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“Possibilities Of Geotourism In Garadia Mahadev District Bundi (Rajasthan)”

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ABSTRACT

Geotourism is defined as travel that preserves or improves a location's natural features, including its surroundings, culture, aesthetics, history, and inhabitants' quality of life. Geotourism makes no assumptions regarding location. It suggests locations as well. Geotourism, reduced to its most basic form, is travel related to geology and geomorphology.

In addition to its historical and cultural significance, Bundi is a well-liked tourist destination in Rajasthan. It also offers a lot of potential for geotourism. Bundi is a natural gift from the earth. Because of the abundance of a wide variety of geological phenomena and byproducts, including among many other landform's structure, residual hills, folding, faulting, waterfalls, river valleys, rock features, and many more, many sites in the Bundi district have direct potential for geotourism. Even though geotourism has tremendous potential for the sustainable growth of the Bundi district and the state's tourism industry overall. However, neither private individuals nor government organizations have made any real attempts to investigate the possibility of geotourism in the Bundi district yet.

The purpose of this proposed study is to expand geotourism opportunities in the Bundi area and Garadia Mahadev, with the goal of becoming Bundi a globally recognized geotourism destination.

Keywords: - Bundi, Garadia Mahadev, Geofeatures, Geotourism, Rajasthan.

Introduction:

The tourism sector is becoming a more significant part of the world economy every day. This supports racial and cultural understanding and increases employment as well as interpersonal engagement. Now, the tourist sector offers a wide range of products, including adventure, nature, eco, and geotourism.

Travel that preserves or improves a location's natural features—its surroundings, culture, aesthetics, history, and inhabitants' well-being—is known as geotourism. "Geotourism is a sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing the earth's geological features in a way that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation, and conservation and is locally beneficial," according to a new definition of the term given by Dowling at the 3rd International Conference on Geoparks, held in Osnabruck, Germany, on June 22–26, 2008. Geotourism encompasses both the locations and the types of destinations visited. At its simplest, geotourism is tourism with connection to geology and geomorphology. Beginning in the early 1990s, the idea of geotourism was created and pushed (Hose, 1995). There are two facets to this type of tourism: geographical and geological.

Bundi is a natural gift from the earth. Because of the abundance of a wide variety of geological phenomena and byproducts, including among many other landform's structure, residual hills, folding, faulting, waterfalls, and many more, many sites in the Bundi district have direct potential for geotourism. Garadia Mahadev is one among them. This place is full of natural and geographical beauty.

Objective:

The project aims to emphasize the Garadia Mahadev's geofeatures so that it can become a global geo-attraction in addition to being a significant tourist destination. Numerous more focused goals have been deduced from this main goal, and they are listed below:

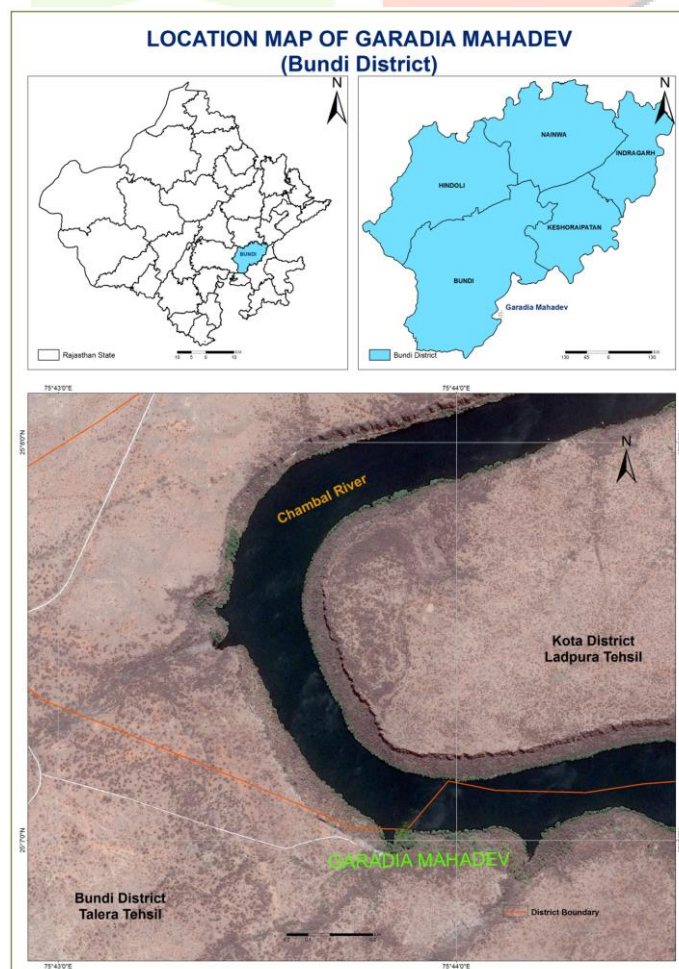
- To research the notion of geotourism and geo-conservation with respect to the study region.
- To designate significant geofeatures within the field of study.
- To determine which issues are impeding the rate of tourism in the region.
- To investigate the possibility of geotourism in the districts of Bundi and Garadia Mahadev.
- To enhance the geographical allure of Bundi district and Garadia Mahadev.

