

EXPLORING DISTRICT BARAMULLA OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR IN A TOURISM PERSPECTIVE

Shabir Ahmad Lone^{1*}, E. Ravi², Nusrat ul Islam Itoo³

^{1*}Research Scholar of History, Department of History, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, 608002- Tamil Nadu, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of History, L.N.Government Arts College, Ponneri, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Research Scholar, Department of History Annamalai University Tamil Nadu India

Correspondence author loneshabir714@gmail.com

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Abstract

In most economies, tourism creates money, jobs, and GDP. Kashmir is known as "Heaven on Earth" because of its amazing beauty. Baramulla attracts visitors with its gurudwaras, temples, monasteries, and shrines. Gulmarg, at 2730 meters above sea level, is a must-see for visitors. Gaurimarg was renamed Gulmarg in the 16th century, which means "Valley of Flowers." More notable sites in the Baramulla District include the Gulmarg Biosphere Reserve, Khilanmarg, Acchabal, Gondola Lift, Tangmarg, and Khilanmarg Golf Course, as well as Parihaspora. The tourism industry in Kashmir has enormous potential, and it also provides numerous economic options for residents in the Baramulla region. The current document emphasizes the District Baramulla's prominent tourist spots, historical sites, and geographical places.

Keyword: *Exploring District Baramulla Of Jammu And Kashmir In A Tourism Perspective*

INTRODUCTION

One of Jammu & Kashmir's 22 districts, Baramulla has 8 tehsils and 16 blocks and covers approximately 4190 sq km. Western Pakistan-occupied Kashmir borders this district. Baramulla is south of Kupwara and north of Poonch and Budgam, bordering Srinagar and Ladakh on the east. Raja Bhimsina built this city 2306 BC. Akbar, the Mughal emperor, visited in 1508. Baramulla, known as Varmul in Kashmiri, is a city and municipality in the Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, India. The Baramulla district's administrative seat lies on the Jhelum River downstream from Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir's summer capital. The town was once the entryway to Kashmir, distributing products from the Jhelum valley cart path. Varahamula was its former name. Sanskrit words Varaha (wild boar) and Mula (root/origin) form the name. The 1947 Pakistani tribal invasion of Kashmir destroyed the town, a major urban settlement and trading center. Northern Kashmir's business and education hub is Baramulla.

In 1421 AD, the renowned Muslim saint, Syed Janbaz Wali, chose Baramulla as the focal point of his mission, accompanied by his followers and companions. In 1586 AD, Emperor Akbar, upon entering the Valley through Pakhil, spent several days in Baramulla, transforming the city into a splendid sight during his stay, as documented in "Tarikh-e-Hassan." Jahangir also had a sojourn in Baramulla during his visit to Kashmir in 1620 AD. Consequently, Baramulla evolved into a place where Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Sikhs coexisted harmoniously, contributing to a diverse and vibrant composite culture. It held the distinction of being the oldest and most significant town in the northern region of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To give an introduction about Tourism in Baramulla.
2. To overview the Historical background and Geographical location of District Baramulla.

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3. To Explore the Tourist destinations of District Baramulla.

METHODOLOGY:

This current research is of a descriptive nature, relying on secondary data sources. These secondary sources encompass a wide range of materials, including journals, periodicals, magazines, newspapers, newsletters, research articles, books, internet resources, as well as both published and unpublished records from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and J&K tourism.

ORIGIN OF BARAMULLA

Baramulla comes from the Sanskrit Varahamula, meaning "boar's molar." The Kashmir Valley was Satisaras (Parvati's Lake in Sanskrit) in Hindu mythology. Jalodbhava (meaning "originated from water") ruled the lake until Lord Vishnu transformed into a pig and struck Varahamula. This released lake water. Ancient Baramulla was named Varahamulaksetra or Varahaksetra. It was a Huviskapura (Ushkur) suburb. The Adivaraha, Vishnu's boar incarnation, was sacrosanct. Thus, during the reigns of Lalitaditya Muktapida, (Queen) Sugandha, and Ksemagupta, many temples and monasteries were created.

Languages

Kashmiri and Urdu are used most, followed by English, Pahari, Hindko, Gujar, and Punjabi.

