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Full Length Research Article

Udपुरia Pond as an important Ecotourism site in South Eastern Rajasthan India

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ABSTRACT

The Udपुरia pond under investigation is situated 40 km away from Kota (Rajasthan) near the village Nimoda, Tehsil Sultanpur, District Kota, Rajasthan. This pond gets filled from Right Main Canal of River Chambal. It is very important bird breeding site which is not very popular in the wild life tourist circuit of India. It has favourable climate for birds, suitable Acacia trees for nest building, typical scenic beautiful landscape, diversity of avian fauna along with many type of fishes and plants. This ecological treasure is supplemented with the rich traditional rural life style of Hadoti region which includes regional crops, agricultural traditions, food, festival, fair, local deity, costumes, folk Lores and, folk songs. This all makes Udपुरia and its pond a complete package to attract and sustain not only foreign tourist but also Indian tourists. With the introduction of tiger in Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve (MHTR), tourism will be increased in Hadoti region. If this increased tourist traffic has information about Udपुरia Bird Breeding site, this traffic could be easily be diverted towards Udपुरia and it can be popularised. In the present paper all these aspects have been discussed elaborately.

Introduction

Ecotourism is a form of tourism involving visiting fragile, pristine, and relatively undisturbed natural areas, intended as a low-impact and often small Scale alternative to standard commercial mass tourism. It means responsible travel to natural areas conserving the environment and improving the well-being of the local people. Its purpose may be to educate the traveller, to provide funds for ecological conservation, to directly benefit the economic development and political empowerment of local communities, or to foster respect for different cultures and for human rights. Since the 1980s, ecotourism has been considered a critical endeavour by environmentalists, so that future generations may experience destinations relatively untouched by human intervention (Tuohino and Hynonen, 2001).

Udपुरia-

The Udपुरia pond under investigation is situated 40 km away from Kota (Rajasthan) near the village Nimoda sultanpur Tehsil in Kota district of Rajasthan. Udपुरia (Nimoda) is surrounded by Sultanpur Tehsil towards East, Kota Tehsil towards West, Ladपुरa Tehsil towards South, Anta Tehsil towards East. This place situated near the Kota District and Baran District. Hadoti is the local language here. The geographical coordinates i.e. latitude and longitude of Nimoda (Udपुरia) is 26.92 and 75.8 respectively. The pond covers an area of about 2 ha. The pond is predominantly rain-fed but is also connected to the Right Main Canal of the Chambal River and receives water from it in the summers when the canal is operating.

Diversity of fauna and socio-economic cultural aspects

The pond is a well-known breeding ground for painted storks. According to the villagers these birds have been coming for more than 20 years. The painted stork breeding colony of Udपुरia village is worth a visit during winter months when whole area is abuzz with the calls of hundreds of young birds competing with each other for food and parental attention. Some species of tortoise, snack and fish also found here. Varies shades of rural life of Hadoti is seen here and agriculture fields also attract for their scenic beauty.

Plant diversity

So many plants are found here which two types are-

1. Agricultural plants diversity-

Being a part of Rajasthan state, the region of Hadoti, Udपुरia is agrarian and the majority of its people work in agriculture. Wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), pulses (urad dal-*Vigna mungo*) and sugarcane (*saccharum officinarum*) are the main staple crops. The region too is enriched with the resources of oil seeds (*Brassica*) and minerals.

2. Natural plant diversity-

At Udपुरia mainly Babool (*Vachellia nilotica*), tamarind (*Tamarindur indica*), banyan (*Ficus benghalensis*), peepal (*Ficus religiosa*) and neem (*Azadirachta indica*) are some of the tree species found here along with certain grasses

(Poaceae), aquatic (Water hyacinth, Hydrilla), semi aquatic plants (duckweed, Sago pondweed).

Animal diversity

1. Domestic animal diversity

Udपुरia has a rich and varied fauna. Here cow (Bos Taurus), buffalo (Bubulus bubalis), hens (Gallus gallus), rabbit (Oryctolagus cuniculus) are domesticated.

2. Non-domestic or wild animal diversity

The painted stork at Udपुरia is found engaged in breeding in numbers greater than those of in Ghana Bird Sanctuary, Bharatpur. Among the migratory birds that reach areas near Kota during winter are various species of geese (Anserini) and ducks (Anas platyhynchos) with their two species. There are about 200 birds in the pond. Five species of storks out of world's total seventeen can be spotted in this region during winter. Mostly visible is Painted Storks (Mycteria leucocephala) that nest in the higher branches of babool (Vachellia nilotica) trees. Another species of stork, generally seen here are open billed storks (Anastomus oscitans) and necked storks (Marabou storic) that because of their being shy avoid communities and stay in solitary. Other migratory birds that offer a fascinating site to the birdwatchers are white-breasted water hen (Amaurornis phoenicurus), coots (Fulica), moorhens (Gallinula), kingfishers (Alcedinidae), rollers (Coraciidae), spotbilled duck (Anas poecilorhyncha), golden oriole (Oriolus oriolus), Indian peafowl (pavo cristatus) etc. In this way, animal diversity present here rounds the year which may attract local as well as tourists.

Socio cultural diversity

Normally Hindus live here and the villagers belong to the Brahmin, meena, berwa, bawari and nandwana communities and all villagers are mostly vegetarian. Various dance forms and musical melodies are quite popular amongst the People of Udपुरia region, which recreate them and thus elevate their spirits.

They wear traditional dresses like the turban, variously called Pagari, Pencha, Sela or Safa depending on style, an Angrakhi or Achakan as the upper garment and Dhoti or Pyjama as the lower garment make up the male outfit.

The standard design is a four-piece dress which includes the ghagra (skirt), the pila (An odhni) with a yellow background and a central lotus motif in red called a pila, is a traditional gift of parent to their daughter on the birth of a son wear by females. But now a days due to social changes, male wear jeans t-shirts in place of traditional dress, similarly females wear saree, salwar –kurta in place of traditional dress and they enjoyed developing life. The main food of Udपुरia is Dal-batti, katt but now they used to like dosa, pizza, burger etc dishes in food.

Conclusion

After the discussion above things concluded that this place rich in diversity and birds are shown important value and this place have traditional culture which attract local people as well as tourist. Fortunately due to the introduction of tiger in Mukundara Hill Tiger Reserve (MHTR), tourism will be increased in Hadoti region. If this increased tourist traffic has information about Udपुरia Bird Breeding site, this traffic could be easily be diverted towards Udपुरia and it can be popularised.

Suggestions

1. Various species can be saved by involving the people living around them.
2. To developed the roads and introduce the food zone at entry or exit point.
3. Need to do maintenance the pond through local people, sarpanch, MLA etc. because due to keeps changing regularly in environment by the interference of human.
4. Need to periodical desilting of pond.

References

Tuohino, A. and A. Hynonen, 2001: Ecotourism – Imagery and Reality. Reflections on concept and practices in Finnish rural tourism. Nordia Geographer's Publications 30 (4):21-34.