



IMPORTANT HISTORICAL TOURISM DESTINATIONS IN MAHARASHTRA [INDIA]: A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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Abstract:

A traveller is someone who moves between different geographic locations, for any purpose and any duration. Maharashtra is the state in the West India, which has own glorious history. There are many famous tourist places in Maharashtra like hill stations, religious places, historic places, beaches etc. Famous Historical tourist places are Bibi-Ka-Maqbara, Daulatabad Fort, Ellora Cave, Panchakkis, Soneri Mahal, Ajanta Caves, Ellora Caves, in Aurangabad, Mahabaleshwar, Panchgani, Pune, Mumbai, Ratnagiri, Shindudurg, Kolhapur and Nashik and so on. To study the important historical tourism destinations is the main objective of this paper. This paper is entirely based on secondary data, which is collected from various books, Journals, websites, newspapers, etc. Maharashtra State is selected as a study region for this paper. The paper concluded that, the important historical tourism destinations are well developed to attract the tourists in worldwide.

Key words: Tourism, Traveller, locations, Festival, Religious, Caves, Chaturthi, celebrate.

Preface: -

Maharashtra is a state with a rich and glorious history and many historical sites are become very rich tourism destinations nowadays. Many forts, monuments, archaeological sites, battlefields are the pride of Maharashtra in today's era. From ancient period to the period of Chh. Shivaji Maharaj and later on the British raj many places have enormous important regarding the tourism right now. Hence, put focus on these historical sites, which are developed as a tourism destination is the main aim of this present paper.

Study Region:-

The Maharashtra State is one of the important States in India. It is located in state spanning west-central India having 307713 sq. Km. geographical area. Maharashtra State lies between 15°45' North latitude to 22°1' North latitude and 72°06' East longitudes to 80°09' East longitudes (DSA2012).



Objective: -

The only objective of the present paper is to study the famous historical tourism destination in Maharashtra.

Methodology: -

This study is purely based on secondary data; which is collected from various books, journals, websites, newspapers and other published and non-published materials.

Analysis: -

Maharashtra is a Second largest State of India and many popular historical tourism destinations are found in the State.

1 Aurangabad: -

Aurangabad is a historical city and the administrative headquarters of the Aurangabad Division or Marathwada region in Maharashtra. In 2010, the Maharashtra Tourism Ministry declared Aurangabad as a tourism capital of Maharashtra. It is one of the fastest growing cities in India also one of the top places to experience Maharashtra tourism. The best time to visit Aurangabad is from October to March while the peak season is from November to February.

Aurangabad city was founded in 1610 AD by Malik Ambar, the Prime Minister of Murtaza Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar and his son Fateh Khan changed the original name Khadki to Fatehnagar. Famous historical tourist places of Aurangabad are Bibi-Ka-Maqbara, Aurangabad Caves, Devagiri/Daulatabad Fort, Ellora Caves Panchakki, etc.

1.1 Bibi-Ka-Maqbara: -

Bibi Ka Maqbara is a beautiful mausoleum situated in Aurangabad. Maintained by Archeological Survey of India, BibiKa Muqbara is one of the top tourist places to visit in Aurangabad.

The Bibi-Ka-Maqbara is dedicated to Rabia-ul-Daurani alias Dilras Banu Begum, the wife of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb's son, Prince Azam Shah built the mausoleum between 1651 AD and 1661 AD in the memory of his mother Begum Rabia Durani. This mausoleum is a replica of the world famous TajMahal. Also known as Mini Taj, the mausoleum is far less ornamental than Taj Mahal in Agra.

**1.2 Aurangabad Caves: -**

The Aurangabad Caves are 12 artificial rock-cut Buddhist Caves located on a hill running roughly east to west in Aurangabad. Sculptural carvings of Aurangabad Caves can be compared to the best paintings of Ajanta and is one of the popular Aurangabad tourist places. The first reference to the Aurangabad Caves is in the great chaitya of Kanheri Caves. The caves are datable from circa 2nd - 3rd century AD to 7th century AD. The Aurangabad Caves were dug out of comparatively soft basalt rock during the 6th and 7th century.