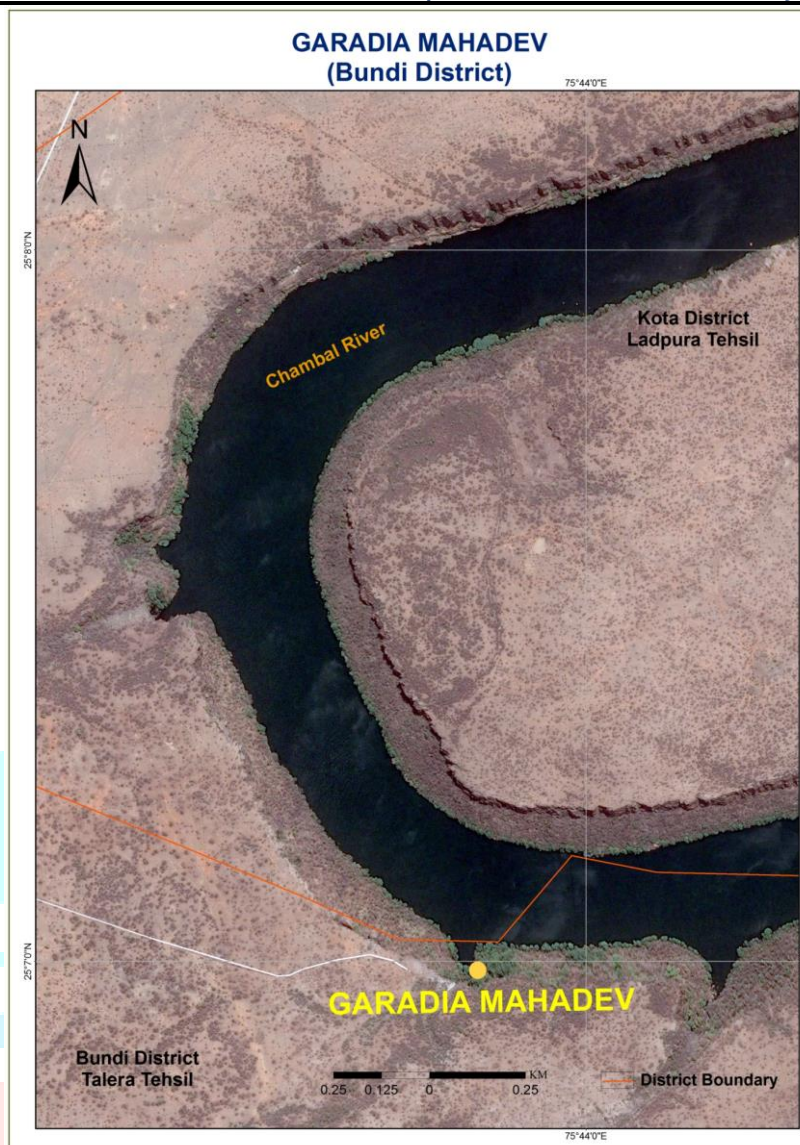
Research Methodology:

The study is both explorative and descriptive in nature. Explorative research [primary data] was done by site visits, field study, discussions with the stakeholders like hoteliers, tourist guides etc. and documentation of geofeatures with the help of photography in the study area. Descriptive research was done by study and analysis of published material regarding geodiversity, geoheritage, geosites, geoparks, geo education, geotourism, etc. This study has used preliminary as well as secondary data but is largely of a preliminary nature.

Study Area:

In the tehsil Talera district of Bundi, Garadia Mahadev is in the southern portion of the district, between $25^{\circ} 07'$ North Latitude and $75^{\circ} 85.4'$ East Longitude. This area is also crossed by the uppermost plateau. The region has a semi-humid climate. Ninety percent of the rain falls between June and September, making an average annual rainfall of 900 mm.





