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Tourism Development and Its Impact on Environment of Bundi

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ABSTRACT: Among the fastest growing economic activities the world over is Tourism and Travel. This sector has been instrumental in increasing the employment and income of the concerned Tourist area and has also led to the increase of the Gross Domestic Production of the concerned communities and the countries. In India too, Tourism and Travel activity has become a major tool of economic and social growth. The Tourism activity is not only providing employment and income but is also encouraging the local government and the local population for the renovation and preservation of their natural, historical, cultural, and social resources. Rajasthan, due to its natural, historical, social, and cultural attractions, is a renowned tourist destination and so Tourism and Travel is a very important economic activity, providing livelihood to a large percentage of the state's population. The State Government with its supporting plans and policies has always encouraged the Travel and Tourism activity. However, much still needs to be done in the areas of infrastructural development, skill, and training to provide professional services, availability of capital, suitable policies, and tax structure for the Tourist industry to work to its full capacity and capability. For the Tourism and Travel industry to function at its optimum potential, combined and sincere efforts must be made by all the concerned spheres: the local population, the service providers, the State Government as well as the Central Government of India. This paper focusses on the tourism development and its impact on overall environment of Bundi city of Rajasthan.

KEYWORDS: Tourism, development, impacts

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism and travel is now the world's largest industry, employing over 127 million people worldwide, with an investment of over 3.3 trillion US dollars and a turnover of over 40 million US dollars spent by tourists worldwide each year.

All governments place a high value on tourism as an industry and a means of achieving long-term economic development. However, one cannot deny that unplanned and uncontrolled tourism has serious environmental consequences.

II. OBJECTIVE

Tourism industry though considered a smokeless and pollution free industry, can threaten the economic, social, cultural, and political environs of the area toured. The main objective of this paper is to study the development of Bundi's Tourism industry and its impact on the town's environs - both positive and negative and to suggest means and ways of overcoming the negative ones.

III. METHODOLOGY

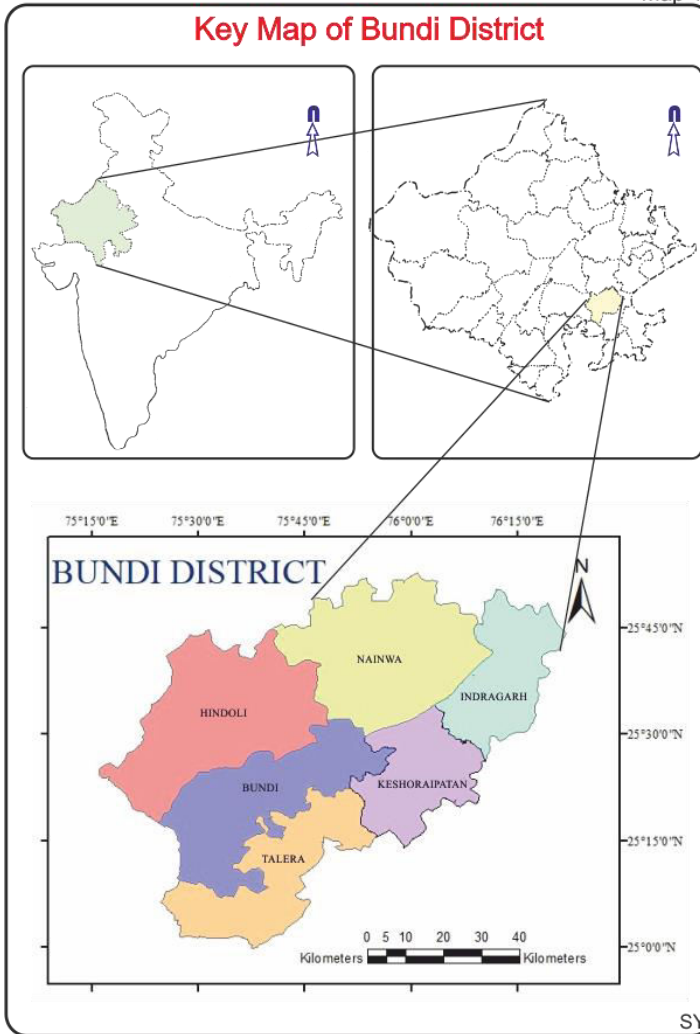
The methodology adopted for the proceedings was simple micro -level case area study of Tourism Industry of Bundi. It is based on field survey work and references have been drawn from personal observation and sample survey of randomly specified units. Field survey was done by asking questions from the workers and entrepreneurs of tourist related centres of Bundi, and the local population directly and indirectly affected by tourist inflow. Some secondary data was collected from various publications and concerned offices.