**1.3 Devagiri / Daulatabad Fort: -**

Daulatabad is an ancient hill fort situated on the way to Ellora Caves from Aurangabad in Maharashtra. Daulatabad Fort is one of the best preserved Forts in Maharashtra and also one of the best in Aurangabad tourist places.

The historical triangular fort of Daulatabad was built by Yadava king Bhillama in 1187 AD. The city was then called 'Deogiri', meaning the hill of gods. Daulatabad or 'the abode of wealth' was the name given by Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq when he made his capital here in 1327 AD. The fort passed several hands, captured and re-captured by the Mughals, Marathas, Peshwa's and finally placed under the control of the Nizams of Hyderabad in 1724 AD till independence.

**1.4 Ellora Caves: -**

Ellora Caves are ancient historical caves locally known as 'Verul Leni'. The caves are located near Verul on the Aurangabad-Chalisgaon road to the northwest of Aurangabad in Maharashtra. The Ellora Caves were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983. Ellora is the most visited ancient monument and also one of the top tourist places in Maharashtra. Ellora is also one of the top historical tourist places to visit near Aurangabad.

The Ellora Caves were built at time when Buddhism was declining in India and Hinduism was beginning to reassert itself. The cave complex comprises of 34 caves that were hewn out of solid rocks of the Charanandri hills. The Ellora complex includes 12 Buddhist, 17 Hindu and 5 Jain Caves. Caves 1 to 12 are Buddhist monasteries, chaityas and viharas, while caves 13 to 29 are the Hindu temples. Dating back to the 9th and 10th century, Caves 30 to 34 are the Jain shrines. The coexistence of structures from three different religions serves as a splendid visual representation of the prevalent religious tolerance of India.



1.5 Panchakki: -

Panchakki is a water mill located in the complex of Baba Shah Musafir Dargah of Aurangabad. Also called as Nehar-e-Panchakki, Panchakki was built in the early years of the 17th century by Baba Shah Musafir. Comprising of the medieval Indian architecture, the water mill runs on scientific principles. Setup with an aim to generate electricity from water brought down from a spring, the Panchakki water-mill was used to grind grains for the pilgrims who visited the Dargah.

**1.6 Sunheri Mahal: -**

Sunheri Mahal is a palace located at the foothill of the Aurangabad Caves in the Paharsingpura area of Aurangabad. It is one of the top places to visit in Aurangabad.

Soneri Mahal was built by a Bandalkand chief who accompanied Aurangzeb into the Dakhan. The Mahal was built between 1651 AD and 1653 AD at a cost of Rs.50, 000 and in 1934 AD it was sold to the Nizam of Hyderabad for Rs.26, 400. The Mahal is named after the paintings in the palace that were once painted in gold.

**1.7 Ajanta Caves: -**

Ajanta Caves are ancient Buddhist caves situated near Ajanta village in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra. Ajanta Caves are one of the oldest UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India and also one of the top historical places in Maharashtra. The caves are now protected by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Ajanta Caves are one of the most visited ancient monuments in India and also one of the top Tourist places in Maharashtra. The Caves

were carved between 2nd Century BC and 6th Century AD.

**2 Satara: -**

The Sahyadri range, or main range of the Western Ghats, runs north and south along the western edge of Satara district. The name Satarais famed all over India and famous Historical tourist places is Ajinkyatara fort, Sajjangarh Fort, Vasantgad Fort, Maha baleshwar, Pratapgarrh fort and Devil's Kitchen, Rajpuri Caves in Panchgani.

2.1 Ajinkyatara Fort -

Ajinkyatara Fort is in Satara, Maharashtra. The fort is located at Ajinkyatara Mountain, which is 3,300 feet high. As the fort is in the higher altitude, visitors can enjoy a magnificent view of the entire Satara city. There are number of water tanks inside the fort for storing water. So, there is no scarcity of water even as the fort is in the higher place. Ajinkyatara Fort from far Yawateshwar hill too is so nice. Main attractions of this place are hiking, trekking and mountaineering.