Present Status and Discussion:

Witnessing India's cultural history, historical monuments, and breathtaking landforms draws tourists from all over the world, who are drawn by the country's natural beauty and cultural variety. Many states welcome tourists to India, but Rajasthan stands out as a popular travel destination since it welcomes nearly one in every five foreign visitors to the country. Rajasthan, a prominent state on the world tourism map and known for its historical monuments, vibrant festivals, and breathtaking scenery, welcomed almost 4 lacs foreign and 1.83 Crore domestic visitors in 2022, according to the state's tourism department's annual report.

Bundi is becoming a popular tourist attraction in Rajasthan for visitors from both within and outside the country. Due to a wide variety of geological phenomena and outcrops, such as numerous landforms, structures, residual hills, folding, faulting, waterfalls, and many more, the district of Garadia Mahadev offers immediate chances for geotourism.

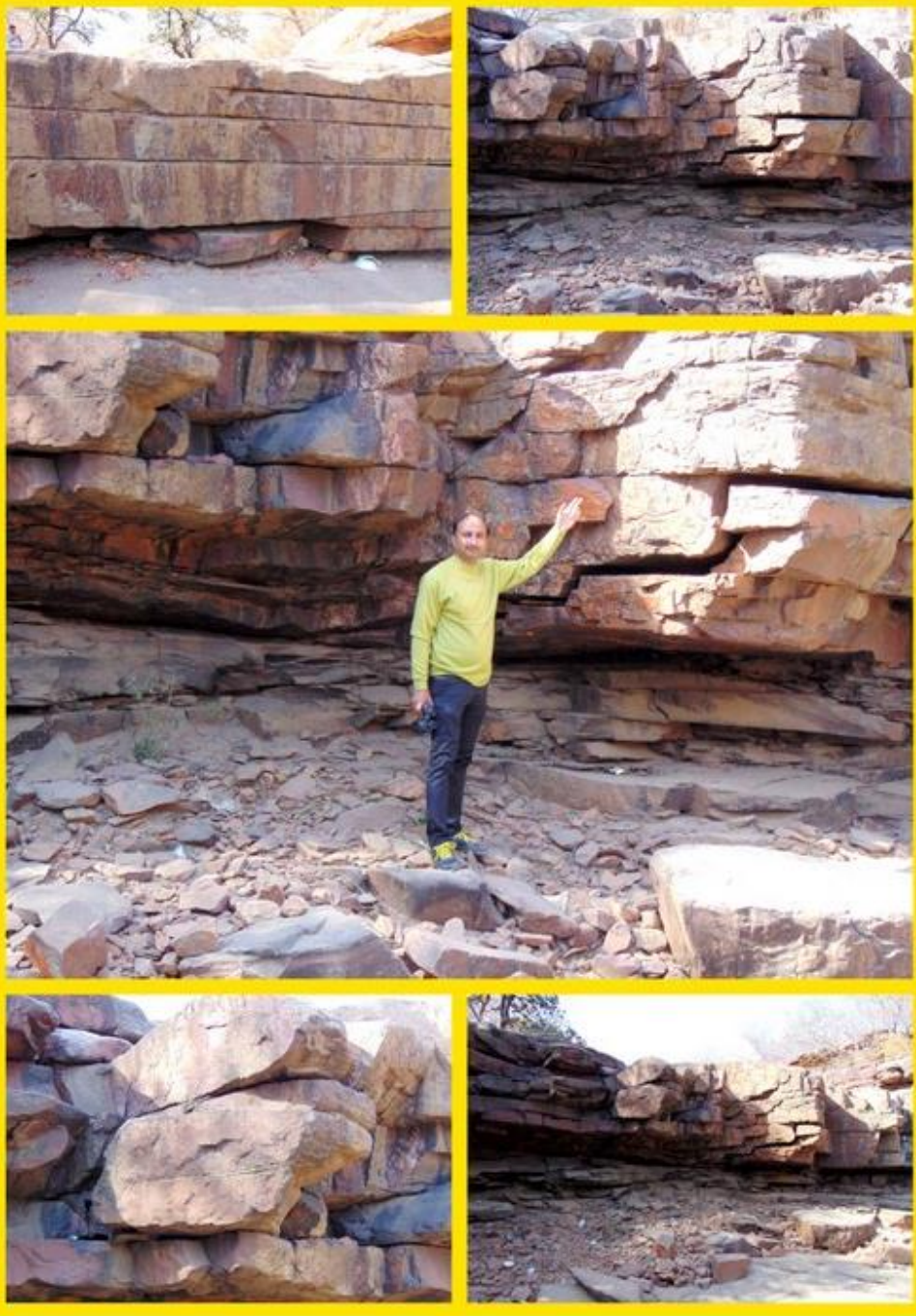
Garadia Mahadev is located 45 kilometres away from district headquarters. There is so much geographical and natural beauty here. The river Chambal flows through a gorge that is approximately 500 feet above mean sea level. On either side of the gorge are enormous cliffs. The way the wind is blowing seems to be reciting the Shiv stotras in your ears to make you feel devoted. On one of the cliffs is the Garadia Mahadev Temple.

