

Problems and Prospects of Tourism Development in District Meerut

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Abstract

Tourism has been identified as one of the world's largest smokeless industries and it is one of the fastest growing industries today. In recent times, it has entered into a new era of expansion and importance and has emerged as an economic activity of immense global importance. Meerut is one of the most sought after tourist destinations of Uttar Pradesh. It is fortunate to be endowed with a lot of tourist destinations. A large number of tourists and visitors not only from the country but from all over the world throng these places for spiritual, recreational, adventure and entertainment purposes. The present paper is an attempt to find out the scope of tourism development in District Meerut. The present study reveals that the Information Display is inadequate at the tourist sites in District Meerut and also its lacks a comprehensive tourism policy. Services of tourism consultants and tourism marketing companies may be hired to chalk out a detailed tourism plan for District Meerut.

Keywords: *Tourism, Meerut, Information Display, Staff Behaviour, Security, Cleanliness and Sanitation, Road and Infrastructure, Information Display*

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Received: 06.03.2021

Approved: 27.03.2021

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Prospects of Tourism
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*RJPP 2021,
Vol. XIX, No. I,*

*pp.128-147
Article No. 18*

Online available at :

[https://anubooks.com/
rjpp-2021-vol-xix-no-1](https://anubooks.com/rjpp-2021-vol-xix-no-1)

Introduction

District Meerut lies in the western part of the north central state of Uttar Pradesh just seventy kilometers north east to the National Capital Delhi within the National Capital Region (NCR) and almost five hundred kilometers west to the State capital Lucknow. Meerut City is the second largest city in the entire NCR – only next to Delhi and lies in the plains of the Ganges and Yamuna Doab. Meerut City boasts of ancient roots dating back to *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and Indus Valley Civilisation. It is the birth place of Mandodri – the wife of Ravana. It is also believed that this place was part of the dominion of Mahipala – the King of Indraprastha. During the reign of Emperor Ashoka it served as important center of Buddhism. District Meerut is one of the largest producers of sports goods in the country, hence, nickname “Sports City of India”. Meerut City is the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Meerut Diocese that comprises Meerut, Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, Dehradun, Haridwar, Moradabad, Rampur, Jyotiba Phule Nagar, Gahziabad, Baghpat and Dhampur Tehsil of Bijnor District.

Literature Review

In this section we examine some of the important definitions and models of tourism to set forth our discussion.

“Tourism was defined as people travelling abroad for periods of over 24 hours” (League of Nations, 1937).

”Tourism is the temporary, short-term movement of people to destination outside the places where they normally live and work and their activities during the stay at each destination. It includes movements for all purposes” (Tourism Society of England, 1976).

“Science, art and business of attracting and transporting visitors, accommodating them and graciously catering to their needs and wants”.¹

“Tourism is an identifiable nationally important industry. The industry involves a wide cross section of component activities including the provisions of transportation, accommodation, recreation, food and related services.”²

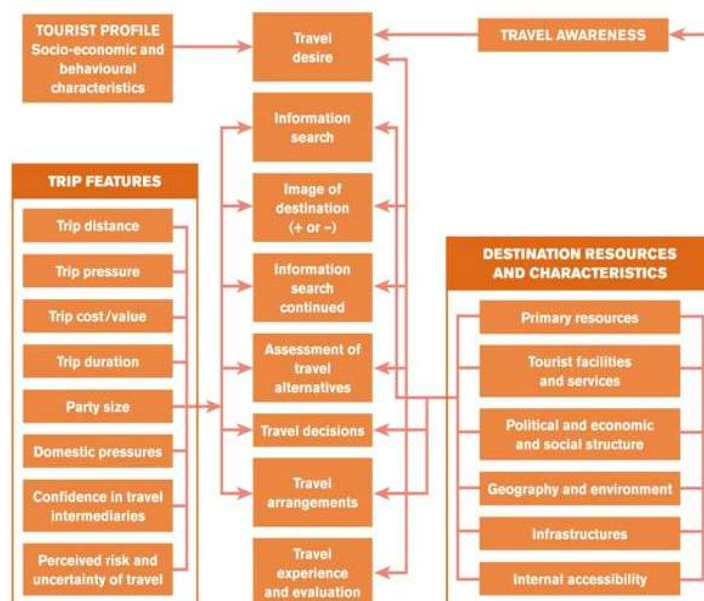
“Tourism refers to the provision of transportation, accommodation, recreation, food and related services for domestic and overseas travellers. It involves travel for all purposes, including recreation and business”.³

“The anatomy of tourism is composed of three elements: man, the author of the act of tourism; space, the physical element to be covered; and time, the temporal element consumed by the trip and stay”.⁴

Hermann Von Schullard (1910), defined tourism as, “sum total of operators, mainly of an economic nature, which directly relate to the entry, stay and movement of foreigners inside and outside a certain country, city or a region.”⁵

“the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activity” (Hunziker & Krapf, 1942).⁶

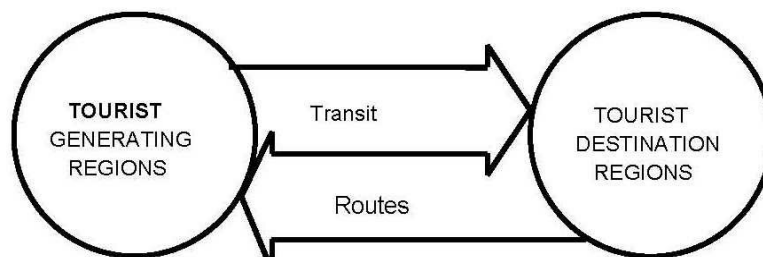
“The temporary movement of people to destinations outside their usual places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs” (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). They proposed the following fundamental model of tourist behaviour.