In 1708, Shahu Maharaj won Ajinkyatara, remained with the Marathas till 1818. The Ajinkyatara fort is a major historic place of Maharashtra, and was very vital as one could keep watch of the entire South Maharashtra.

2.2 Sajjangarh Fort:-

Sajjangarh Fort was earlier known as Aashwalayangad and was built by the Bahamani Emperors in between 1347-1527 AD. It was later conquered by Adil Shah in 16th century AD. In the same year the Mughals attacked the Sha rulers and brought this fort under their control. The fort then came under the rule of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Previously known as Parali Fort, it was renamed to Sajjangad after Shivaji Maharaj requested Sri Ramdas to set up his permanent abode here.

2.3 Vasantgad Fort:-

Vasantgad Fort is an ancient hill fort situated near Talbid village in Satara district of Maharashtra. It is one of the popular trekking places in Maharashtra and also one of the top places of sightseeing in Satara.

Vasantgad Fort was built by Shilhara King Bhoj. Shivaji Maharaj conquered the fort in 1659 CE from Adil Shah. Later, Rajaram Maharaj, the son of Shivaji Maharaj stayed for some time in this fort when he returned from Gingee. Aurangzeb captured this fort in 1700 CE and named it Killa-da-Fateh. The Marathas got the fort back in 1706 CE

2.4 Mahabaleshwar: -

Mahabaleshwar is a popular hill station and a town in Satara district of Maharashtra. It lies at an altitude of 1,353 m. in the Western Ghats range of India. It is one of the best hill stations near Pune & Mumbai and among the top Places to visit in Maharashtra.

2.5 Pratapgarh Fort: -

Pratapgarh, is a large hill fort located in Satara district of Maharashtra. The fort lies at an altitude of 1080 m and is built on a spur which overlooks the road between the villages of Par and Kinesvar. It is among the best forts in Maharashtra and among most scenic places in Mahabaleshwar and one of the best forts near Pune. Maratha king Shivaji Maharaj had commissioned Moropant Pingle, his prime minister, to commence the construction of this fort for the purpose of defending Nira and the Koyna River banks, and also to guard the Par pass. The construction of the fortress was completed in the year 1656. The fort stands as the witness of historic Battle of Pratapgarh between Shivaji and Afzal Khan, the commander of the Bijapur Sultanate, on 10th November 1659. In 1818, the Maratha forces had to surrender the Pratapgad Fort after losing the third Anglo-Maratha War.



2.6 Panchgani: -

Panchgani also called Paachgani is a famous hill station and municipal council in Satara district of Maharashtra. It is one of the top hill resorts in Maharashtra and among the best hill stations near Pune & Mumbai cities. Devil's Kitchen and Rajpuri Caves are famous historical tourist places in Panchgani

2.6.1 Devil's Kitchen: -

Devil's Kitchen is situated to the south of Table Land in Panchgani hill station. According to mythology, this is the place where Pandavas of Mahabharata stayed here for a while during their exile. This place was used to cook their food. Some people claim that Pandvgadh Caves are also built by them and bear their name. The place is now a beautiful sightseeing spot which is popular among tourists. It is situated in close proximity to Table Land and visitor can either take a short walk or hire a private taxi for sightseeing.



2.6.2 Rajpuri Caves: -

Rajpuri Caves are one amongst the most ancient attractions of the Panchgani region.

There are four caves and these ancient caves are surrounded by many water kunds. It is believed that these caves were used for penance and religious rituals by Lord Kartikeya. It is also said to be the home of Pandavas during their exile. Devotees believe that taking bath in these holy kunds will provide relief from all kinds of diseases and evils.

3 Mumbai: -

Mumbai, the entertainment capital and India's financial powerhouse, is the capital city of the Indian state of Maharashtra. It is also one of the best places to experience the tourism in Maharashtra. The city is a collection of 7 islands and was named after the goddess Mumbadevi. Famous 7 historical tourist places in Mumbai are Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Gateway of India, Mount Mary Church, Elephanta Caves, etc.