This location is significant from a geographical standpoint because it contains layered rocks that span a considerable amount of time, as well as a variety of other rock features.

VIEW



GEOFEATURES



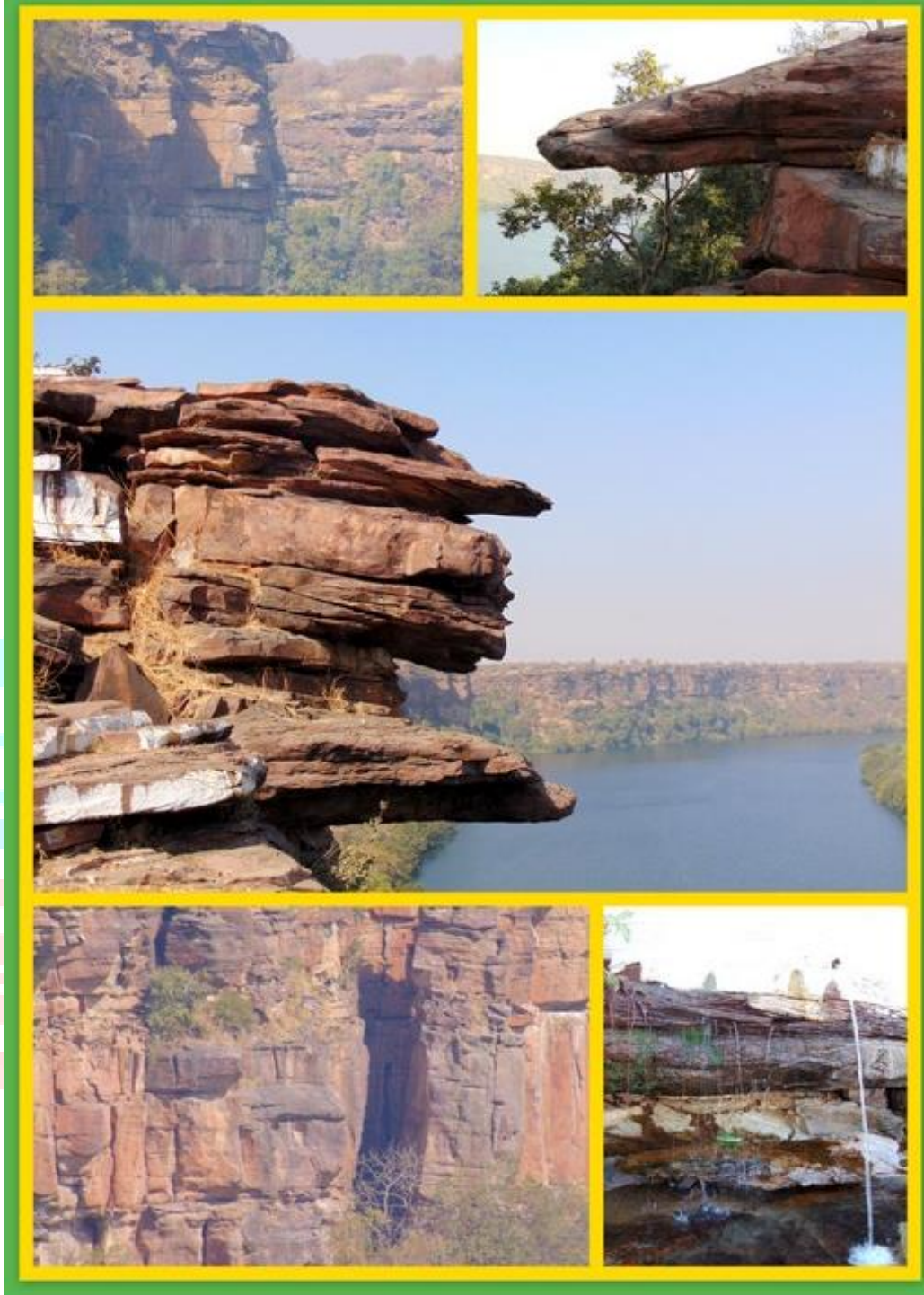
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SWOT Analysis:

