data collected with the help of well-designed questionnaires. The potential tourism destination has been identified with the help of sources of data and personal field visit.

The primary sources of has been collected from different tourist destination in Bhaderwah and Bhadarwah Development Authority (BDA). Primary data has been gathered through personal interviews, field surveys, based on questionnaires interviews. The questionnaire has been prepared on five points "Likert" scale.

The anchors of the Likert scale will be 1- strong disagree, 2 -disagree, 3-average, 4- agree & 5 strongly agree.

A five percent (5%) random stratified sampling has been done from tourist's locals, businesspersons, and government officers to get the desired information regarding the tourism development and potential of the area concerned.

Secondary source of data will be collected through different sources such as central tourism department, state tourism corporation, census statistical department, Master plans and others official and non-official agencies to draw relevant result.

Internet websites, brochures, books, journals, newspapers, etc. Photographs has been taken for the different destinations to supports the ground truth of the study area.

### Tourism in India:

Tourism in India has a strong relevance to economic development, cultural growth and national integration. India is a vast country of great beauty and diversity and her tourist

and her rich cultural heritage as superbly manifest in many of the architectural wonders (palaces, temples, mosques, forts, etc.), her widely varied topography ranging from the monotonous plains to the loftiest mountains of the world, gregarious tropical forests and above all, the great variety of the life style, India offers an unending choice for the tourist. Tourism is the most progressive earning profession in modern life. Tourism is primary a term of economic referring to an economic activity and like other economic activities, it creates a demand or provides a market for number of quite separate and varied industries. It is the world fastest growing industry. At present more than 1 3rd population of the world is directly or indirectly associated with the tourism industry, in India although tourism has the distinction of being the third largest foreign exchange earning industry after gem and jewellery and readymade garments, its share in the worlds tourist traffic is a mere 0.51 percent. Traditionally the hilly towns like shimla, Srinagar, mussorrie, nainital etc attracted the rich people from the places as the tourists who used to come to these hill stations to get rid of the heat of the planes in the summer months or to see snow-fall during the winters.

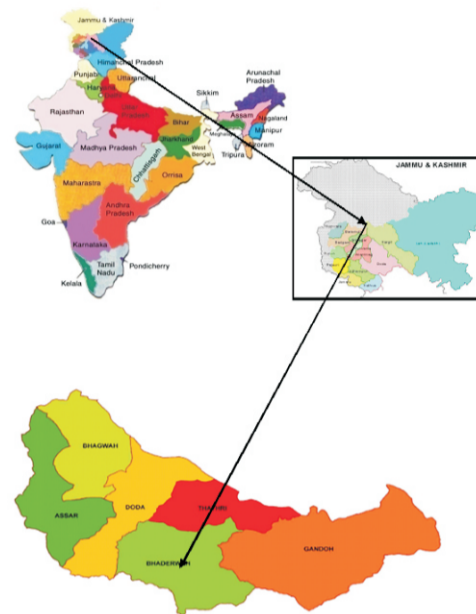
**Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir:**

Jammu and Kashmir is the northern most State of India, situated mostly in the Himalayan Mountains. The state is rightly called the crown of India because of its glorious location. It occupies an apex seat in the beautiful destination of the world. It has been fascinating since long for its scenic slender, natural beauty, and colorful cultural heritage and vast and rich treasures of history. Owing to abundant natural resources and hence its scenic beauty, the state has opted tourism as mean of its development. Because of the above fact and wide spread tourism industry, the importance of its economic advantages and in the upliftment of common masses cannot be under as a whole in general, the development of tourism industry in the state has created enormous employment in its numerous segments. After agriculture, tourism is the main economic activity in the state.

**An Assessment of Tourism Potential in Bhaderwah:**

The valley of Bhaderwah in Himalayas is located on 75°-40' East longitude and 33°-4' North Latitude. The Bhaderwah Valley in the North has beautiful SwarDhar Mountains, in the South the series of mountains from Chatter Gali-Sonbain-Guldanda-PadriGali, in the East the

**Study Area**



Jai Valley and in the West SeojGali and in the South-West Kaplas and KailashKund. The dense green forests add charm to the valley which is crisscrossed by a series of mountains. The Neeru River is central to the beauty of the saucer shaped valley and the Deodar and Kail forests are the lungs of the valley. Sir G.T.Vigne, who toured the entire mountain stretches in the region in 1842 A.D., described Bhaderwah as "The happy region-the prettiest country ever seen in the mountains." It is popularly known as Chota Kashmir and has the potential to become an attractive tourist spot.