3.1 Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus: -

Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, formerly known as Victoria Terminus, is the most important train station and heritage building situated in Dadabhai Naoroji Road in Mumbai. Declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO on 2nd July 2004, Victoria Terminus is Mumbai's historical landmark and also one of the top tourist places in Mumbai City.

The Terminus is the 2nd World Heritage Site of the Indian Railways after the Mountain Railways

(of Shimla, Darjeeling & Ooty) which was inscribed in 1988, and the first functional administrative building to be put on the World Heritage list. Headquarters of the Central Railways, this station links Mumbai to the rest of India. Designed by Frederick William Stevens, a British architect, Victoria Terminus is a wonderful example of the Indo-Victorian Gothic architectural style.



3.2 Gateway of India: -

Gateway of India is a national heritage monument located at the waterfront in Apollo Bunder area in South Mumbai, facing Arabian Sea. It is considered to be the most famous monument in Mumbai and also one of the main tourist places visited as part of Mumbai Darshan.



3.3 Mount Mary Church: -

The Basilica of Our Lady of the Mount, more commonly known as Mount Mary Church, is a Roman Catholic Church located in Bandra, Mumbai. It is one of the most well-known churches in Mumbai and also one of the famous Mumbai places to visit. The basilica is situated on a hillock known as Sunderban Bandra, about 80 m above sea level overlooking the Arabian Sea.

Dedicated to Virgin Mary, the church was built in 1640 AD. Jesuit priests brought the statue of Mary from Portugal and built a chapel in 16th Century. This small basilica was later renovated to its current semi-Gothic form. There are two statues of Mary at the Church, one inside the church and one outside. It is an ideal

place for peace-seekers and those who love to explore Colonial architectural.



3.4 Elephanta Caves: -

Elephanta Caves are a network of sculpted caves located on Elephanta Island or Gharapuri in Mumbai Harbour. The Caves, listed as UNESCO World Heritage Site, is Mumbai's oldest historic sites and also one of the best tourist places in Mumbai and also among the prime places represented in the promotion of Maharashtra tourism.

The identity of the creators of the architectural masterpieces built in Elephant Caves is disputed. It is believed that the Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas were behind the creation of the caves and sculptures. The island was ruled by the Chalukyas and later by the Gujarat sultanate. It was later handed over by the Gujarat Sultan to Portuguese in 1534 AD. The caves are known for its beautiful Hindu temples and sculptures. The Elephanta Caves were named by the Portuguese after they saw statue of an elephant on the island.



3.5 Jama Masjid: -

Jama Masjid, also known as Friday Mosque, is the oldest mosque in Mumbai situated at the renowned Sheikh Memon Street near Crawford Market. This is the largest mosque in Mumbai and also one of the popular pilgrimage places to visit in Mumbai.

It is said that the Jama Masjid was first situated near Dongri and was later moved to somewhere near to the Crawford market. In 1770 CE, the mosque was destroyed by Governor William Hornby. In the 18th century, a

large tank (water reservoir) was situated at this site in the midst of gardens belonged to a Konkani Muslim merchant. He was agreed to the erection of a mosque at this site on condition that the tank was preserved intact in 1775 CE. The structure of the present Jama Masjid was started in 1775 CE and the construction was completed in year 1802 CE

3.6 Bandra Fort: -

At a distance of 1 km from Mount Mary Church and 17 km from Mumbai Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Castella de Aguada, also known as the Bandra Fort, is an ancient fort located at Land's End in Bandra, Mumbai. The Bandra Fort was built by the Portuguese in the early 1640 AD to serve as a watchtower overlooking Mahim Bay to the south, the Arabian Sea to the west, the islands of Worli to the south and the town of Mahim to the south west. The fort also guarded the northern sea route into Mumbai Harbour. During the Portuguese rule, it was armed with seven cannons and other smaller guns as defence. A freshwater spring in the vicinity supplied potable water to passing ships, thus lending the fort its name Castella de Aguada.