Source: Mathieson, A., & Wall, G. (1982). *Tourism: Economic, Physical and Social Impacts*. Harlow: Longman.p.95.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) defines tourism as, “A social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure”.⁷

2.1 The Geographical Elements of Tourism



Source: Leiper, N. (1979). The Framework of Tourism: Towards a Definition of Tourism, Tourist and Tourism Industry. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 6 (4), 390-407.

“It is the system involving the discretionary travel and temporary stay of persons away from their usual place of residence for one or more nights, excepting tours made for the primary purpose of earning remuneration from points en route. The elements of the system are tourists generating regions, transit routes, destination regions and a tourist industry. These five elements are arranged in spatial and functional connections. Having the characteristics of open system, the organisation of five elements operates within broader environments: physical, social, economic, political, technological with which it interacts”.⁸

Objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

Identify the tourism sites in District Meerut.

Examine the quality of tourist facilities especially the Information Display at different tourist sites in District Meerut.

Propose and measures for further developing tourism in District Meerut.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the study are:

District Meerut is one of the most tourism rich regions of Uttar Pradesh.

District Meerut faces a lot of challenges for developing tourism in the region. Inadequate information display at tourist sites is a major challenge

that the tourist face.

There is a huge scope for developing tourism in District Meerut.

Tourist Sites in District Meerut

Meerut is one of the most sought after tourist destinations of Uttar Pradesh. It is fortunate to be endowed with a lot of tourist destinations. A large number of tourists and visitors not only from the country but from all over the world throng these places for spiritual, recreational, adventure and entertainment purposes. Meerut is a proud home to one of the oldest Jain Mandirs, one of the oldest and the first Churches of North India and one of the oldest and first Mosques of North India. Some of the important tourist destinations in District Meerut include, but not limited to: (a) Digamber Jain Bada Mandir Hastinapur, (b) Shahi Jama Masjid, (c) St. John's Church, (d) Augarnath Temple, (e) Martyr's Memorial, (f) Gandhi Bagh, (g) Shahpeer's Mausoleum, (h) Shahi Eid Gaah, (i) Parikshitgarh Fort, (j) Dargah of Baley Miyan, (k) Nauchandi Mela, (l) Suraj Kund, (m) Hastinapur Wild Life Sanctuary, (n) Chandi Devi Temple and Nauchandi Mela, (o) Mansa Devi Temple, (p) Bhai Dharam Singh Ka Gurudwara. This list is only indicative and in no way an exhaustive one.

Digamber Jain Bada Mandir Hastinapur

Shri Digamber Jain Prachin Bada Mandir is a Jain temple complex situated in Hastinapur a little over thirty five kilometres away from Meerut. It is oldest Jain temple in North India is dedicated to the sixteenth Jain Teerthankar Shantinatha. In Jainism Hastinapur is a highly sacred place as it is considered to be the birthplace of three *Teerthankaras* namely Shantinatha, Kunthunatha and Aranatha in the sixteenth, seventeen and eighteen centuries respectively. Another significant incident related to Hastinapur is that the first *Teerthankara* Rishabhjnata terminated his thirteen month long self-imposed reparation when King Shreyans served him sugarcane juice. Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II's imperial Treasurer Raja Harsukh Rai constructed this Temple Complex in the year 1801.⁹ The Temple Complex comprises the *Mukhya Shikhara* in the centre. Several Jain Temples, most of which were built in the late twentieth century and dedicated to various *Teerthankaras*, surround the *Mukhya Shikhara*. The *Teerthankara* deity of the Complex is Shri Shantinatha – the sixteenth century *Teerthankara* sitting in *Padmasana*. The idols of seventeenth century and eighteenth century *Teerthankaras* Shri Kuntunath and Shri Aranath flank the altar on the right and left side respectively of the *Teerthankara*. Some of the other important Temples in the Complex are as under:

- *Manastambha*: This thirty one feet high structure was built in the year 1955 and is located outside the entrance of the main temple complex.
- *Trimurti Mandir*: In the Centre is Shri Parshvanath idol, on the left alter is a twelfth-century Shri Shantinatha idol in Kayotsarga posture and on the right altar is white color Shri Mahavir Swami idol.
- *Nandishwardwee*: Constructed in 1980s it is a fine specimen of one of the most important elements of Jain Cosmology. Idols of Shri Shantinatha and Shri Aranath, on both sides, adorn the main entrance of the Temple.
- *Samavasarana Rachna*: It is fantastic structure that contains one hundred and eleven small *Chaityalaya* and four *manastambhas* which signify the *Samavasarana* of the 19th *TeerthaEkar*, Shri Mällinātha.
- *Ambika Devi Temple*: It houses an ancient idol of goddess Ambika which was recovered from a nearby canal. Image of Shri Neminath is carved on the head of the idol of goddess Ambika.¹⁰

Apart from these abovementioned temples the other temples in the Jain Complex include Shri Bahubali Temple, Shri Parshwnath Temple, Jal Mandir, Kirti Stambha and Pandukshila.