IV. THE STUDY AREA

The 25° 27' North latitude and 75° 39' East longitude pass through the city of Bundi. It is situated in a valley along a narrow gorge of the Aravalli Hills about 210 km. South of Jaipur, 36 km. East of Kota on the National Highway No.52.

Map 1



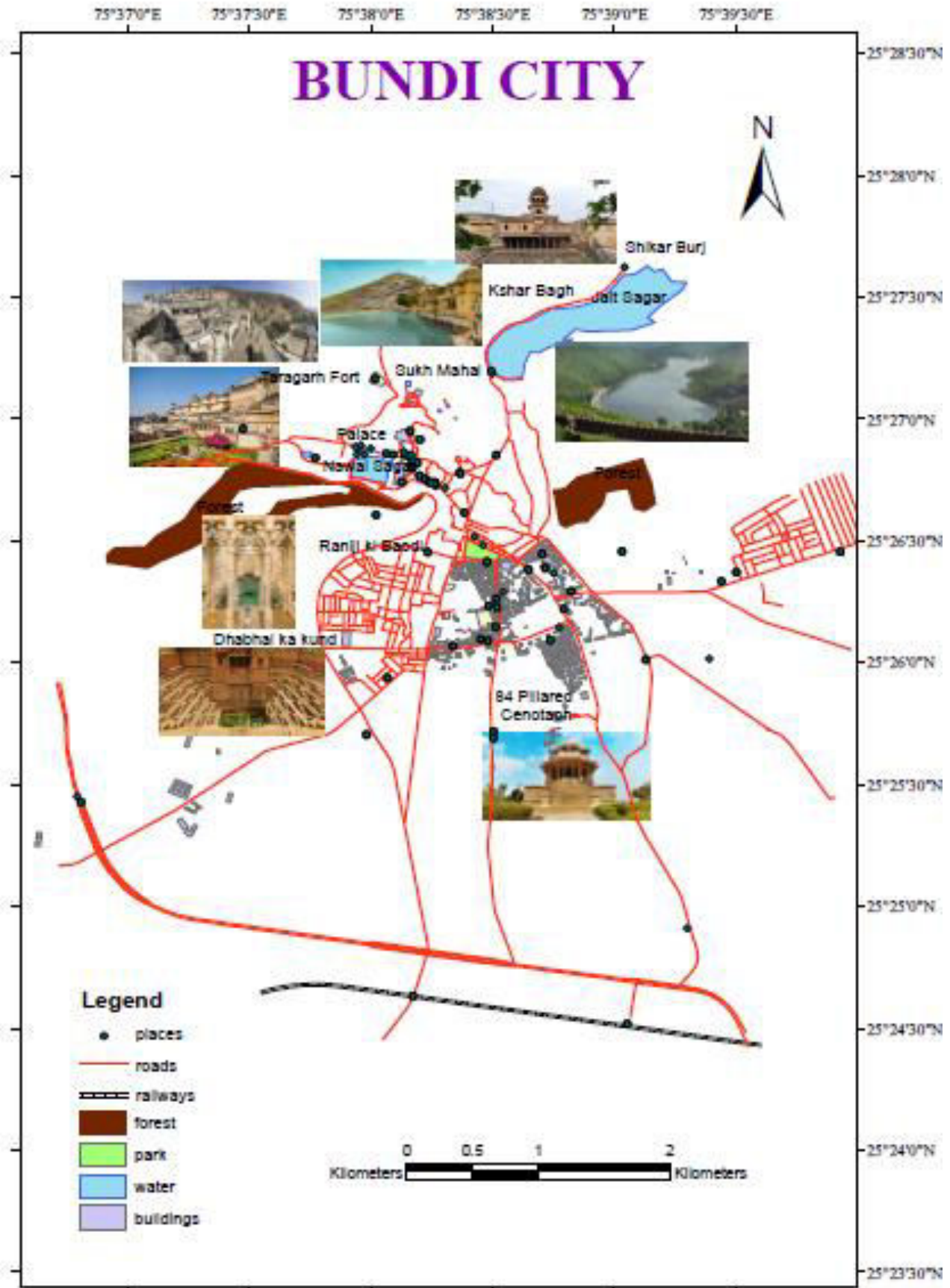
The climate of the area is moderate. Average annual temperatures are about 20°C. January is the coldest month with average temperatures of 24.5°C. May is the hottest month when temperature may go up to 46°C. Average annual rainfall is 628 mm of which 90% is during the Monsoon season.

