

## **ANALYZING THE CHALLENGES CONFRONTING CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM OF KASHMIR AND THE WAY FORWARD**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Tourism is presently one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Countries are making constructive efforts for attracting maximum number of tourists. Therefore the ultimate challenge is in delivering tourism products that are appropriate to and compatible with both hosts and guests. In this sense, Cultural Heritage Tourism is seen as capable of fulfilling such requirements. Due to the attractiveness of Cultural Heritage as a commodity, an increasing number of areas across the world are being promoted as Cultural Heritage Destinations. Kashmir is a well-known international tourism destination and has tremendous tourism potential to attract different types of tourists. Along with its scenic beauty, the valley of Kashmir is famous for its rich Cultural Heritage. The amalgamation of Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist Philosophies has added colour and fragrance to the Kashmiri Culture resulting into a composite culture based on humanism, secularism and tolerance. The difference of ethnics present in Kashmir brought different local knowledge discipline ranging from its architecture, handicrafts, tradition, music and dance, which reflects a colorful Heritage and an amalgamated Culture. In order to maintain, conserve and preserve the resources and assets of Cultural Heritage in Kashmir, a system or management need to be developed that takes into consideration every issue and challenge confronting Cultural Heritage Tourism. The purpose of this study is to examine the Potential of the Cultural Heritage Tourism in Kashmir, the issues and challenges confronting Cultural Heritage Tourism of Kashmir and suggesting the way forward for it.

**Keywords:** Cultural heritage Tourism, resources, challenge, local community, preservation.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism today has evolved beyond being viewed as an undifferentiated phenomenon to the extent that specific niche markets have emerged. Often by default, places get labelled as offering a specific type of experience and therefore as providing a more 'specialised' type of tourism. While the majority of travellers still opt for the typical conventional 'mass' experience best characterised by destinations fulfilling the 'three S' type experience of sun, sand and sea, certain niche markets have become popular. It may be argued that since the late 1990s there has been an interest in promoting the past (in its many guises) as a tourist 'product' and understanding and reliving the past as a key tourist 'experience' (Prentice, 1994). The attraction of an area's historic, natural and cultural value is supported by the World Tourism Organisation, which estimates that majority of trips today involve a cultural and heritage component. Expectations are that this sector will continue to grow with the growing interest in culture and heritage. Given such projections it is, however, important to point out that cultural/heritage tourism is not a new phenomenon, but rather one that is becoming increasingly recognised as offering new and more varied experiences to domestic and foreign tourist's alike (Prentice, 1994). It is well known that

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Cultural Heritage Tourism (CHT) is the biggest attraction for international tourists, which in turn is a major source of foreign exchange (Gumede, 2019). People visiting cultural and historical resources are one of the largest, most pervasive, and fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry today. In fact, heritage tourism appears to be growing much faster than all other forms of tourism, particularly in the developing world, and is thus viewed as an important potential tool for poverty alleviation and community economic development (UNWTO 2005).

Heritage refers to our legacy “inheritance” from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations, including the natural and cultural, tangible as well as intangible assets with significance/value (ICOMOS, 1999). Culture comprises of processes including the ideas and ways of life of people and the outcomes of those processes including buildings, art, artifacts, customs, beliefs, traditions, habits and values (Richards, 2013). Cultural Heritage involves aspects of culture that are considered as inheritance and resulting from humanity’s interaction with or intervention in the physical world, including tangible and intangible assets that have cultural significance.

Heritage tourism has become as a potential form of alternative tourism among both international tourists as well as domestic tourists. The difference of ethnics present in India brought different local knowledge discipline ranging from its architecture, handicrafts, traditional attire, music and dance, which reflects a colorful heritage and an amalgamated rich and multi culture. Cultural Heritage Tourism is defined as travelling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. Cultural Heritage Tourism has long existed, but recent demographic, social, and cultural changes in the many source countries have led to an increasing number of new niche markets in destination countries, including culture-oriented holidays.

India is experiencing growth of tourism and heritage tourism is one of the tourism branches that have long contributed to appeal the overseas special interest tourists and acts as main pull factor as well as important marketing tool to attract more up market special interest tourists especially with special interests in Cultural Heritage. Jammu and Kashmir is rich in its ancient monuments, unique culture and customs of its both the two regions. Along with its scenic beauty, Kashmir valley is rich in its unique cultural heritage treasure and acts an important attraction for many foreign tourists from various parts of the world. The amalgamation of Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist Philosophies has added colour and fragrance to the Kashmiri culture. Many efforts have been made to survey, list, document and notify such cultural heritage sites of the Kashmir in the past. In order to make this sector more vibrant the concerned departments of the government need to market cultural heritage resources in a more effective and sustainable way. There are various issues and challenges which need to be addressed as far as conservation and preservation of Cultural Heritage Tourism is concerned. Conserving Cultural Heritage is as important as conserving the Natural Heritage/environment. Yet, most tourism scholars have focused their discussions of tourism development on the natural resources alone. While some natural realms will in fact recover from the negative impacts of development and regenerate organically, damaged cultural heritage will not. Built heritage is a non-renewable resource that once destroyed is gone forever. This creates a unique challenge to heritage conservators and managers, who have long had to deal with masses of tourists clambering on or vandalizing places of historic importance.