3.7 Kanheri caves: -

Kanheri caves are located inside Sanjay Gandhi National Park to the north of Borivali in the outskirts of North Mumbai in Maharashtra. These Cave are considered as one of the top tourist places in Mumbai. The name of these caves has originated from the Sanskrit word Krishnagiri, meaning black in colour.

The Kanheri Caves constitute a group of rock-cut monuments chiseled out of a massive basaltic rock. The caves demonstrate the Buddhist influence on the art and culture of India. These caves were formed between 1st century BC and 10th century AD, with the earliest rocks comprising 109 tiny rock-cut cells. Most caves were named as Buddhist Viharas in ancient times and were meant for living, study and meditation. The site also served as a university during the rule of Kushanas and Mauryas.

3.8 Versova Fort: -

The Portuguese built Madh Fort as a watchtower during the 17th century. The Marathas captured the fort in the 1739 CE war. The fort is long and narrow with a 7 sided polygonal structure. Only the external facade of the fort is intact but internally it is dilapidated. From the Madh Fort, travellers can view the Gorai, Worli and Mumbai Beach Skyline. Many Indian movies have been shot at this location. The fort is under the supervision of the Indian Air Force

and Navy at present. Visitors can enjoy beautiful views of the coastline and city skyline from this fort. Visitors need to seek special permissions from the concerned authorities to visit this fort.

3.9 Vasai Fort: -

Vasai Fort, also known as the Bassein Fort, is an ancient fort located at Vasai in the suburbs of North Mumbai. The fort, overlooks the confluence of the Ulhas River, is one of the top places to visit in Mumbai.

Vasai was known as a place for ship building in the 15th Century. Bahadur Shah, a Mughal Emperor had built the Bassein Fort in the 1530s. The fort covers an area of around 110 acre. The Portuguese conquered and destroyed most of the fort a year after it was built. The Portuguese remodeled the fort into a flourishing city by building a citadel inside. The fort was under the Portuguese control till 1739 AD. In the 18th century, the fort was raided and overtaken by the Maratha army under Chimaji Appa. They stood strong for 3 long years, and then the British took over the fort in the First Anglo-Maratha War.

4Nasik: -

Nasik is a religious city located in the northwest region of Maharashtra in India. Nasik is one of the popular pilgrimage places to visit in Maharashtra. But it is famous for Pandavleni Caves historical tourism place.

4.1 Pandavleni Caves: -

Pandavleni Caves or Trirashmi Caves are the ancient rock cut caves situated on Trirashmi Hills to the south of Nasik. The location of the caves is a holy Buddhist site in Maharashtra and also one of the popular places to visit in Nasik.

Pandavleni Caves are a group of 24 caves carved between the 3rd century BC and the 2nd century AD, representing the Hinayana Buddhism and has nothing to do with the characters of Mahabharata (the Pandavas). These caves were built by the rulers of that time like Satavahanas and Kshaharatas for Hinayana Buddhist monks. More ancient name of caves is Trirashmi Caves where the root 'Trirashmi' means 'triple royal'



5Ratnagiri:-

Ratnāgiri is a port city on the Arabian Sea coast in Ratnagiri District in the south western part of Maharashtra, India. The district is a part of Konkan division of Maharashtra. Historical places of Ratnagiri are Thibaw Palace, Ratnadurg Fort and Purnagad Fort.

5.1 Thibaw Palace: -

Thibaw Palace is a historical building situated on a small hillock in Ratnagiri Town of Maharashtra. This is one of the major tourist attractions of Ratnagiri. Thiba Palace is an architectural grandeur that was created for King Thibaw of Myanmar (Burma) who was in exile here. It is said that the Palace was built by the British in 1910 to keep the king of Burma under house arrest. The palace came into use from 1910 up to the king's death on 16th December 1916. The palace is a beautifully constructed three storied structure with sloping roofs. Semi-circular wooden windows with beautiful carvings are the main attraction of this structure. There is a dancing hall with marble floor on the first floor.