Phyllites, shales, slates and quartzites are the common rocks of the area. An alluvial mantle is superimposed on the older rocks in the river valleys. The rest of the area has thin alluvial soils. Natural vegetation comprises of Tropical Deciduous forests which are generally open. Hill slopes are fairly covered with Dhokra (*Anogeissus Latifolia*), Dhau (*Anogeissus Pendula*), Khair (*Acacia Catechu*) and Khejra (*Prosopis Spicigera*). Bundi forests abound in variety of wildlife and provide natural habitat to various animals, birds, and fishes.

Agriculture is the main stay of the area with 67% of working population engaged in agriculture and allied activities. However, in the city of Bundi 80% of male workers and 76% of female workers are engaged in secondary and tertiary activities while 4% of male and 8% of female workers earn their livelihood from household industries.

Bundi is the transport nodal centre of the district. It has a Broad-Gauge railway station and a State Roadways Bus Terminus. The Television Relay Centre of Bundi has the tallest T.V. tower in the State. Being the district headquarter, Bundi city is also the administrative headquarter of the district. It has a Civil line, Collectorate, District Court, Post & Telegraph Office, a Jail, three Colleges,

numerous schools and hospitals, an Agriculture Mundi, and branches of several nationalized and co-operative banks.





V. PLACES OF INTEREST

A moment in history caught and held. A Rajput town so ancient that one gets the feeling of having stumbled upon a page of history. Bundi town nestles in a narrow valley enclosed by huge walls and fortified by four gateways. In the centre of the township is the Nawal Sagar Lake. A mediaeval fortress stands sentinel to the city - a mute witness to history and time.

The city presents a unique picture as regards its situation and dwellings. The style and structure of the old dwellings is a mixture of Rajasthani and Mughal architecture. Big stone pillars to construct verandas, round stone arches for doors and small windows covered with stone cut lattices (jalis) are a general feature of houses. The walls are painted with Bundi style of fresco paintings. The streets inside the town are narrow and wind in and out. The shops are built several feet above the ground to save from floods during Monsoons.

Tourist attractions include the Taragarh Fort raised at a height of 500 mt. atop a hill in 13th century incorporating the Chhatra Mahal, Badal Mahal, Daulat Diwan-E-Aam and the famous Chitra Shala. Nawal Sagar and Jait Sagar are two artificial lakes. Phool Sagar, Sukh Mahal, Shikar Burj and Kshar Bagh are interesting monuments just outside the old city. Chaurasi Khambon Ki Chhatri, due to its unique construction has become the symbol for Bundi (as Hawa Mahal for Jaipur).

Inside the city are beautifully carved and geometrically constructed Step wells and Tanks to store rainwater, many ancient temples and big Havelis. The Bundi school of miniature and fresco painting is well known to art lovers/many examples displayed on the walls of the famous Chitra Shala, Mahals and Havelis of the city. Bundi is a land where past still lives. The old walled city is almost untouched by the twentieth century and retains an almost mediaeval air, wherein lies its charm.