## **Review of literature**

### **Heritage**

Heritage is defined as anything that "reflects a heterogeneous nostalgia for the past as imagined or presented" (Light & Prentice, 1994: 27). According to Collins (1990: 69), "heritage is an accumulation of daily details and large traditions, social, racial and religious built from time and memory". The term heritage is used in a wider context, and it certainly does not only refer to old buildings. The word heritage in its broader sense is generally associated with the word inheritance (Collins Dictionary, 1996), meaning something transferred from one generation to another. The Oxford English Dictionary (2002: 161) defines heritage as: 'something inherited at birth, anything deriving from the past or tradition, historical sites, practices regarded as the valuable inheritance of contemporary society'. This definition refers to what is inherited, on a specific and individual basis, usually from one's own ancestors. Schouten's comment (in Herbert, 1995:21) "Heritage is not the same as history. Heritage is history processed through mythology, ideology, nationalism, local pride, romantic ideas or just plain marketing, into a commodity."

The International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) defines heritage by dividing it into natural and cultural environments. This definition further specifies classifications of tangible and intangible elements. According to ICOMOS, tangible elements include landscapes, historical sites and places, and the built environment, while intangible elements consist of collections, past and continued cultural practices, knowledge, and living experiences. Similar to ICOMOS, the United Nations for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also defines heritage in terms of its nature, either natural or cultural (UNESCO, 2001). The term "natural heritage" is used to describe gardens, landscapes, national parks, wilderness, mountains, rivers, islands, and flora and fauna. On the other hand, "cultural heritage" is defined as consisting of traditions or living expressions that are inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants. Examples of living expression include oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, as well as knowledge and skills related to the production of traditional crafts. At the same time, UNESCO defines heritage as either tangible (movable or immovable) or intangible.

### **Heritage Tourism**

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, heritage tourism gained increasing attention, with a growing body of specific literature being devoted to the topic (Balcar and Pearce, 1996: 203). Zeppal and Hall view heritage tourism as a broad field of specialty travel, "based on nostalgia for the past and the desire to experience diverse cultural landscapes and forms" (1992: 49). Yale says that "the fashionable concept of heritage tourism really means nothing more than what we have inherited, which can mean anything from historic buildings, to art works and beautiful scenery" (1991: 21). Heritage Tourism is defined as the phenomenon in which the cultural, historical and ethnic components of a society or places are harnessed as resources to attract tourists, as well as develop a leisure and tourism industry (Chang, 1997:47). As a result, destinations are paying attention to one of the fastest growing niche market segments in the travel industry of heritage tourism. Heritage tourism is a broad field of specialty travel, based on nostalgia for the past and the desire to experience diverse cultural landscapes and forms. It includes travel to festivals

and other cultural events, visit to sites and monuments, travel to study nature, folklore or art or pilgrimages (Zeppel and Hall, 1992). According to Hall et al., "heritage tourism is a subset of cultural, ethnic and educational forms of special interest tourism which includes many aspects of touristic behavior ranging from examination of the physical remains of the past to the experience of contemporary cultural traditions " (1990: 24).

Hollinshead (1988) asserts that heritage tourism also includes local cultural traditions, the community heritage that serves as touristic attractions and embraces folkloric traditions, arts and crafts, ethnic history, social customs and cultural celebrations. According to Smith (1989), heritage tourism includes nostalgia for the past with an emphasis on peasant culture and hand crafted objects. Fyall and Garrod (1998) define heritage tourism as an economic activity that makes use of socio-cultural assets to attract visitors. Thus, heritage tourism is a mixture of many things. It is a highly competitive and market oriented business, based upon nostalgia for the past, and it sells a heritage product in the name of authenticity. The sustainability of heritage tourism lies in the preservation and promotion of its authenticity. In fact, sustainability requires heritage tourism to carefully preserve the authenticity of its product so that future generations inherit the genuine.