Shri Digamber Jain Mandir Teeth Kshetra Committee manages the affairs of the Shri Diagambar Jain Prachin Bada Mandir. Under the auspices of the Committee several Dharamshalas, Bhojnalaya, Jain Library, and Acharya Vidyanand Museum are maintained. The Kshetra Complex also contains a Post Office, Police Sub-station, Jain Gurukul and an Udaseen ashram. The Committee also manages Kailash Parvat Rachna, twenty *Tirthankaras* Tonks, and a cluster of four ancient Nishiyajis.¹¹

It is believed that the festival of Raksha Bandhan also started from the sacred place of Hastinapur. As the legend goes, in the Ancient period, a group of seven hundred *Munis* of Akampancharya reached Hastinapur. While they were meditating Raja Bali set afire their place of worship. However, instead of creating a hullabaloo these seven hundred *Munis* kept calm and decided not to eat cereals till the fire cools down. Vishnu Kumar, on the Day of *Shravan Shukla Purnima* that is Raksha Bandhan, transformed himself into *Vaman* and asked Raja Bali for three feet land. He measured the entire Planet Earth in just three steps and thus protected these seven hundred meditating *Munis* and expelled Raja Bali. Jain community celebrated this festival with a vow to protect each other by tying the *Raksha Sutra* (Protection Band). Mahamuni Vishnu Jain Mandir is also situated here and it houses ancient idols.¹²

Shahi Jama Masjid

Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi's Wazir (Chief Minister) Hasan Mahdi, built Shahi Jama Masjid in 1019 AD.¹³ It is older than the Qutb Minar. It is considered to be the first Masjid in North India. "Situated in the old city area, the Shahi Jama Masjid in Meerut is considered the first mosque constructed in North India in 1019 AD. The mosque represents a mixture of the pre and post-Mughal era architecture. The structure remains robust after almost 1000 years of its construction"¹⁴ while the three magnificent domes are a fine specimen of Central Asian architectural style. The construction of the Mosque was completed during the reign of Naseeruddin Mahmood while Mughal Emperor Humayan repaired some of Mosques damaged portions. It was the epicenter of First War of Independence. As of today Muslim Community maintains it.

St. John's Church

Chaplain the Reverend Henry Fisher of Church of England on behalf of the East India Company established this Church in 1819 in the cantonment area and was completed in 1822. It is considered one of the oldest churches in North India. Situated in Meerut Cantonment St. John's Church is parish Church in the diocese of Agra of Church of North India. At the entrance of the Church is inscribed the parish motto "Unity, Witness and Service". The Church premises contains huge but defunct pipe organ. Air to the organ was supplied through the manually operated bellows. It has a seating capacity of ten thousand people. During the War of 1857, this Church was the scene of heavy fighting between Indians and the British forces. Church represents a fine example of Anglican parish architecture of early nineteenth century. The design of the Church building corresponds to architecture style prevalent before the Gothic Revival. The Palladian or the Classical style of architecture best suits the local needs of that time. The Church is adorned with two hundred years old pews and kneelers, brass eagle lectern, marble baptistery and stained glass windows. The Church abides by the Anglican rite and Book of Common Prayer liturgy. It is open round the year and the visitors can visit here as per their own convenience. Mass Services in English are held on Sundays from 08:30am (Summers) and 09:30am (Winters) which generally comprises Holy Communion (In case Priest is available). Special services on major Christian festivals such as Easter, Christmas and New Year are held from 10:00 am. Newly baptised Christians of all the major denominations are offered Holy Communion. A large majority of Church parishers belong to Meerut City although quite a few travel down from as far as fifty kilometres to attend the Church services.

Adjacent to this Church is St. John's Cemetery which contains graves that are more than a century old and have engraved headstones, carved pillars and some extremely elegant tombs. Some of the notable burials in the St. John's Cemetery include Sir David Ochterlony, Bt. and Sir Rollo Gillespie. Major-general Sir David Ochterlony, 1st Baronet of Pitforthly, 1st Baronet of Ochterlony GCB was born in Massachusetts. He served as the British Resident to the Mughal court at Delhi. Major-General Sir Hugh Robert Rollo Gillespie was an officer in the British Army.