Bhadarwah always had a great potential of a popular tourist destination but due to lack of infrastructure it could not convert potential into reality. But after the efforts of Mr GulamNabi Azad, Bhadarwah is being developed into a model tourist destination. Bhadarwah Development Authority set up by Govt. of J & K is acting as a nodal agency to bring Bhadarwah into the tourist map of the country. Apart from the natural scenic beauty, Bhadarwah also has numerous historical and religious places. The Bhadarwah Fort, which was used as a Distt. Jail is being revamped and developed.

Bhadarwah once an independent principality is better known as "Little Kashmir" because of its heavenly natural setting and its evergreen landscape. It is fortified by sky touching mountain peaks which remain grey for most of the year. These cliffs hide in their laps the enormous wealth of pine forests with their green pigmented shades besides economy boosting green gold. Apart from their aesthetic significance, these snow peaks raise their heads high with

their spiritual grandeur associated with the famous Kailash mountain range at an altitude of 15000 feet from the sea level. The valley of Bhaderwah keeps on echoing with the murmuring streams that run down the melting snow of these hill-tops and quench the thirst of the amazingly fertile tracts of this extremely beautiful valley. . This valley is known for its abundant production of delicious apples, pears, peaches, apricots and walnuts having a considerable commercial status of quality its snow fall in January & February is followed by bright dazzling sun adding to its natural charm. Its thick forests abound in not only green gold but are a big sources of variety of herbal plants and wild animals and this is why this Mini- Kashmir is rightly called "Switzerland of J&K State".

#### **TOURIST DESTINATIONS OF BHADERWAH:**

##### **Jai Valley**

Jai the Everlasting Green Valley lies on the North East of Bhadarwah town about 32 Kms. away connected to the town by beautiful Bhadarwah-Jai Link Road.

##### **Chinta Valley**

Chinta is a beautiful Valley, a lovely summer destination. This Valley is also popular with tourists in winters when its ski-slopes attract skiing enthusiasts. Chinta Valley is located 25 Kms from Bhadarwah.

##### **Padri**

One of the beautiful landscapes named Padri lies on upcoming Bhaderwah-Chamba National Highway at a distance of 41 Kms from Bhaderwah at a height of 10,500 feet. It is the highest point on Bhaderwah – Chamba road. Chamba.

##### **Gurdanda**

One of the mighty ridge falls on Bhadarwah-Bani-Basohli Road where one gets lost in the beauty of forests and grasslands. Towards its left lies the mighty Sonbain Glacier which gives birth to Neeru River where one can feel and play with the snow just having a walk of five-ten minutes even in the peak summers.

##### **Sunbain Glacier**

Ashapati's glaciers called Sunbain glacier is evergreen glacier available round the year, easily accessible at about 1.5 km walking distance from Gurdanda of Bhaderwah – BaniBasoli road.

##### **Sarthal-Valley-Chatergalla Pass.**

Sarthal is one of the beautiful valliesenroute Bhaderwah-Bani-Basohli Road which has now become a tourist circuit wherein the tourists divert from Lakhanpur to Bhaderwah via BaniBasohli Road after having break journey at Sarthal Valley.

##### **Seojmedow**

If Gulmarg and Pahalgam are Jewels of "Paradise" on earth. Seoj meadow is diamond in the crown of Bhaderwah, pride of Jammu region.

##### **Khellani Top/ Kellar Valley**

Kellar is a saucer shaped valley bestowed with paddy fields on both sides of the rivulet Bankud at the bottom with splendid coniferous forests on all elevations

##### **HangaNoorie.**

A place approximately 12kms westwards from Bhaderwah town amidst the thick black forests of deodar, is a fine picturesque spot situated on the bank of HangaNallah. Characterize by crystal waterflowing with murmuring rhythms ambunce musical. The place came to lime light when in the 80's Hindi Film 'NOORIE' was picturised at this place and first time the beauty and culture of Bhaderwah was depicted in its fine glory to world outside.