### **Cultural Heritage Tourism**

Today, tourism products are becoming very dynamic. As Nyaupane *et al.* (2006) and Sethi (2005) have observed that there is a shift from the normal tourism trends that centered on nature towards cultural heritage tourism. In recent years, growing international interest in heritage has caused a growth in cultural heritage tourism as well. Cultural heritage tourism can be defined as "travel concerned with experiencing the visual and performing arts, heritage buildings, areas, landscapes, and special lifestyles, values, traditions, and events." Cultural heritage tourism encompasses a wide range of tangible and intangible elements (Swarbrooke, 1994: 222). However, tangible remains of the past, such as buildings, sites, and artefacts form the principle resources for Cultural heritage tourism (Zeppel and Hall, 1991:35). Nuryanti (1996: 250) suggests that 'Cultural heritage tourism offers opportunities to portray the past in the present'. Similarly, Hall and Zeppel (1991: 54) conclude that Cultural heritage tourism is an experiential tourism, in the sense of seeking an encounter with nature or feeling part of the history of a place. It can be argued that cultural heritage tourism includes historic buildings and monuments, the sites of important past events like battlefields, traditional landscapes and indigenous wildlife, language, literature, music and art, traditional events and folklore practices, traditional lifestyles including food and drink, and sports. Ivanovic (2008, 58) defines cultural heritage tourism as 'travelling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and the present'. Poria (2001:1048) has defined Cultural heritage tourism as a subgroup of tourism, in which cultural heritage resources are the core element that are used in the formulation of the tourism product offered to the market. Cultural heritage includes "handicrafts, language, gastronomy, art and music, architecture, sense of place, historic sites, festivals and events, heritage resources, the nature of the work environment and technology, religion, education and dress."

According to the World Heritage Convention, cultural heritage includes both tangible and intangible assets, such as archaeological works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or

structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of historic, artistic or scientific features, sites, music, dance, drama and memory (UNESCO 2007). Intangible cultural heritage is defined by UNESCO (2003, 1) as ‘the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals, recognize as part of their cultural heritage’. Intangible cultural heritage is transmitted from generation to generation and is constantly re-created by groups in response to their environment, their interactions with nature and their history, providing them with a sense of identity and continuity. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) defines cultural heritage tourism as “movements of persons essentially for cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts and cultural tours, travel to festivals and other events, visits to sites and monuments, travel to study nature, folklore or art, and pilgrimages.” There is not only one definition for cultural heritage tourism.

Poria *et al.* (2003:248) argues that cultural heritage tourism should be defined by motivation, rather than by site-specific attributes. They define heritage sites based upon the motivations of tourists, tourists’ perceptions of a site, and whether or not tourists perceive it to be part of their own heritage. According to the available literature, cultural heritage tourism is the hottest trend in the tourism industry (Cass & Jahrig 1998). As Johnson (2002) observes, cultural heritage sites do not only have intrinsic beauty and value, they are among the key assets of tourism. Cultural heritage and tourism enjoy a special symbiotic relationship with each enriching the other. Dickinson (1996) opines that this is because tourists want to experience unique places, traditions and history, and learn about the cultural sites in their country.

Visiting cultural and historical resources is one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry today. In fact, heritage tourism appears to be growing much faster than all other forms of tourism, particularly in the developing world, and is thus viewed as an important potential tool for poverty alleviation and community economic development (UNWTO 2005). Due to the attractiveness of cultural heritage as a commodity, an increasing number of areas across the world are being promoted as cultural heritage destinations. One of the main factors encouraging the development of cultural heritage tourism in these regions is increasing tourist’s demands for new travel destinations and products. Increasing interests in and demands for cultural heritage may be partly due to the shift in people’s motivations for travelling that occurred during the 1990s, focusing less on escapism and more on personal and cultural enrichment (Silberberg (1995). Infact cultural heritage tourism is the fastest growing sector in the tourism industry. Cultural heritage sites and places reflect a large and varied collection of the human creation and history of the culture adopted across the entire world. It includes cultural aspects such as heritage sites, monuments, traditional activities, languages and natural resources that are considered very important to be preserved for the future generations. Due to the increased curiosity in people to learn and experience other cultures and communities, a large number of people are travelling across the world.

As discussed above, UNESCO defines heritage in terms of its nature, either natural or cultural (UNESCO, 2001) and at the same time, defines heritage as either tangible (movable or immovable) or intangible. The World Heritage Convention (WHC) has also defined cultural heritage as including both

tangible and intangible assets. The table given below explains the categorization of Heritage and Cultural heritage as per the UNESCO's classification.

**Table 1. UNESCO's Classification of Heritage and Cultural Heritage**

<b>HERITAGE</b>			
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>		<b>Natural Heritage</b>	
<b>Tangible Heritage</b>		<b>Intangible Heritage</b>	<b>Tangible and Immovable Heritage</b>
<b>Immovable</b>	<b>Movable</b>	a) Music. b) Dance. c) Literature. d) Theatre. e) Oral traditions. f) Traditional performances g) Social practices. h) Know-how. i) Crafts. j) Cultural spaces. k) Religious ceremonies.	a) Natural and maritime Parks of ecological interest. b) Geological and physical Formations. c) Landscapes of outstanding natural beauty. d) Allied natural themes.
i) Monuments: Archaeological sites, Industrial archaeology ii) Buildings: Architectural works, Historic centres, Groups of buildings. iii) Sites: Cultural landscapes, Historical parks, gardens and Botanical gardens.	i) Archives ii) Museum collections iii) Libraries		

Source: UNESCO website

Many studies have been conducted on the nature and natural heritage of Kashmir but less has been discussed and studied about the Culture Heritage and Cultural Heritage Tourism of the Kashmir valley. The study is an attempt to fill this gap and give a holistic view of the Cultural Heritage Tourism of the valley of Kashmir. The study discusses the potential and the challenges regarding this niche sector of Kashmir Tourism and how to deal with the challenges confronting it.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study is based on the following objectives:

- To study the Cultural Heritage Tourism of the Kashmir Valley.
- To study the various issues and challenges regarding the Cultural Heritage Tourism of the Valley.
- To suggest the measures for the conservation and management of Cultural Heritage Tourism of the Valley.