Augarnath Temple

Located in Meerut Cantonment Augarnath Temple is also locally known as Kalipaltan Mandir. Devoted to Lord Shiva the Temple is situated at the site where the soldiers of the war of 1857 planned their operations. There is a memorial built to honour the martyrs of the First War of Independence (1857). The Temple boasts of both religious and historical significance. The official website of the government of Uttar Pradesh mentions:

“The Augarnath Temple in Meerut is devoted to Lord Shiva. The temple has historical importance as the first war of independence of India was also witnessed here. The actual date or year of the formation of the temple is not known but it is believed that the ‘*shiva linga*’ in the temple emerged on its own that is treated as a miracle of God and therefore attracts lots of devotees. In the past few years, several changes have been made in the temple. In 1968, a new temple was constructed and the old architecture was replaced. In 1987, a new hexagonal hall was also constructed there and in 2001, a ‘*Kalash*’ (pitcher) made from 4.5 kg of gold was installed at the spire.”¹⁵ Little is known about the history of the Temple “however, it is said that at this temple, the Maratha rulers used to perform the pilgrimage on auspicious occasions making it a significant place of worship in the city”¹⁶.

Although, some of the inscriptions indicate that Krishnadevaraya of the Vijayanagara Kingdom built this Temple, yet the local priests contest these claims. The *Kanvars* or the *Shivbhakts* offer their holy *Kanvars* at this Temple on *Shivratri* in the month of Shraavan and Phalguni. The worship of *Shivlinga* is being held since ancient times.

Martyr's Memorial

It is thirty meter (ninety eight feet) high white marble pillar located at Bhainsali built in the memory of the martyrs of First War of Independence of 1857. The Memorial premises also contains a Government Freedom Struggle Museum dedicated to the first war of Indian independence. The official website of Meerut states:

“Government Freedom Struggle Museum, Meerut was established in 1997.

It is located in the Shaheed Smarak Compound on Delhi Road, about 6 km north-east from the city railway station and at a distance of about 200 meters from the Delhi Bus Station. The Museum's main aim is the collection, preservation, documentation and exhibition of cultural property and to make it available for educational activities as well as for creation of awareness about our glorious past. Some postal stamps, pictures, post cards, memorial coins related to the events of 1857 and latter coins are also in the collection of the museum. The museum is in the developing stages and efforts are being made to collect more specimens. The museum organises educational programs such as lectures, seminars and competitions related to history, culture, philosophy, the freedom struggle and religion. It also aims at coordinating with other cultural and educational organizations for disseminating Indian culture and particularly the events related to the long drawn freedom struggle of India".¹⁷

Gandhi Bagh

Locally also known as "Company Garden", it located in Meerut Cantonment. It is one of the oldest recreational parks in Meerut. East India Company built this Park and said to have installed water storage chamber and motor in it which were earlier fixed in Delhi's Red Fort. At the moment Meerut Cantonment Board (MCB) manages the Park. The Company Garden is famous for its Musical Fountain which runs daily in the evening. "Spread across 22 acres, the park now boasts of a children's park, walking trek path, terracotta garden, cricket ground and musical fountain".¹⁸ Apart from these facilities the MCB also "opened opened a rose garden as well as a mini zoo for the public on March 9, 2016".¹⁹ The Zoo boasts of fifteen pairs of love birds, twelve pairs of rabbits, thirty guinea pigs, nine ducks, four pairs of fantail pigeons, a pair of hen and cock and two black ducks. Only a few days later on March 13, 2016 the MCB started camel rides in the Park for a nominal fee. Previously there were several entry points and the entry was free of cost. However, presently there is only one entry gate and the administration levies a nominal entry fee as well. At the moment Meerut Cantonment Board (MCB) manages the Park and has introduced a lot of news facilities in order to attract more visitor "footfalls", for example, on march 13, 2016 the MCB started camel rides. This is available on every Sunday for a nominal fee. "The move yielded results as boating and battery cart rides were able to attract handsome revenue on the inaugural day of the amusement activity".²⁰ These facilities make Gandhi Park, "Perfect spot for a family picnic or anyone to spend the day with a green layer".²¹

Shahpeer's Mausoleum

Empress Nur Jahan, wife of the fourth Mughal Emperor Jahangir, constructed this Red Stone structure in 1628 in honour of a local *sufi* saint Hazrat Shahpeer who was a mentor of Jahangir. Complex but elaborate *Naqqashi* adorns the walls of the incomplete Mausoleum. It falls under the religious tourist spots. Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) lists the Mausoleum as National Heritage Monument. One of the stunning facets of the architecture of this Mughal Mausoleum is that there is no roof in the entire structure. Notwithstanding, this not even a single drop of rain falls on the main tomb. As the legend goes Shahpeer left for heavenly abode just the next day after the construction work of Mausoleum commenced. Therefore, further construction work stopped and, hence, till date it remains unfinished.