#### **FINDING:**

The J&K government has set up the Bhadarwah Development Authority (BDA) under the Prime Ministers Reconstruction Plan; to build tourism infrastructure and to oversee the holistic development of the area to make Bhadarwah an ultimate tourist destination. The Authority has been setup in 2006 and has started raising tourist infrastructure such as Parks, Tourist Reception Centres, Resorts, Heritage restoration etc. Some of the nice infrastructure has come up and rest is being raised. The true endeavour of the Government in the shape of road infrastructure is at its apex with the widening of Batote-Kishtwar Highway, Doda-Bhaderwah Model Road, Bhadarwah - Bani - Basohli Road, Bhadarwah-Chamba National Highway, and Thathri-Bhalessa model Roads are exemplified. The internal roads linking the heritage villages, scenic spots, tourist villages, pilgrimage centres, heritage centres, forest resorts, and adventure resorts are being developed. Bhadarwah is blessed with the pristine natural beauty, which needs to be placed and publicised before the World to explore. Steps in this direction are also being taken to document the historical perspective, culture and heritage and natural glory of the destination in the shape of booklets, brochures, leaflets, calenders and websites. Some of the intellectuals of the area are being roped in to document the culture and history of Bhadarwah in its right earnest through research, analysis and screening efforts. The USPs of the area are historical MelaPatt, Kailash Yatra, Machail Yatra, Mani-Mahesh Yatra, Roshera Devi Yatra, SubaarDharMela and Nagini Mata Mela which are also getting flip by way of publicity through print and electronic media. Bhadarwah is destined to get triangular access from Lakhanpur via Basohli-Bani-BhadarwahRoad , Jammu DodaBhadarwah Road and ChambaBhadarwah Road and poised to become a famous weekend all weather tourist destination. Until 2005, Bhaderwah was like any other backward area of the State. However, with Mr. GhulamNabi Azad taking over as the Chief Minister, its fate began to change. As Mr. Azad, who hails from the area, was elected for the first time to the Assembly from this segment with a record margin, a new path of development was opened. The biggest boon to development has been in form of network of roads. Bhaderwah is also getting a facelift as a tourist destination. A fabulous Tourist Reception Centre, along with other facilities, has added to its advantages. The Bhaderwah

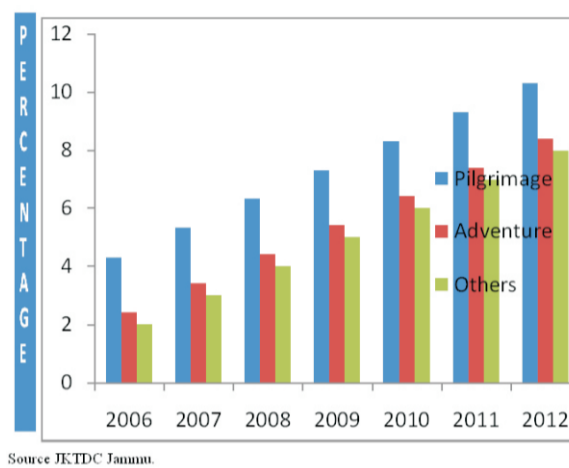
Tourism Development Authority (BTDA) has revived the Bhaderwah Fort, built by erstwhile Dogra Ruler, besides developing the Ghata Fish Pond. Bhaderwah offers adventure, scenic and cultural tourism potential. Bhaderwahis have been participating in the number of yatras organised during different parts of the year. Now it has become a hub of pilgrimage in whole of Jammu and Kashmir. Adventure Being a mountaneous region Bhaderwah also offers a wide range of adventure tourism activities. Trekking possibilities include short, day-long walks up and down mountain slopes in the areas like Chinta, Chirala, Jai valley and in the meadows like 'Padri', 'Seoj', 'Subardhar'. These meadows also called dhars. A range of rafting options is also available in the Neeru Stream and in the Chenab River from Thathri to Puldoda. Paragliding is one another option for the adventure sport lovers. The best places for paragliding are Chinta and Jai valley, Dhamunda to Bhaderwah, Seoj and padri meadows. Bhaderwah valley gets covered with the thick blanket of snow in winters during the months of January and February and the high altitude areas like Padri remain covered by snow till early June. 'Snow Skiing' in these areas can be equally enjoyable like it is in the Gulmarg or other parts of Kashmir valley.