### **Research Methodology**

The present study is conceptual in nature and the paper is based on secondary data and primary insights. The data for the study was collected from various interdisciplinary journals, research papers, magazines,

Union/Central and J&K Ministry of Tourism and Culture, articles and reports. The basis for writing the issues, challenges and suggestions regarding the study is the extensive review of literature and the field studies conducted by the scholar and the experience of the scholar regarding the Cultural Heritage of the of Kashmir valley.

### **Cultural Heritage Tourism of Kashmir - An Overview**

Jammu and Kashmir is a well-known tourist destination and has tremendous tourism potential to attract different types of tourists. Tourism is one of major industries of J&K. It has played an important role for developing the economy. Kashmir is second to no place in the world as far as its natural beauty is concerned. Over and above its natural scenic beauty, the valley of Kashmir is well known to the whole world for its rich heritage.

The Cultural Heritage of Kashmir valley is an amalgamation of sorts. The numerous civilizations that have inhabited the Kashmir valley from time to time have left their impression on the culture of Kashmir. The Valley of Kashmir abounds in ancient literature, language, religion, arts, crafts, dance, music, etc. Infact, the people of Kashmir have made significant contribution in the fields of storytelling, poetry, philosophy, sciences, etc. The handicrafts of Kashmir like Pashmina shawls, papier-mâché products, silk carpets, woodwork, stonework, etc, are admired throughout the world. It should be noted that Kashmir remained a source of inspiration to other parts of the country in particular and the whole world in general through the centuries. Unfortunately, the cultural and political history of Kashmir has been full of many unbearable and unexpected upheavals.

The amalgamation of Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist Philosophies has added colour and fragrance to the Kashmiri Cultural Heritage. The early Vedic civilization set its roots in Kashmir, the great Buddhist philosophy flourished here from 300 B. C. to 800 A. D. and unique Shaiva philosophy originated in this beautiful valley. It was this Shaiva philosophy which due to its significant synthetic approach, novelty, and practical utility and distinct thoughts influenced all the schools of Indian philosophy including Tantra. Besides the local Naga-cult, Vaisnism and Shakticult also grew there side by side without any hindrance. In the later period the Christianity and Islam also entered into and got themselves established in Kashmir with the same fervor and Islam dominated the every aspect of life here. The unique position of Kashmir provided a fertile soil for all such mixture of religions, cultures and philosophies.

The renowned folk songs and dances are an integral part of the Kashmiri culture. Music and dance is a way of celebrating festivities for the people of Kashmir. In the field of education too, Kashmir did not lag behind. At one point of time in the past, Kashmir served as one of the highest learning centers of Sanskrit and Persian. The great Sharda-pitha was recognised as one of the most prominent seats of learning here, thousands of students from all parts of the world used to throng this great centre of learning. Teaching in all branches of learning was imparted there. In Kashmir's most congenial and favourable environment, many scholars achieved miraculous intellectual heights and contributed their best share to different field of Sanskrit literature. Their invaluable contribution enriched Sanskrit literature to a commendable extent. The science of poetics was profounded there which later on spread over into other parts of our country. Kashmir has a unique history of art housing several civilizations

which exist in the shape of standing monuments of classical and medieval period. With time, the cultural heritage of Kashmir has evolved more and more.

<b>Table 2: Various components of Cultural Heritage Tourism of Kashmir</b>		
<b>Tangible Heritage</b>		<b>Intangible Heritage</b>
<b>Immovable</b>	<b>Movable</b>	
i) Monuments: Parihaspora, Pandrethan, Pari Mahal, Martand, Awantipore temples, etc. ii) Buildings: Hari Nivas Palace, Old Secretariate, etc. iii) Sites: Burzhama, Gufkral, Mughal Gardens, Tulip Garden, Botanical Garden, Harwan, etc.	i) Collections of: SPS Museum, Zabarwan Museum, Meras Mahal, etc. ii) Libraries: SPS Museum Library, Alama Iqbal Library University of Kashmir, etc.	a) Music: b) Dance: Rouf, Band pather, hafiz Nagma, etc. c) Literature: Raj Tarangini, etc. d) Theatre: Tigore Hall e) Oral traditions: Ladishah f) Traditional Performances: Dhamali g) Social practices: Marriage ceremonies (Wazwan) h) Know-how: Medicinal Plant i) Crafts: Paper Machie, Willow work, Copper work, Stone work j) Cultural spaces: Folk theatres k) Religious ceremonies: Urs at the Sufi/Reshi shrine of Kashmir

Source: Prepared by the author

### **Issues and Challenges Confronting Cultural Heritage Tourism of Kashmir**

Cultural Heritage is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Cultural heritage tourism development presents many challenges. Meeting these challenges is a major task of policy makers as well as its various stakeholders. Some of the challenges regarding development of Cultural Heritage Tourism of Kashmir are as under.