“The tomb of Shahpeer is the one of the popular monuments in Meerut that is considered to be the oldest tombs in North India. The *Dargah* was constructed in 1620 which is much in advance than even the Taj Mahal. This open-to-sky shape has no roof; in spite of which the rain water does no longer fall on the principle tomb. The tomb is fabricated from red sand stone and has several intricately carved designs, motifs and floral designs. Several pillars and arches lie close to the principle tomb, therefore, leads us to believe that as in keeping with the antique plan, it changed into supposed to have been a closed quadrangle shape with porches and arches”.²²

Shahi Eid Gaah

Made up entirely of a mixture of clay and limestone this more than eight hundred old Shahi Eidgah is situated on the Meerut-Delhi Road. It is such a huge structure that a close to one lakh devotees can pray simultaneously. Intricate *Naqqashi* adorn the the walls of the Eidgah. Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmood – the eighth Sultan of Delhi Sultanate and the youngest son of Sultan Iltutmish – built the Shahi Eidgah at Meerut in 1210 AD. It is believed that the Sultan would come down here all the way from Delhi to pray special Eid prayers. After the prayers the meal is cooked in huge vessels and distributed among the poor of the neighbouring villages. One of the key architectural features of the Eidgah is that there is no underground foundation while the building is directly constructed on the ground without any base. The bricks are carved with Arabic inscriptions.

Parikshitgarh Fort

King Parikshit – the grandson of Arjuna and the ruler of Hastinapur – constructed this Fort. It is situated almost twenty three kilometres away from Meerut. In due course of time the Fort underwent wear and tear at various places. Gurjar Raja Nain Singh repaired and restored the Fort in the eighteenth century. In 1857 the

British demolished a part of the Fort to and used it as Police Station. Excavations in and around the Fort have unearthed pots filled with coins and pottery pieces dating back to ancient period. Near to the Fort lies the Ashram of Rishi Shringi who is believed to be the *Vaid* of high calibre. As the legend goes Rishi Shringi helped the infertile King Dashrath of *Mahabharata* procreate his Pandava sons. All of these facts decisively point towards the mythological origins of Parikshhitgarh town which is located on hillock. Also, excavations carried out in 1916 under the staircase of the Fort unearthed coins of Mughal Emperor Shah Aalam-II's period. It is believed that King Parikshit died of snake bite and after his death his son Janmajay performed *Sarpjana* here. According to 2001 Census the Parikshitgarh has a total population of seventeen thousand three hundred ninety nine. Out this sixty percent are males and thirty eight percent are females. The average literacy of Parikshitgarh is seventy six per cent that is two per cent more than the national average of seventy six per cent.

Dargah of Baley Miyan

Founder of Delhi Sultanate Qutbuddin Aibak built this Dargah in 1194 in memory of a nineteen year old *Sufi* saint Ghazi Syed Salar Masud locally known as Baley Mian who was killed on April 12, 1034 on new moon Friday. He is equally revered by both Muslims and Hindus. People cutting across religious and sectarian lines throng the Dargah all throughout the year. During the Nauchandi Mela an annual *Urs* is organised at the Dargah. The Chand Devi Mandir is lies adjacent to the Dargah which is a sign of communal harmony that is *Ganga-Jamni Tehzeeb* or the Composite Culture that we are so proud of.

Nauchadi Mela

Municipal Corporation of Meerut organizes the annual month long Nauchandi Fair at the four-and-a-half square kilometer Nauchandi Ground. It begins on the second Sunday after the Hindu festival of Holi which falls in the month of March every year. The Fair exhibits artistic and religious include, but not limited to, Lucknow's Chikan work, Moradabad's brassware, Varanasi's carpets, rugs and silk sarees, Agra's footwear, Meerut's leather items, sports goods, scissors, gajaks, nan-khatai. The Fair attracts an annual footfall of more than fifty thousand visitors. Its history is almost three hundred fifty years. Since then it regularly organized with a gap in 1858 because of the 1857 Revolt. Indian Railway runs a train Nauchandi Express from Meerut to Lucknow named after this annual Fair. The Fair started in 1672 as one day cattle-trading fair, has now slowly and gradually, expanded into almost one month long affair. It is also famous for Indo-Pak Mushaira but

unfortunately now it no more features due to political reasons. The Fair begins with the *Puja* and offerings to goddess Chandi – the reincarnation of goddess Parvathi.

“During *navratras*, a large number of devotees assemble in this temple and also visit Bale Miya’s dargah to pay respects to the saint. Gradually, it became an annual affair, known as Nauchandi (New Moon) Mela because a large gathering would attract vendors also. In 1880, the then District Magistrate of Meerut F.N. Right realized the importance of this fair, and the administration too began to participate in it. Even today it is managed by the district administration. The name Nauchandi Fair stuck, as Hindus also liked it for it resembled the name of the temple.”²³

Suraj Kund

Its history is more than three hundred years old. Businessman Lawar Jawahr built Suraj Kund in 1714. Ganga Canal water filled this *Kund*. Several Temple including Baba Manohar Nath Temple, which is said to have been built during the reign of Mughal Emperor Shahjahan, surround the Suraj Kund. Out of the total five *Kunds* spread across the length and breadth of the country Surajkund is the largest amongst them all. Over a period of time the water of the *Kund* dried up and presently the Municipal Corporation of Meerut has transformed it into a public place. A garden, a park with pathways and a robust statute of Swami Vivekananda in the Centre are the attractions. The *Kund* is open round the year for the public.