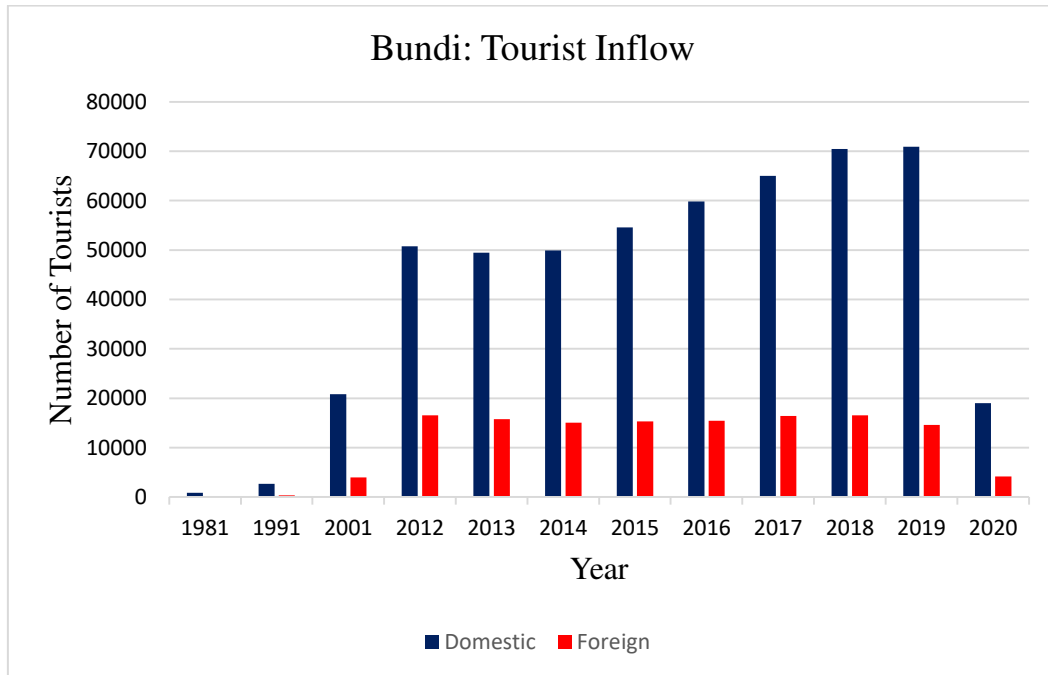
VI. PRESENT TOURISM PATTERNS

Eminent people who visited Bundi in the past include Rudyard Kipling, Virginia Foss, Colonel Tod. Till a few decades ago tourist inflow was little in number, international tourists were rare. Development of Infrastructure and promotional steps taken by authorities have changed the scene. In 1981, total number of tourists visiting the area were only 971, of which 840 were Indians whereas only 131 foreign tourists. This number rose to 70442 Indians and 16534 foreign tourists in 2018 and declined to 19022 Indians and 4186 foreign tourists in 2020 (Table). The decline is predominantly due to spread of corona epidemic and lockdowns imposed by various governments across the world.

Table: Bundi Tourist Inflow

Year	Domestic	Foreign
1981	840	131
1991	2660	344
2001	20847	3994
2012	50788	16523
2013	49434	15739
2014	49925	15063
2015	54574	15290
2016	59864	15420
2017	65021	16442
2018	70442	16534
2019	70946	14610
2020	19022	4186

Source: Tourist Information Centre Bundi



VII. IMPACTS ON ENVIRONMENT

Tourism has the capacity to disturb the fragile eco-systems of the areas toured. It creates environmental thresholds. Its impacts are felt on the physical, economic, social, and cultural environs and are both positive and negative.

Positive Impacts

1. Economic environment

The most positive impacts of Tourism development are seen on Bundi's economic environs.

a.) It has created jobs specially for the educated unemployed youngsters as tour operators, local agents of travelling agencies, owners, and managers of guest houses. New hotels and restaurants have come up in the city.

b.) Development of infrastructure which has also benefitted the local population in the form of better roads, better connectivity, better services, and amenities.

c.) It has stimulated capital investment in the area, both by Govt. and private sector. d.) Opportunity for small business has been generated in the form of guest houses, tourist-oriented shops, artefacts and souvenir manufacture, courier and information services, internet cafe, etc.

2. Physical Environment

Reforestation of hills, protection of wildlife, cleaning of lakes and streams have been undertaken to preserve the scenic beauty of the city, which form amongst the most visible tourist attractions.

3. Historical Sites

Tourism development has led to the cleaning and conserving of the city's historical monuments like the Taragarh Fort, Chitra Shala, frescos on haveli walls, various step wells and Tanks, 84 pillared cenotaph, and other sites, keeping in view their tourism potential.

4. Wildlife

Natural tourism required protection and preservation of the wildlife which had become non-existent around Independence time due to excessive hunting and poaching. Bundi Hills now are a part of Ramgarh Sanctuary. Panthers and tigers have been spotted in recent years.

5. Recreation and Aesthetic Value

Conservation and maintenance of local attractions - both natural and cultural - have provided local population with picnic spots and recreational opportunities. It has increased the aesthetic beauty of the city and inculcated an aesthetic sense amongst its people. It is increasingly being recognised that besides economic gains, tourism has great potential to act as a tool for preservation of environment. It provides not



only motivation but also financial assistance by way of money spent by tourists, in the cause of preservation, protection and conservation.

Negative Impacts of Tourism

Environmental parameters are often threatened due to increase in tourism. Unplanned and uncontrolled tourism can take serious implications. Though Bundi's Tourism industry is in its early stages of development, certain ill effects have manifested themselves.