#### **Looting and illegal digging**

One of the most salient and urgent concerns in the developing world is looting and illegal digging (Brodie 2003, 2005; Ciochon and James 1989; Lafont 2004; Prott 1996). There are several reasons, First, there is an unfortunate and widespread lack of protective legislation in many countries (Ribeiro 1990), but even where national laws and regulations are in place, they are often ignored or unrecognized by local-level authorities. Second, fueled by a growing desire for antiquities of various sorts, mostly originating in the developing world, there has been no indication that this trend has slowed down in recent years or will do so in the foreseeable future. This is a multi-billion dollar business, which mostly benefits the wealthy go-betweens and antiquities dealers. Third, because of this growing demand and a dearth of other alternatives, many people see this kind of illicit activity as being more financially lucrative than farming or laboring in some other menial occupation. Finally, most archeological sites in developed countries have been well excavated by archeologists for many years, but in the developing



world, there are still major projects yet to do and many unexplored areas. Also, antiquities from the “other world” may be more interesting to collectors.

Illegal trafficking of priceless objects has slowly depleted heritage reserves of Kashmir. The political instability in Kashmir post 1990’s is especially believed to be a period when art smugglers robbed Kashmir of its priceless articles “which now adorn homes of private collectors and museums in western countries.”

In 2012, a 10<sup>th</sup> century Durga statue in greenstone, stolen from a temple in Tengpun village of Pulwama, was spotted at Linden Museum, Stuttgart (Germany). The role of Indian art dealer, Subash Kapoor, who was arrested in Germany in 2011, was suspected in smuggling the idol out of Kashmir. During her visit to New Delhi in October 2015, German Chancellor, Angela Merkel returned the 18-armed Durga sculpture which is now installed at the SPS Museum. Former Director, Centre of Central Asian Studies, Dr. Aijaz Ahmad Banday was “surprised” to see Harwan Tiles at a museum in France”. A 6<sup>th</sup> century AD Gajalakshmi (Stone) was discovered in village Brah of Anantnag district during early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The photograph of the image was first published in 1913. Ever since, host of archaeologists, including Banday, have used the picture in their publications but nobody knew where the image was actually located until 2014 when it was discovered in Japan with a private party.

So far as structural and archaeological heritage of Kashmir is concerned, most of the important sites and monuments in Kashmir like Burzahom, Martand and Awantipora are under the supervision of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) which is accused of leaving these literally uncared for since 1990. The ASI, however, claims that “all the Sites/Monuments are well preserved, maintained and in presentable condition.” The J&K High Court expressed lack of satisfaction over the working of the ASI in Kashmir. Against well established norms, the ASI has not set up any site museum at its archaeological sites in Kashmir to showcase the excavated objects. Instead, it is accused of shifting the artefacts outside Kashmir. The Terracotta tiles of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC excavated here were shifted to Ramgad, Udampur in the name of security. In 1995, Indian paramilitary forces during a raid at Chandpora, Shalimar, claimed recovery of 35 antique objects related to 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century AD which made big news. At a press conference, the recovered antiquities were displayed. An official of the SPS Museum was called to ascertain the antiquity of the objects. “We had gone to seek custody of the recovered objects but the security forces refused to give those to us. Overnight, the antiquities were shifted to New Delhi and handed over to the National Museum”. The images were of Hindu deities and mostly in stone. Several incidents of theft at the SPS Museum did not come in the way of Jammu & Kashmir Government liberally gifting prized heritage objects to various museums and institutions.

The first documented beneficiary of the government munificence was Moti Lal Nehru Children Centre (MLNCC), Lucknow. In 1958, the MLNCC was gifted 30 numismatics natural history and decorative art objects. However, in 2013, when in pursuance of a court order the Government of Jammu & Kashmir was asked to get back all the gifted artefacts, the MLNCC expressed inability to locate the objects. Barely two months after a major theft in the Museum in 1973, as heritage lovers in Kashmir were still under shock, the State Government gave a generous gift of 35 precious artefacts, including 31 antique coins, to the Government of Himachal Pradesh for setting up a museum at Shimla. On 26 September

1973, an order was issued, pursuant to a decision of the State Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Syed Mir Qasim under which the artefacts were taken out of the SPS Museum and the Research Section of the Department of Libraries and transferred to Shimla. The objects included coins, manuscripts, armoury and painting related to ancient and medieval Kashmir. Besides gifting away artefacts from its collection, the Government has exhibited casual approach towards preserving and protecting Kashmir's heritage wealth, a glaring instance of which is sending outside the Valley 'Stone Age' objects for carbon dating and then caring less to bring them back. In 1963, these artefacts including stone axes and tools made of animal bones, unearthed from the Neolithic Burzahom in 1930s, were sent to a laboratory in Calcutta (now Kolkata) to scientifically determine their age. The objects were never brought back. Fifty-four years later, nobody even knows where the treasure is located now.