Hastinapur Wild Life Sanctuary

The Hastinapur Wild Life Sanctuary was established in 1986 as part of “Asia Flyway” project. It spreads across more than two thousand square kilometers and covers more than one hundred seventy three kilometres of length of the holy River Ganga and extends up till the Districts of Hapur and Amroha covering the regions of Khaadar, Kholra and Bangar. Kholra boasts of dense forest cover whereas Khaadar region contains wide grass-land expanses with interspersed forests. The Sanctuary is home to State animal Swamp Deer and State Bird Saaras (Crane). It is famous for Twelve–Horned Deer or the “*Baara Singha*”. Under Crocodile Breeding Projects, baby crocodiles are released in the Ganga River near Hastinapur. Under the aegis of WWF, the Turtle Rehabilitation Program also has its centre near the Hastinapur Sanctuary. Foreign and Indian migratory birds regularly visit the Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary. Marshy ecosystem with more than three hundred species of birds, Sloth Bear and Wild Boar is a major tourist attraction. “Thirty-one years after the establishment of Hastinapur wildlife sanctuary, a plan was prepared to develop it as an eco-tourism destination”²⁴ with the help of NGOs that entails development of religious and historical sites in and around the sanctuary and job creation. The Forest

Department is planning to barricade the entire forest areas of the Sanctuary and maintain enough water supplies for sustaining aquatic life in the Sanctuary. It is also proposed to develop Ganga Barrage as a bird sanctuary. On November 30, 2020 local NGO NEER Foundation approached the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and expressed the desire to develop one hectare of land for eco tourism in the Sanctuary.²⁵

Chandi Devi Temple

Chandi Devi Temple is an ancient Temple dedicated to Goddess Chandi. Devi Ahliya bai Holkar built this Temple. High concentration of the devotees is in the morning. The Temple boasts of museums and art galleries and is surrounded by a lot of hotels and cafes his is very old so can be related as history, crowd can be expect in morning time so good time is evening. It is said that Ravan's wife Mandodri was a devotee of Goddess Chandi and she established Goddess Chandi's idol here during the Navratri and started to worship her. It is believed that Mandodri built a secret tunnel to the Temple. A one day Fair was started in the eighteenth century here which increased to three days. In due course of time its time period has increased and now the Fair stretches for about one month which starts ten days after Holi festival. As the legend goes if a person worships and offers *Prasada* to Goddess Chandi regularly for forty days then She fulfils his/her desire.

“The Chandi Devi Temple is a prominent Hindu temple located close to Surajkund. It is famous for the annual Nauchandi Mela held every year after Holi. The temple is decorated with flowers and lights during the occasion and several stalls selling various wares are put up. The Temple was built by Devi Ahilyabai Holkar several years ago and is a famous religious spot for Hindus across India”.²⁶

Mansa Devi Temple

It is an ancient *Siddipeeth* Temple located on the Garh Road opposite the Medical College and occupies four-and-a-half beegha of land. The Temple Complex is built on a *Shamshaan* and contains the idols of Shiviji Parivaar, Durga Mata, Mansha Mata, Santoshi Mata and the five *Darbaars* of Rambhakt Hanumanji. On every Sunday a *Mela* is organised inside the Temple premises. It is believed that *Maa* Manshi never returns Her devotee empty handed. After their wishes are fulfilled there are several *bhakts* who visit the Temple year after year. It is also believed that if someone writes his/her wishes than that too is fulfilled. For the duration of the nine day Fair the *Mata* displays Her nine different versions. Devotees from far off places through the Temple and offer *Halwa Prasada*. Apart from the principal *Maa* Mansha Devi Temple there are twenty five small gate Temples inside the premises. Because

of the small gates the devotees are bound to enter the Temples in a bowing posture. *Maa Mansha Devi Trust*, which was established in 2010, maintains the Temple.