**5.2Ratnadurg Fort: -**

Ratna durg Fort is a historical fort situated on the shores of Arabian Sea in Ratnagiri. It is one of the popular forts in Maharashtra and also one of the top tourist places to visit in Ratnagiri. The fort of Ratna durg was constructed during the rule of Bahamani Sultans. It was captured by Adilshah and then Chhatrapati Shivaji conquered the fort in the year 1670 AD.

5.3 Purnagad Fort: -

Purnagad Fort is an ancient sea fort situated at Purnagad village in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra. It is one of the popular forts of Konkan and also one of the best places to visit in Ratnagiri. Spread over an area of 22 acres, Purnagad Fort has two entrance gates, one facing east and the other facing west. The main entrance door is a very robust structure between the two bastions. There is a Hanuman shrine and a well at the entrance. Pictures of Moon, Sun and Lord Ganesh are carved onto the main entrance door.

6Kolhapur: -

Kolhapur city is situated on the banks of river Panchganga and is known as 'Dakshin Kashi'. The name Kolhapur is famed all over India and famous Historical tourist places is Bhavani Mandap Maharaja's Palace, Panhala Fort Samangad Fort, Shahuji Chhatrapati Museum, and Vishalgad Fort.

6.1 Bhavani Mandap: -

Bhavani Mandap is a historical building situated in the walled city center of Kolhapur in southern Maharashtra, India. It is located near the famous and mammoth Mahalaxmi Temple on the west. It is the glory of the city. Being the biggest and oldest building, it has historical importance. When Kolhapur became self-governed, this place was built. It has fine and sound construction with 14 squares.

**6.2 Maharaja's Palace: -**

The Maharaja's Palace is an impressive palace in Kolhapur constructed in 1881 and it presently encloses the famous Shahaji Chhatrapati museum. The place was constructed in Indo-Saracenic colonial architectural style and was designed by the renowned British architect Charles Mant. The museum displays many exquisite and wonderful possessions of the Maharajas' clothes, memorabilia, hunting photos and many such artifacts and utensils. This palace and museum offer a close look at the ancient royal cultures and life styles.



6.3 Panhala Fort -

Panhala Fort, also known as Panhalgad, Pahalla and Panalla (literally "the home of serpents"), is located in Panhala, 20 kilometer northwest of Kolhapur in Maharashtra, India. It is located at a majestic height of 3127 feet above sea level is an ideal getaway. The joy of experiencing the magical amalgamation of nature and history and drowning in the peace, tranquility and bliss, is possible only at a place like Panhala. Built by King Bhoj in 1052 A.D. and ruled in succession by the Shilahara and Yadava dynasties.

Prime Attraction at Panhala Fort :Andhar Bavai, Kalavanticha Mahal, Ambarkhana, Dharma Kothi, Sajja Kothi, Teen Darwaza, Wagh Darwaza, Rajdindi bastion, Temples and Mausoleums.



6.4 Samangad Fort: -

Samangad is a hill fort in Kolhapur District, Maharashtra. It is 2,600 feet above sea level. The fort is situated on the oval-shaped top of the hill. The eight-foot-high wall of the fort which encircled the hill top is still intact. Earlier several cisterns cut out of the rock ensured a plentiful supply of water to the fort but by 1957 most of them were in ruins.

The fort is surrounded by trees; it is developed by the government of Maharashtra as a tourist place. Also Maruti temple and Chaloba temple near fort is visited by devotees.

6.5 Vishalgad Fort: -

Vishalgad (also called Khelna or Khilna) was one of the important forts of Shivaji and Maratha Empire. The name 'Vishalgad' meaning grand fort in Marathi, was given by Shivaji after annexing it for the Maratha Empire in 1659. The fort is separated by a deep narrow riven from the road terminus. Its vastness is big as per its name Vishal.

The Bhunda Darwaja or a bare gate seen from the busstop shows wrong way of the entry. Actual entry is separate. Nothing is there except the ruins of old buildings. Now the fort is known to people as place of Malik Raihan Dargah. A Sati Mandir is there in memory of Ambadevi the

queen of King Rajaram I, who burned as Sati after the death of her husband. The Samadhi or tomb of great warrior BajiPrabhuDeshpande who fought until death with SiddiMasood, commander of Adilshaha who was perusing Shivaji at the time when he escaped from siege of Siddi to fort Panhala and was rushing to Vishalgad.