Old hands in Kashmir archaeology recall at least two incidents when precious artefacts were stolen from official premises. In the first case, Khazanchi had discovered a Buddha image at Harwan which was still under his study when allegedly it disappeared from his table. In another case, a 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century stone Shivlingam discovered from Parihaspora and weighing 5-6 quintals went missing from the Darbar Garh premises before it could be accessioned and transferred to the Museum. On 17 October 1979, stone images and stone fragments related to 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century AD were discovered from Khurhama (Kupwara). Soon thereafter, there were allegations that some of these objects were pilfered during shifting between the excavation site and the Museum. A criminal case was filed against an officer of the Archives, Archaeology and Museums Department. The missing objects were believed to be of high antique value. As part of the investigation, the Anti-Corruption Department seized 22 objects from the Museum which remained in its custody for 24 years until released on 29 January 2013 through intervention of the court. The case is still undecided even as the accused official has since passed away. There are various more incidents of illegal trafficking of priceless objects that has been slowly depleted heritage reserves of Kashmir.

### **Political instability**

Political instability is the biggest of all challenges that Kashmir is facing. Political instability manifests in a variety of ways. Political upheavals have been examined in the context of tourism and have been shown to affect tourism negatively in a variety of ways, including reducing arrivals and invoking negative perceptions of the place in the tourism markets and Kashmir is witnessing this issue that greatly affect its tourism industry. Apparently millions of dollars of damage had been done via looting and wanton destruction to cultural properties, such as municipal buildings, theaters, museums, and historic books and libraries. Funds meant for the conservation of cultural heritage assets are diverted to other purposes.

### **Improper Conservation Methods**

Various reasons are associated with this issue like budget constraints, inexpert handling of artifacts and improper restoration techniques. Efforts to protect are commonly treated as cosmetic cover-ups rather than structural improvements that will withstand future years and decades of anthropogenic or nature-caused deterioration. Many sites have been fancifully reconstructed, with modern red bricks and cement. In some cases the authorities have built soaring new structures on top of crumbling ancient foundations.

In others, they have taken the remains of an original spire and built a new structure to hold it up. The irony is that many monuments in Kashmir are covered by iron sheets and many are used as store houses for the storage of construction material to be used around the sites.

### **Modernization—Development Versus Conservation**

Too often, old buildings are destroyed in the name of modernization and development before the economic justification for saving them has a chance to work (Burton 1993; Long 2002). The pressures of urban growth pose a significant threat to urban heritage as population and economic pressures mount to expand cities and to construct new buildings in historic districts and rural suburban areas (Castriota 1999; Kaneko 1994; Oren et al. 2002). In developing regions, however, traditional buildings tend to be razed and replaced anew by Western-style hotels and shopping malls. The expenses associated with preserving historic structures often do not justify their maintenance, so they are removed in favor of new buildings that offer more economic promise (Setiawan and Timothy 2000; Wahyono 1995). In the less-developed world, it is not uncommon for protection of ancient monuments and historic buildings to be viewed as interference in modern development (Sadek 1990). While most observers see urbanization and modernization as major barriers to successful heritage protection, many traditional building techniques and materials have been replaced by concrete. The construction of infrastructure near heritage places has become a major threat to heritage in Kashmir valley.

### **Lack of Cooperation and Holistic Management**

Cooperation is an important principle of sustainable development, because it upholds several principles of sustainability, including efficiency, equity, cultural and ecological integrity, community ownership, integration, holism, balance and harmony. In the tourism sector, it refers primarily to collaboration between government agencies, private and public sectors, polities that share a common resource, different levels of government within a state, and between private sector businesses/organizations (Timothy 1998). Such collaborative efforts are important for assuring equality of opportunity and the recognition of needs among stakeholders. The collaborative approach is especially important in the realm of heritage management. Without adequate cooperation, sites are neglected, overused, or caught in legal battles, and regional plans are virtually impossible to carry out in an adequate manner. In Kashmir, there is a general lack of holistic management. Each public sector, individual tourism business, or level of government is primarily interested only in its own set of responsibilities. To exacerbate the problem further, agencies and organizations rarely communicate or coordinate their efforts; they carry out their responsibilities without taking into consideration the efforts of other departments, ministries, or the private sector. This can result in overlapping, or parallel, development, ill-fitting projects, over-expanded budgets, stalled work, and sectoral fragmentation. Cultural heritage has been the causality in Kashmir for a larger period of time as culture and tourism has been under one ministry for a larger period of time and the preservation of cultural heritage was given least consideration in comparison to natural heritage. Then came the time when Culture was separated from tourism and the many organization from state and centre were not able to collaborate their efforts for the preservation of Cultural heritage.