The present study led to the tourism geography. After agriculture, tourism is the main economic activity in the state. The Jammu and Kashmir state is quite rich in natural resources such as water, forests, and scenic beauty. It lush green forests rich flora and fauna, snow-clad peaks, mountains, gorges, gaint glaciers, skiing grounds, perennial rivers, lakes, invigorating climate etc. attract a huge number of tourists from all across the world. Most of the beautiful places of Bhaderwah like Jaai, Chinta, Nalthi, Khellani etc. also provide good accommodation facilities to the tourists. The various Govt. polices run out by the tourism Department and by the efforts of Former Chief Minister of State Mr. GulamNabi Azad collectively have helped in bringing the Bhaderwah on the tourist map. The Bhaderwah Development Authority has also played an important role in exposing the beauty of Bhaderwah in front of all through its everending efforts. The starting of Bhaderwah Tourism Mela by Tourism Departments of Jammu and Kashmir has also helped in attracting large number of towards this paradise. Many of the pilgrimage tatra carried out in this valley like Machailyatra, Mani Mahesh yatra, Kailashyatra etc. have helped in adding more beauty to its natural beauty by mixing up of cultural and religious beliefs. The mighty mountains of Bhaderwah also provide ideal location for the paragliders and skiing lovers and both these segments are well promoted by Bhaderwah Tourism Authority through various channels.

The land of Bhaderwah is also blessed with some beautiful glacier and mountain passes.

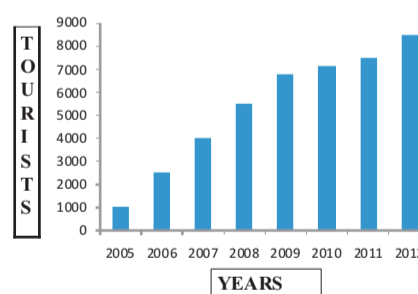
In last it can be easily concluded that there is no doubt in the enchanting natural beauty of Bhaderwah and its potentiality of attracting large number of tourists. Bhaderwah is surely going to become the main tourist destination State. In near future, if the State Govt. Tourism Department and Bhaderwah Development Authority will remain working for the promotion of its natural beauty, which cannot be expressed in words, it can be only enjoyed by going there.

TREND OF INCREASING TOURIST IN BHADERWAH (2006-2012)



The trend of tourist increase day by day in the study area. After 2005, the efforts of Mr GulamNabi Azad, Bhadarwah are being developed into a model tourist destination. Bhadarwah Development Authority set up by Govt. of J & K is acting as a nodal agency to bring Bhadarwah into the tourist map of the country. Apart from the natural scenic beauty, Bhadarwah also has numerous historical and religious places. The above graph show that the the Pilgrimage tourism has great importance in Bhaderwah which led to increase every years. After that adventure and other tourism have their own nature and importance which led to increase the tourism in study area, from 2006 to 2012 all type of tourism increase.

TREND OF INCREASING OVERALL TOURIST IN BHADERWAH (2005-2012)



Source JKTDC Jammu.

The above graph show that the increasing trend of

general tourist in study area. The Bhaderwah Tourism Development Authority (BTDA) has played a great role for development of tourism in Bhaderwah .Before 2005 there are very little tourist travel in the study area but due to effort of Mr. Azad and foundation of Bhaderwah TourismDevelopment Authority (BTDA) in 2006, which leads to increase of tourism in study area. In 2005 about 1000,2006, 2500,2007,4000,2008, 5500,2009, 6800,2010,7100,2011,7500 and 2012,8500 persons are visited in different tourist destinations in Bhaderwah

#### CONCLUSION:

Bhaderwah is one of the most beautiful tourist destinations in Jammu and Kashmir as well as in India. It is one of the important areas, which is led to low potential in tourism activities. The beautiful destinations of Bhaderwah attracting the large Number of tourists such as Pilgrimage, leisure, adventure, tracing, medical, winter, mouinraneing, and cultural tourism etc. Due to its beautification, which is popularly known as Mani- Kashmir Former Chief Minister of State Mr. Gulam Nabi Azad collectively, have helped in bringing the Bhaderwah on the tourist map. The Bhaderwah Development Authority has also played an important role in exposing the beauty of Bhaderwah in front of all through its ever-endingefforts. so there are need to much development of tourist destination and other infrastructure in Bhaderwah.

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**BEAUTIFACTION OF BHADERWAH.**



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