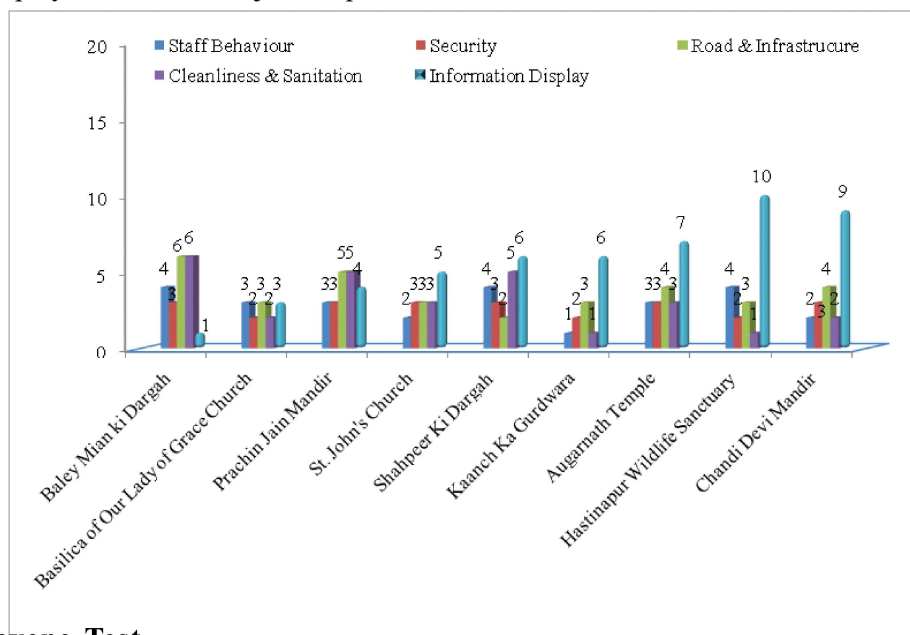
“An important Hindu temple in Meerut, Mansa Devi is reckoned one of the oldest religious places in the city. The temple is known primarily for its exquisite architecture, carvings and statues. This popular Hindu shrine in Meerut is dedicated to Goddess Durga. Being one of the oldest in the city, every day, the temple is frequented by numerous devotees. The complex of the temple also includes various other small shrines. On Sundays, the crowd doubles at Mansa Devi Temple”.²⁷

Methodology

The first step was to shortlist nine, out of nearly twenty tourist sites, for our study. After a careful observation and applying multiple criteria the tourist sites we shortlisted for our study were: (i) Baley Mian Ki Dargah, (ii) Basilica of Our Lady of Grace Church, (iii) Prachin Jain Mandir, (iv) St. John’s Church, (v) Shahpeer Ki Dargah, (vi) Kaanch Ka Gurudwara, (vii) Augarnath Temple, (viii) Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary and (ix) Chandi Devi Mandir. In order to maintain sample size uniformity twenty respondents were chosen from each site. This gives us a total of one hundred eighty respondents. An Interview Schedule in English containing four Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) based on Likert Scale and one short answer type question was prepared using Google Forms. These MCQs on Staff Behaviour, Security, Cleanliness and Sanitation, Road and Infrastructure and Information Display were such framed to enquire about what the tourist disliked the most about these tourist sites. The one short answer questions asked the respondents about what improvements they would like to see at these tourist sites. The co-author of the paper visited each and every single tourist site and administered the Interview Schedule to the visitors. This study was spread across for fifteen days. Once the survey completed the researchers tabulated the data using Spreadsheets available with Google Forms.

Our Data Analysis revealed that tourists found Information Display as one of the major area that warrants immediate attention. Information about the tourist site was poorly displayed and in most cases it was bilingual that is Hindi and English only. Also, the kind of font and writing style was sub-standard which made it difficult for the visitors to read them. Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary came out to be the worst on this parameter. Since the Information Display was the most common factor about which the visitors complained, therefore, we regressed it on Staff behavior, Security, Road and Infrastructure and Cleanliness and Sanitation in Microsoft Excel 2007 whereby we obtained and $p = 0.105705$ Staff Behaviour that is $p > 0.05$ Hence, we omit Staff Behaviour and test our hypothesis.

Since there are four groups, therefore, we performed Levene Test for Homogeneity of Variance to test the second hypothesis that is inadequate Information Display is one of the major complaints of the tourists in Meerut District.



Levene Test

Group	Variance,	SD (n - 1)	n
Security	0.26666668	0.5163978	9
Road & Infrastructure	1.3777778	1.1737878	9
Cleanliness & Sanitation	3.4333334	1.8529257	9
Information Display	7.388889	2.718251	9

Ho (Null hypothesis): Variances (V) are equal across all groups.

Ha (Alternative hypothesis): Variances (V) are not equal for at least one pair.

F-value = 5.1221867

df1 = 3

df2 = 36

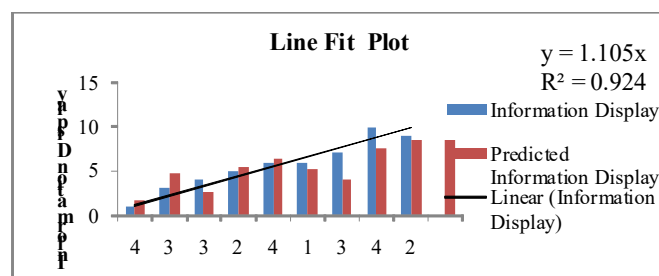
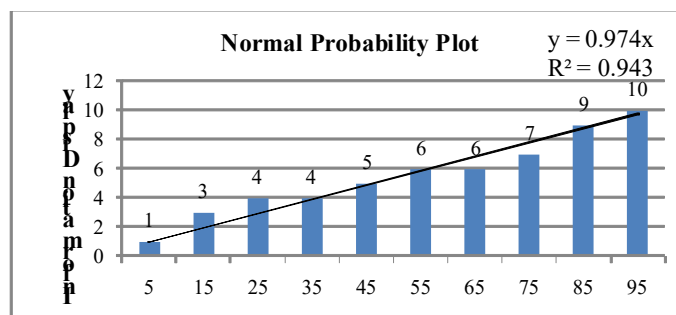
p = 0.004708 ** (2 tails)