### **Financial Constraints**

Public funding for conservation and preservation is in short supply in the developed world but is even scarcer in less-developed regions. The most glaring problem associated with heritage conservation and management in the developing world is an endemic lack of financial support. Most historic sites throughout the developing world charge admission fees, upon which their maintenance and care are dependent. Insufficient budgets do not allow public agencies to hire enough guards to protect their historic properties, or well-trained staff. Entrance fee is not charged at most of the cultural heritage sites of Kashmir and funds for conservation and preservation are scarce in Jammu and Kashmir due to which the state is not able to protect its rich heritage and many sites in Kashmir valley vanishing rapidly.

### **Private Ownership**

Many historic buildings deemed worthy of conservation are privately owned and, in most cases, the people who own them lack the finances themselves for the upkeep or restoration of their properties. Such is the case in India where, in a social climate of cynicism regarding favoritism and elitism, the government of India is disinclined to bestow public funds on families and other private owners for the upkeep and conservation of historic buildings. Many homes and other heritage properties remain in a state of disrepair and continue to degrade via pollution and normal human and natural wear. Most heritage buildings in Kashmir under private ownership are suffering from several issues of conservation due to lack of knowledge by the owners regarding the importance of these buildings and the lack of resources to maintain them.

### **Human Habitation**

Human Habitation can be viewed from two primary perspectives. First, many heritage places are overflowing with human tenancy and economic activity. Many highly urbanized areas of the developing world face this challenge, as do rural regions, although the pressures of urbanization increase these pressures manifold (Leech 2004). Jammu and Kashmir is also facing the issue of urbanization particularly at urban heritage sites. In most historic cities of Kashmir where people live in the historic portions of town, the centuries-old buildings are the homes of people. It is not only hard for them to fathom why their homes would be of interest to conservationists, let alone tourists, but it also creates a great deal of conflict as governments come in to relocate entire communities sometimes so that construction, road widening and other developmental works can be done. Increasing land shortage in Kashmir valley leads many people to poach, mine, and gather timber illegally off public lands. These are inharmonious with the goals of protected lands and commonly result in arrests, large fines, and conflict between residents and government officials.

Many individuals and entire villages are known to have established their homes and communities in or around historic structures. This is a major problem in at least three ways. First, they have profound corrosive impacts on oftentimes delicate structures, similar to the way tourists create wear and tear. However, residents may in some cases cause more damage because they live inside the structures full time and utilize them in ways tourists would not. Building fires, drying clothes, grinding grain, and climbing on edifices and artifacts do irreparable damage. Second, in the course of their daily lives, residents use protected resources (Phillips 1993). They disassemble structures to acquire building materials and utilize artifacts for tools or other devices. While their reasons for doing this are

understandable—poverty and a need to survive—it is nonetheless extremely damaging to historic sites and an epidemic problem in much of the world (Chakravarti 2008; Timothy 1999a). Finally, livestock are usually allowed to wander through, graze in, sleep on, and rub against ancient buildings. Many rural sites in Kashmir are facing all these three problems and the cultural heritage assets are the casualties.

### **Lack of Social Will: Poverty and Unawareness**

Many residents of less-developed regions view preservation with suspicion and ignorance. They equate preservation and conservation with backwardness and see it as antithetical to modernity. This leads to serious problems, like where important historic buildings and ancient monuments are replaced by modern structures, which in most mindsets denotes progress and development. Unlike their counterparts in the West, who tend to value heritage for its sentimental and nostalgic worth, older people in developing nations have few sentimental attachments to historic buildings and other heritage places, because these are too reminiscent of their humble pasts; preservation is often seen as standing still, in opposition to progress, or outmoded (Burton 1993; Myles 1989; Ronquillo 1992; Timothy 1999a). In Kashmir valley the peoples are generally unaware about their rich cultural heritage and being one of the developing economies peoples are less concerned for their heritage and priority areas are food, shelter and other material things.

### **Lack of Political will**

Culture and built heritage are often seen as an unaffordable luxury, when other public services are lacking and money is in short supply. Thus, in many less-developed regions, including Kashmir heritage conservation is not a priority. The heritage bearing witness to centuries of culture once damaged will be disappeared forever. Various manifestations of public corruption have already been noted in this part of the world, but the problem is much more widespread than it appears on the surface. Even where governments have an interest in preserving heritage and fund it adequately, the focus is all too often solely on built heritage at the expense of preserving living and intangible heritage (e.g., dance, music, languages, traditions) (Turnbull 1998). Due to lack of political, ignorance and unawareness of local people about their cultural heritage Kashmir is slowly losing its rich treasure of cultural heritage.