7 Sindhudurg: -

The district is named after the fort of Sindhudurg, which lies on a rocky island just off the coast of Malvan. Sindhudurg fort, Sindhudurg district has 37 forts, the highest number of forts in Maharashtra as well as all types of forts (Jaldurg – Sea), (Bhuikot – fort on land) and (Giri- fort on hilltop). The famous fort is Sindhudurg Fort, Ramgad fort and Vijaydurg fort.

7.1 Sindhudurg Fort: -

Sindhudurg Fort is a historical fort that occupies an islet in the Arabian Sea, just off the coast of Maharashtra in Western India. The fortress lies on the shore of Malvan town of Sindhudurg District in the Konkan region of Maharashtra, 450 kilometres. This fort was constructed by Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the Chhatrapati of the Maratha Empire. The main object was to counter rising influence of foreign colonizers and to curb the rise of Siddis of Janjira. The construction was done under the supervision of Hiroji Indalkar, in the year 1664.



7.2 Ramgad fort: -

River Gad which originates near the Fort Rangana travels almost 80 km before meeting the Arabian Sea. It served as an important trade route and a vital transport link in those days and Ramgad fort served as an important vigilance base for the same. This fort was built by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on a hill dissected from the main mountain range of Sahyadri and has its main doorway, fortification wall and bastion intact till date.

7.3 Vijaydurg: -

Vijaydurg (sometimes written as Viziadurg), the oldest fort on the Sindhudurg coast, was

constructed during the regime of Raja Bhoja II of the Shilahar dynasty (construction period 1193-1205) and restructured by Shivaji Maharaj. Earlier, the fort encompassed an area of 5 acres and was surrounded by sea on all four sides. Over the years the eastern trench was reclaimed and a road constructed thereon. Presently the area of fort is about 17 acres and is surrounded by the Arabian Sea on three sides. Shivaji extended the area of the fort by constructing three walls on the eastern side, each 36 metres high. He also constructed 20 bastions.

8Raigad: -

Raigad District is a district in the state of Maharashtra, India. Formerly called the Kolaba district, the district was renamed after Raigad, the fort that was the former capital of the Maratha leader Shivaji Maharaj, and is located in the interior regions of the district, in dense forests on a west-facing spur of the Western Ghats of Sahyadri range.

8.1 Raigad Fort: -

Raigad is a hill fort situated in the Mahad, Raigad district of Maharashtra, India. The Maratha king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj built this fort and made his capital in 1674 when he was crowned King of a Maratha Kingdom which later developed into the Maratha Empire eventually covering much of western and central India.

The fort, which rises 820 meters (2,700 ft) above sea level, is located in the Sahyadri mountain range. There are approximately 1737 steps leading to the fort, though today Raigad Ropeway, an aerial tramway, exists to reach the top of the fort in 10 minutes. The fort was looted and destroyed by the British after its capture in 1818. This is one of the most popular forts in Maharashtra and popular places for trekking near Mumbai. This fort is one of the prime places to experience Maharashtra tourism.



8.2 Murud-Janjira Fort:

Murud-Janjira Fort is situated on an oval-shaped rock off the Arabian Sea coast near the port town of Murud, 165 km (103 mi) south of

Mumbai. Janjira is considered one of the strongest marine forts in India. The fort is approached by sailboats from Rajapuri jetty.

The main gate of the fort faces Rajapuri on the shore and can be seen only when one is about 40 feet (12 m) away from it. It has a small postern gate towards the open sea for escape.

The fort has 26 rounded bastions, still intact. There are many cannons of native and European make rusting on the bastions. Now in ruins, the fort in its heyday was a full-fledged living fort with all the necessary facilities, e.g. palaces, quarters for officers, mosque, two small 60-foot-deep (18 m) natural fresh water lakes, etc. On the outer wall flanking the main gate, there is a sculpture depicting a tiger-like beast clasping elephants in its claws. The palace of the Nawabs of Janjira at Murud is still in good shape. Special attractions of this fort are 3 gigantic cannons named Kalabangdi, Chavri and Landa Kasam. These cannons were said to be feared for their shooting range. Another gate to the west is sea-facing, called 'Darya Darwaza'.