--> Ho was rejected. ==> Ha

MODEL SUMMARY								
<i>Regression Statistics</i>								
Multiple R	0.863785							
R Square	0.746125							
Adjusted R Square	0.543024							
Standard Error	1.837537							
Observations	9							
ANOVA								
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>			
Regression	4	49.61729	12.40432	3.673677	0.093051			
Residual	5	16.88271	3.376542					
Total	9	66.5						
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	-5.19347	5.116184	-1.01511	0.35663	-18.345	7.9581	-18.345	7.9581
Staff Behaviour	1.536074	0.779094	1.971615	0.105705	-0.46665	3.5388	-0.46665	3.5388
Security	5.489722	1.973075	2.782318	0.038796	0.41777	10.56167	0.41777	10.56167
Road & Infrastructure	-0.33091	0.628234	-0.52674	0.620898	-1.94584	1.284013	-1.94584	1.284013
Cleanliness & Sanitation	-2.30673	0.696062	-3.31398	0.021148	-4.09601	-0.51745	-4.09601	-0.51745
RESIDUAL OUTPUT				PROBABILITY OUTPUT				
<i>Observation</i>	<i>Predicted Information Display</i>	<i>Residuals</i>	<i>Standard Residuals</i>	<i>Percentile</i>	<i>Information Display</i>			
1	1.594115	-0.59412	-0.43378	5	1			
2	4.787989	-1.78799	-1.30546	15	3			
3	2.695687	1.304313	0.952318	25	4			
4	5.558646	-1.55865	-1.13801	35	4			
5	6.434905	-1.43491	-1.04767	45	5			
6	5.224506	0.775494	0.566211	55	6			
7	4.022572	1.977428	1.44378	65	6			
8	7.640064	-0.64006	-0.46733	75	7			
9	8.630794	1.369206	0.999698	85	9			

Descriptive Statistics

Staff Behaviour	Security	Food & Infrastructure	Cleanliness & Sanitation	Information Display
Mean	2.8	2.6	3.6	2.9
Standard Error	0.326599	0.163299	0.371184	0.585947
Median	3	3	3	2.5
Mode	4	3	3	1
Standard Deviation	1.032796	0.51639	1.173788	1.85292
Sample Variance	1.066667	0.266667	1.377778	3.433333
Kurtosis	-0.89565	-2.27679	0.750892	-1.16101
Skewness	-0.27232	-0.48412	0.98935	0.573745
Range	3	1	4	5
Minimum	1	2	2	1
Maximum	4	3	6	6
Sum	28	26	36	29
Count	9	9	9	9
Largest(1)	4	3	6	6
Smallest(1)	1	2	2	1
Confidence Level(95.0%)	0.738817	0.369409	1.839677	1.325503



Conclusion

It is unfortunate that District Meerut despite being one of the most tourism rich regions fails to offer tourist friendly environment. This may be attributed to a variety of reasons. Based on filed observation and field study we would like highlight some of them here. Although, some relation information is available at each and every tourist site, however, it is inadequate and fails to elicit the detailed knowledge about the tourist site. Our research revealed that some other important factors that influence tourist footfall in District Meerut include, but not limited to, Staff behaviour, Security, Cleanliness and Sanitation and Road and Infrastructure. Meerut's law and order situation acts as a deterrent for tourism development. Meerut boasts of a turbulent past and remains one of the most volatile regions from security point of view. Hence, tourists and especially international tourists, are reluctant to visit here. Another significant challenge that tourists visiting District Meerut face is inferior tourism infrastructure including road connectivity. A large number of major tourist sites fair poorly when it comes to providing basic tourism facilities such parking, as tourist guide, cleanliness and sanitation, maintenance and upkeep, dilapidated roads, information display, promotion literature, so on and so forth. District Meerut lacks a comprehensive Tourism Policy to develop it as a hot tourism destination.

The tourism rich District Meerut offers a huge scope for developing tourism in a big way. Government agencies and district administration are required to promote and push Meerut as one of the hot tourism destination at the international level. For this purpose services of private tourism consultants and tourism marketing companies may be hired to chalk out a detailed and comprehensive tourism development plan. Apart from tourism allied industries and products such as sports goods, *revri/gazak*, and scissors need to be promoted. Trained and knowledgeable tourist guide may be provided at each site. It is imperative to formulate a comprehensive tourism policy for District Meerut that entails developing Meerut as an international tourist destination. Multilingual information display and promotion material holds the key to international tourism in District Meerut. Apart from the existing Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary, others spot may be identified and developed as ecotourism sites. Taking advantage of its proximity to the national capital Delhi, a couple of world class hospitals offering world class treatment at competitive prices may be established in District Meerut to promote health/medical/medical tourism.

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