I created a schedule and spoke with the respondents to confirm the facts during the study to investigate and assess the potential of geotourism in Garadia Mahadev. With the assistance of in-person interviews with visitors and residents, a great deal of useful information was gathered. The following are the findings of the SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats):

Strengths:

- This location has a great biodiversity; -
- It is a nature-based geotourism attraction.
- This location boasts a wide range of breathtaking scenery.
- This location currently has road connectivity, and it is a popular domestic tourism destination.

Weakness:

- The natural and geographical beauty is being ruined by encroachments and illegal constructions.
- The roads, transport, and conveyance facilities are not conducive to tourism, and most visitors feel deceived by the inflated prices they must pay to enter the interior.
- The absence of lodging and food options is apparent. Additionally, Bundi's tour guides lack the necessary training for geotourism, leaving them ill-equipped to satiate visitors' curiosity about the region's landforms and geofeatures.
- Large amounts of noise and plastic waste are caused by a variety of activities, such as Goth and religious programs, that are out of balance with the surrounding animals and natural beauty.

Opportunities:

- Expanding the area's promotion of responsible activities.
- Developing a vision for the benefit of all residents and stakeholders is a possibility.
- Possibilities for employment, socioeconomic growth, and travelling exist.
- The region is sizable enough to support extensive geosite planning and management.
- Develop and improve geotourism education initiatives.
- There is an opportunity for integrated, comprehensive planning and administration of sustainable development.

Threats:

- Lack of obligations and code of conduct for local and abroad tourists.
- The resources are under pressure due to the increase in tourism activity.
- Vehicle trafficking is not environmentally beneficial.
- The natural and geographical beauty is being ruined by the unplanned and uncontrolled growth of geotourism.
- Infrastructure associated with tourism is not being built in a way that respects the environment.
- There should be a rise in tourist crimes and deception involving tourists.



Suggestions:

- The district headquarters should be affordably and environmentally serviceably connected to the tourist areas via roadways.
- Tourism department should teach the tourist guides providing enough knowledge about structures and methods of formation of these major geofeatures present in and around Bundi.
- To give students hands-on experience and practical knowledge of the different landforms created over centuries, various educational institutions should be invited to these locations for introductory tourist excursions. In addition, locals living in the vicinity of the geotourism destinations should be made aware of the importance of protecting and preserving the natural beauty of these places.
- A tourist map showcasing these geo-attractions ought to be created for the district, enabling Bundi to stand out on national and international geotourism maps in addition to being a historically significant tourist destination.
- Signage at historical sites should also include pertinent information, such as a map showing the locations and distances to important geotourism destinations in and around Bundi, so that visitors to these historical monuments can become interested in the geo-objects and decide to reschedule their trip to the Bundi.
- Recently, two tunnels with a heritage aspect were built on NH 52 near Bundi. At 1.1 km each, they are thought to be the longest tunnels in Rajasthan and have become a new destination for travellers. Therefore, appropriate signage that includes images, a location map, and other details about the geo-sites close to these tunnels may also aid in drawing in more domestic tourists.
- The creation of contemporary hotel options at reasonable prices is essential for both local and foreign visitors to have longer and safer stays.
- To improve the geotourism experience, efforts should be made to raise public, visitor, academic, and student geo-awareness.
- All visitors and locals alike should get geo-education through geographical maps and diagrams, geographical exhibitions, poster displays, and open geographical museums.

Conclusion:

Presently only about one percent of the international tourists arriving in Rajasthan choose to visit the historical town of Bundi and witness forts, palaces, cenotaphs, paintings, step wells, etc. because the tourism here is badly affected by several factors. However, apart from these places of historical importance, Bundi is also characterized by natural beauty and many unexplored geofeatures having potential of geotourism in the area. Hence, if the geofeatures and geoobjects are developed on the line of geotourism and the suggestions to improve tourism experience are worked upon; historical tourism coupled with geotourism will play a vital role in creation of job opportunities to boost the economy and Bundi district will become a major geotourism destination on the global tourism map.

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