9. Pune: -

Pune is one of the most renowned tourist places in Maharashtra. The spectacular historical monuments from the Maratha period and many places of tourist interest add richness to this city of diversity. Shaniwar Wada, Sinhagad Fort, Pataleshwar Caves, National War Museum, Aga Khan Palace, Rajgad Fort are the some of the prominent attractions in Pune.

9.1 Shaniwar Wada:-

Shaniwar Wada is an ancient palace fort situated in the center of Pune in Maharashtra. This one of the most popular historical places in Pune and also one of the top tourist places in Pune City. Built in 1732 AD, Shaniwar Wada was the seat of the Peshwa rulers of the Maratha Empire until 1818 AD when the Peshwas surrendered to the British after the Third Anglo-Maratha War. Following the rise of the Maratha Empire, the palace became the center of Indian politics in the 18th century. It is influenced by Mughal design and architecture,

Shaniwar Wada represents the skilful craftsmanship of Maratha artisans and boasts.



9.2 Pataleshwar Cave: -

Pataleshwar Cave Temple is an ancient rock cut cave temple located on Jangli Maharaj road in Shivaji nagar area of Pune. It is one of the top places of sightseeing in Pune and is maintained by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). The temple is also known as Panchaleshvara or Bamburde Temple and is dedicated to Lord Shiva. The rock-cut cave temple was carved out in the 8th century AD, during the Rashtrakutas Period. The cave temple bears resemblance with the rock-cut temples of Ellora. It has been declared as a protected monument by the government of Maharashtra. Made of basalt rock, the cave temple is believed to have been cut out from a single rock. A linga, the symbol of Shiva, is housed in the sanctum, which is a cube-shaped room about 3 to 4 m high. On each side of the sanctum, two smaller cells are present. A circular Nandi Mandapa, with its umbrella shaped canopy supported by square pillars, is located in front of the cave.

9.3 Aga Khan Palace: -

The Aga Khan Palace is a national monument of India's independence movement. It is situated on Pune-Nagar Road and is one of the prominent tourist places in Pune. Aga Khan Palace is a majestic building and is considered to be one of the greatest palaces in Maharashtra. The Palace was built by Sultan Mohammed Shah Aga Khan III in 1892 AD. The palace was an act of charity by the Sultan who wanted to help the poor in the neighbouring areas of Pune. Aga Khan Palace covers an area of 19 acres, out of which 7 acres is the built up area. It has Italian arches and spacious lawns. The building comprises five halls. The palace captivates the visitors with its magnificence and picturesque architecture.



9.4 Sinhgad: -

Sinhgad or Sinhgargarh means the Lion Fort, is a fortress located southwest of Pune City. Sinhgad Fort is one of the popular places of trekking in Pune and also one of the top places to visit in Pune City. Previously called Kondana, the fort has been the site of many important battles, most notably the Battle of Sinhgad in 1671 CE. According to history, the fort was built 2,000 years ago and it is said that the name Kondana was derived from sage Kaundinya. Mohammed bin Tughlak captured the fort from the Koli tribal chieftain, Nag Naik in 1340 CE. And in 1496 CE, Malik Ahmad, the founder of the Nizam Shahi dynasty took control of the fort. Nearly 200 years later, the Maratha leader Shahaji Bhonsale captured the fort. In 1647 CE, Shivaji held the stronghold and renamed it Sinhgad. In 1665 CE, as per the Treaty of Purandar, Shivaji handed over Sinhgad to the Mughals and again captured it in 1670 CE, under the direction of Tanaji Malusare.

Concluding Remarks :-

There are many historical places, which have an enormous importance as tourism. All these tourist places are well developed and have potential to attract to more number of tourists not only from the India but outside India also. Various facilities provided at these destinations to attract more number of tourist also.

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