1. Physical Environment

- a.) The beauty of the landscape is being destroyed by the eatables, paper bags, polythene packs, bottles etc. left behind carelessly by the tourists.
- b.) Nawal Sagar, Jait Sagar and other water bodies are decaying due to dumping of wastes and garbage. This is increasing their Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) and changing their physical and chemical properties. Talk to any old person of Bundi and he will tell you of the deterioration in drinking water quality over the years.
- c.) Increase in traffic and rate of accidents - Last 10 years have seen a phenomenal increase in vehicular movement, both public and private. Police and hospital records indicate towards increasing rate of accidents, mainly on the Kota - Bundi highway and the Jaipur - Bundi bypass.
- d.) Increase in air, water and noise pollution - Though the levels have still not been quantified by authorities, people feel that increased construction, traffic and tourist movement has increased noise and air pollution. Changing lifestyles are changing water utilization habits leading to water contamination and water scarcity. Bundi city had a 24-hour water supply few years back. Today the city has been divided into zones, each zone getting only 2 hours of daily water supply.

2. Historical Monuments

Visitors have recorded their visits by scribbling their names, removing stones, digging holes, marking tree trunks, plucking plants, and chipping off carving at the various monuments. The gold plating of paintings in the Chitra Shala have been removed and they have been disfigured with black and other colours.

3. Socio-Cultural Environment

- a.) Increase in alcoholism and drug addiction (Smack) specially in the younger generation is a trend being observed by all, taking over the old habit of 'Bhaang'.
- b.) Cross cultural exchange has led to changes in the dressing and food preferences of Bundi's youngsters, which have become more cosmopolitan rather than traditional.
- c.) Commercialization of local art and handicraft is a largely felt ill effect as these are being altered to meet the tastes and time constraints 'of the tourists.
- d.) Ethnicity and Religion - Locals feel that increased inflow of tourists, their unhindered movements into religious places at all times of the day is reducing the sanctity of the holy places and hampering them in performing their religious rites, at the same time it makes them/their temple/their rituals and offerings impure.

4. Economic Environment

- a.) Tourist season here is from October to March. People engaged in Tourism industry thus face the problem of seasonal unemployment.
- b.) Effects of outside events - Wars, political un stability, communal riots, natural calamities at local, national, and international levels hamper tourism. North Korea tension, Kargil war, terrorist attacks on America and America-Taliban war reduced travelling at international level. Political and communal instability in certain states led to reduction in number of national tourists also. Even the corona epidemic has reduced the tourist inflow in Bundi as there were national lockdown as well as ban on international flights to India.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

Development of tourism industry is in essential alternative that the authorities cannot afford to overlook if the agriculture-based sub urban economy must be supported and uplifted, as Bundi has all the potentials for attracting visitors of all age groups and tastes. To overcome and control the ill effects, few steps that can be taken are:-

1. Environmental education and awareness amongst the locals regarding the precious wealth they have been endowed with, by nature and by their history. The locals as well as tourists must be made aware of their duties towards the city in keeping it clean and conserving its heritage.



2. Renovation, restoration, and beautification by

- (a) Garbage management and cleaning.
- (b) Streamlining and face lifting.
- (c) Physical and chemical renovation and restoration.
- (d) Preservation and protection.
- (e) Town planning keeping in view future projections.

3. Developing Eco-tourism - The volume and type of tourist activity must be balanced against the sensitivity and carrying capacity of the resources available. Maintaining the quality of environment is not only desirable but also, necessary for visitor satisfaction, as decline in quality will ultimately lead to decline in tourist flow.

4. Formation of a Tourist Master Plan - A policy plan for the development of tourism infrastructure emphasizing on a systematic approach towards tourism development at the Macro-level, guiding programme - planning at the Micro-level, with environmental protection and conservation of tourism resources and natural endowments is a must for an integrated development of the city of Bundi.

IX. CONCLUSION

Bundi's Tourist industry is in its early stages of growth. Quantitative and scholarly studies have been non-existent. Collecting quantitative data was difficult. Even after visiting all related offices and officers, data e.g., changes in the number of gases in air, changes in physical and chemical composition of water bodies, wildlife statistics, number of people directly and indirectly benefited by tourism, economic importance of tourism due to its earnings, were not available. Impact on environment was judged in terms of trends foreseen in the past few decades and visible changes that have occurred in the behaviour and attitudes of the local population. Thus, this study is more a qualitative study giving observations as general trends and attributes. Impacts and potential has been judged subjectively and put down therein.

What was observed was that if planned and publicized properly, Bundi has vast tourist potential. It is special in the sense that it is a mediaeval town which is still living and has retained its old-world character. Due to space limitations, modern construction is practically non-existent in the old walled city. Agriculture sub-urban economy has kept the people away from the garish modern ways of living and helped the city in retaining, its old charm. As a part of our heritage, these environs should be preserved. If the city is declared a Heritage Zone and integrated development plans undertaken, Bundi has all the potentials to enlist itself as an unavoidable destination in the plans of all those visiting India and Rajasthan.

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