### **Suggestions– the Way Forward**

Kashmir is rich in its ancient monuments, unique culture and customs, rich biodiversity and scenic beauty of western Himalaya. Preserving cultural heritage is an important aspect for every citizen's identity as it helps in shaping cultural future. Strenuous efforts are needed for the preservation and conservation of the rich cultural heritage of this beautiful place and listing and grading of heritage should be done accordingly. Keeping in view the vast treasure of heritage wealth of Kashmir much is needed to be done on ground. Some of the actions which must be considered for confronting the challenges to Cultural Heritage Tourism of Kashmir are:

- **Awareness, Education and Training**

Awareness regarding the importance of Cultural heritage is the primary task that should be done. People living in and around the cultural heritage sites should be informed about the value and

importance of the assets that they are living with. Do's and don'ts should be made not only for tourists but also for the people living at the cultural heritage sites. More comprehensive education and training programs for the stakeholders (like, tourism service providers, government officials, community, etc.) concerned with the cultural heritage at the local or regional levels are necessary. Links with academic institutions should be established for carrying the capacity building and awareness programmes regarding the cultural heritage assets. More specific training service provision (bhaba/restaurant, drivers, etc), visitor record and customer service.

- **Guiding and Interpretation**

Guiding and Interpretation is very important so far as Cultural Heritage Tourism is concerned. If the community is to be in a position to define its culture and tell its story to its own residents as well as visitors there must be a creative use of various guiding and interpretive techniques. Guiding and Interpretation will require proper understanding of the various cultural heritage components/assets and the proper information about them. Different types of guides should be available for guiding a monument, a historic site, a religious place, a city and soon. Proper use of audio-visual equipment's, signage's, guide books, and brochures will enhance the experience of tourists with the cultural heritage assets.

- **Tourism Development at Cultural Heritage Sites and Impact Assessment**

Every kind of tourism development in and around the cultural heritage sites should follow the impact assessment exercise. The capacity of sites must be considered, including physical, natural, social, and cultural limits. The scale and pace of tourism development should be compatible with local and environmental limits. There must also be monitoring and evaluation of plans and operation. Establishment of guidelines, for tourism operations, including requirements for impact assessment must be put into place. Protection and monitoring strategies are essential if communities are to protect the very resources that form the basis of their tourism product/culture.

- **Cooperation and Coordination among Stakeholders**

Any kind of tourism product or tourism development will not be successful until there is cooperation and coordination among the stakeholders which includes local community, government, sites managers, businesses and tourism operators. Cooperation among the stakeholders is essential given that one business or operation can be directly affected by the success or quality of another. Models of cultural tourism partnerships must be explored in the areas of planning, management, marketing, and funding for tourism ventures. Sustainable development requires that all those concerned learn to deal with conflicts and to explore the creative use of partnerships as a way of sharing knowledge, as well as risks, in tourism development. There needs to be more coordination at both policy and action levels among the various agencies involved and among the different levels of government. This is particularly relevant to tourism and environmental policies. Also, service provision, such as transportation,

parking, and water and sewer capacities, must also be considered in conjunction with tourism plans and developments.

- **Financing**

As the funds for the cultural heritage are scarce in most of the developing countries, because of the scarcity of government funding, prioritization of developmental works in comparison to conserving and developing cultural heritage, political unwillingness, lack of awareness regarding the importance of cultural assets and declining resources from international development agencies, it is essential to look at various forms of creative financing for the conservation and management of cultural/heritage. There are various national and international organisations working for cultural heritage which can be approached for the funding of conservation and developments projects regarding cultural heritage of the area. Imposition of entry fee, organizing cultural events at cultural sites, celebration of various national/regional/local festivals around the cultural sites, organizing cultural pride events and quizzes, etc. will be helpful in this regard.

- **Better Planning and Management**

Various tourism developmental plans should be linked with the Cultural Heritage assets of the area and a broader set of initiatives and community or economic development plans should be framed. Cultural heritage assets must be afforded the same status and importance as other assets in the local plans and they should be viewed as a component of broader community goals.

- **Cultural Heritage Tourism Marketing and Promotion**

Kashmir is rich in its various cultural heritage assets that remind us about the rich historical background and our composite culture. There is immense scope of Cultural heritage tourism in Kashmir if the various aspects of our cultural heritage are highlighted and promoted. Kashmir is having unique proposition not only in built cultural heritage but we have various aspects of our intangible cultural heritage (dance, music, customs, fairs, festivals, sufism/reshism, etc.) which have neither been discussed nor been highlighted nor promoted. Therefore more effective marketing and promotion of cultural heritage tourism products is the need of the hour.

## **Conclusion**

A great deal of tourism relies on places with natural, indigenous and historic significance on which tourism products are based. Preserving the cultural heritage for tourism and for the enrichment and education of present and future generations is crucial. Cultural Heritage resources play a significant role in sustainable cultural, social, economic development of communities, so the physical fabric, that has influenced their creation, has also to be maintained. Kashmir is inherently very rich in cultural and ethnic diversity. This diversity can potentially be turned into an asset that characterizes the region and plays an important role in its economic development. It is crucial to find a proper way to settle the issues and challenges arising during managing and promotion of cultural heritage tourism of Kashmir. Once the challenges are confronted and issues are tackled, it will intern lead to the Cultural Heritage Tourism development which will inturn lead to the overall tourism development in the Kashmir. The challenge is not to stop tourism but rather for all stakeholders to work together in achieving sustainable Cultural

Heritage Tourism. What remains should be preserved through the cooperation of local stakeholders, governments, and international agencies.

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