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Revitalizing the urban development scenario- Contemporary Katra town

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Abstract

Pilgrimage as a form of journey provide an opportunity for the people to visit sacred places and is a feature common to more or less all societies. Mata Vaishno Devi being one of the most popular shrine located in the lap of Trikuta Hills of Jammu region (Jammu and Kashmir, India). Every year lacs of devotees from different parts of the world pay the obeisance at shrine. This work reveals the critical appraisal of urban development scenario (Case-Study) of Katra town (base camp to Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine), in the last 20-30 years. A brief model shall also be attempted for future urban development and inherent Architectural Style so that it would be amongst the rich cultural Heritage for the future generations to be preserved, conserved and simultaneously globalized for all good reasons.

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1. Introduction

City's Urban Infrastructure icons are the Arteries and lungs of the modern society. All cities are the outcome of rigorous social interaction and beliefs over a large period of time one of such social belief driven town is KATRA, situated in Jammu and Kashmir (India). Katra is very close to Our Present Hon'ble PM Sh. Narendra Modi as only recently, he has inaugurated the railway line up to this religious Town. Katra town is world famous for the pilgrimage as it forms the base Camp of Trikuta Hills upon which (12 kilometers away from base town) the Holy Shrine of Goddess Vaishno Devi is believed to be located. Every year Millions from around the globe visit the shrine.

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1.1. Location and background

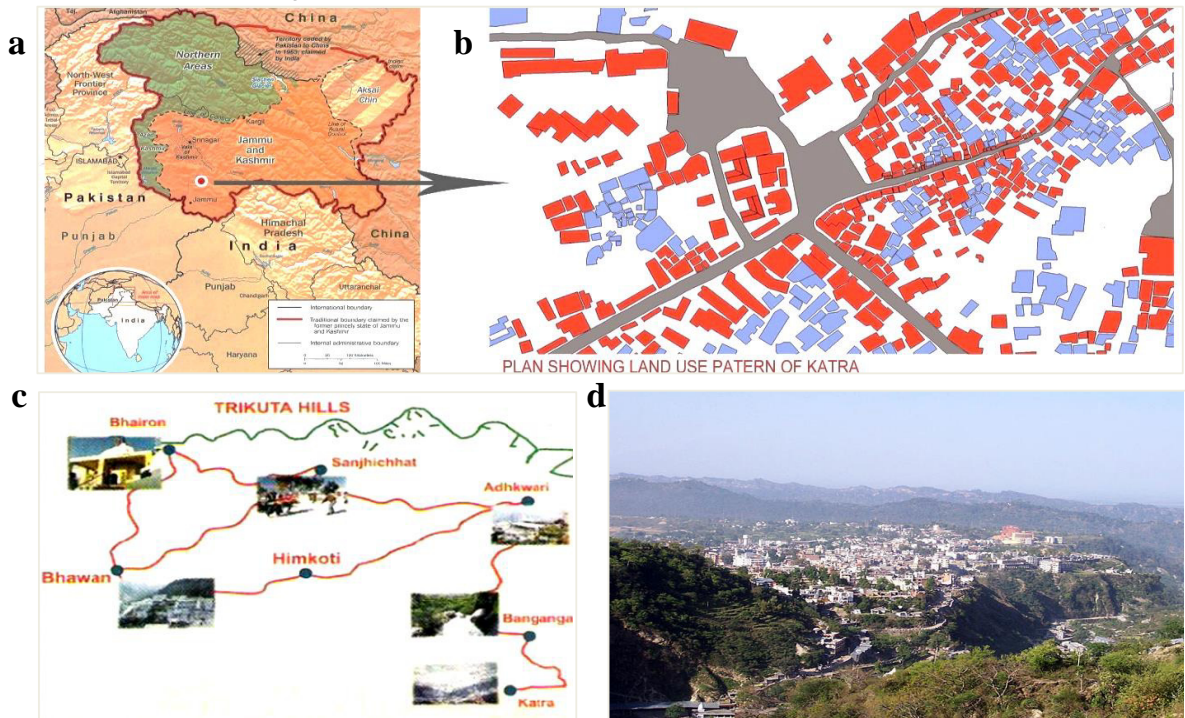


Fig. 1. (a) Location Map of Katra (b) Land use pattern of Katra (c) Religious Places Katra to Bhawan (d) View-Katra from Pilgrimage Track

Katra is located at 42 kilometers from Jammu in Reasi district at an average elevation of 754 meters. The land of Jammu is blessed with the holy stay of many great saints and spiritual souls. Mata Vaishno Devi, Katra (Jammu) is one of the most famous pilgrimage tourist destination in India. Numerous temples and shrines with glittering Shikhras roaring the Jammu city's sky-line creating the ambiance of a holy and a peaceful city. Jammu emerged as the major economic center of the state, owing a great contribution to the pilgrimage tourists it attracts.

Indian Spiritual tradition has propounded four *purusharth* (objectives) of a human life. These are *Dharm* (Righteousness), *Arth* (Material Pursuits), *Kaam* (Contentment) and *Moksh* (Enlightenment). Shri Mata Vaishno Devi is believed to grant all the four boons to those who visit her holy shrine in a righteous way. where she merged her human form with the astral form of her creators, the three supreme Energies.

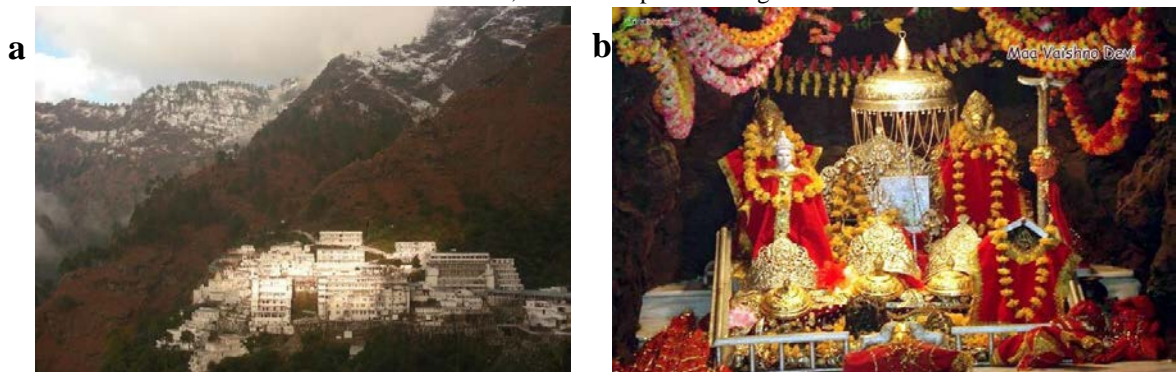


Fig. 2. (a) Journey Culmination Point-Bhawan Complex (b) The three supreme Energies inside Holy Cave at Bhawan Complex

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