Transport, Road From Srinagar

Srinagar, the Jammu and Kashmir capital, is 55 miles from Baramulla. NH-1 connects Uri to Srinagar and Leh from the Line of Control. Before the 2010 National Highway Authority of India renumbering of all national highways, NH-1 was NH-1A. Srinagar's NH-1 joins NH-44. Srinagar and Jammu have taxis and buses. Srinagar-Baramulla is the valley's best motorable and maintained road. Rice farms and meadows surround it. It crosses Sangrama, Wagoora, Hygam, Pattan, and Zainakot. NH701 and NH701A connect Baramulla to Kupwara and Gulmarg, respectively.

From Uri and Muzaffarabad

The Jhelum River runs along the 123-kilometer (76-mile) Muzaffarabad-Baramulla road. Pakistan calls it "Srinagar Road." From Domel Bridge, Muzaffarabad to LOC Chakothi-Uri Border Crossing. NH-1 passes through Uri, 45 kilometres (28 mi) west of Baramulla, across the Line of Control. The road from Uri to Baramulla is picturesque, passing wooded mountainsides and cliffs until the last 40 km (25 mi). The road reopened for controlled bus travel in 2005 but closed again in 2019.

From Kupwara via Watergam

NH-701 connects Baramulla to Kupwara through Watergam and Handwara. Baramulla to Handwara is 29 km and Watergam 15 km. Kupwara-Baramulla is 47 kilometers.

Airport

The closest airport is Sheikh-ul-Alam International Airport in Srinagar, which is located approximately 60 kilometers to the southeast. In contrast, Jammu Airport serves as the airport in the state's winter capital.

Train

The Banihal railway tunnel connects Srinagar, Qazigund, and Banihal across the Pir Panjal mountains to Baramulla, the last station on the 119-kilometer (74 mi) Banihal-Srinagar-Baramulla railway line, opened in October 2009. Indian Railways will connect the Jammu-Baramulla line. Katra, 276 km (171 mi) south, is the nearest long-distance train station.

Tourist Places in District Baramulla

Wular Lake

On Haramuk Mountain's foothills is Asia's 2nd largest freshwater lake, Wular Lake. It is 200 square kilometres long and 10 km wide. Sangrama's Baramula Road lake is between Sopore and Bandipore. River Jhelum supplies Wular Lake with water. "Zaina Lank" is the lake's central island. Zainul-Abidin built this island. Wular Lake may be a relic of ancient Satisar Lake. Sunsets are popular at this lake.

GULMARG

Gulmarg means "flower meadow". Gulmarg is 60 KM from Srinagar, a 1.5-hour drive. The Himalayas have drawn millions of tourists to Gulmarg. The world's highest cable car, the Gulmarg Gondola, draws visitors. The first stage of the Gondola carries passengers to 8530 ft to Kongdori Station, while the second stage goes to 12293 ft. Tourists can ride horses to Strawberry Valley, Leopards Valley, and Kongdori to observe the frozen lake of Al-Patar. Winter in Gulmarg is a skier's heaven, covered in snow. These unspoiled slopes test expert skiers! Winter in Gulmarg means "White Christmas" and New Year parties, as well as scenic beauty. Yousuf Shah Chak and Jahangir frequented Gulmarg. Gaurimarg, Lord Shiva's wife, was Gulmarg's previous name. Yousuf Shah Chak renamed it Gulmarg, meaning roses. Between missions, Central Asian explorer Sir Marc Aurel Stein (1862–1943) lived here in a tent. The British in India loved summer vacationing there.

Parihaspora

Old Parihaspora is 26 miles from Srinagar in Baramulla. Kashmir's Shankervarman capital was here. Lalitaditya Muktapid, Kashmir's 8th-century monarch, found it. The Parihaspora Pattan and Pattan Bazaar's old archaeological structures are its main attraction. The town also has a Buddhist Stupa and monastery. In 1914, excavations revealed Vishnu temples, Raj Bhawan, and a Chaitya. This dig shows ancient stone structure.

Ziyaratbaba Reshi

Baba Payam-Din's Ziarat of Baba Reshi is a prominent shrine in Baramulla near Alpathar Lake, 13 kilometers from Gulmarg. Baba Payam-Din was a famous Muslim saint and courtier of Kashmir's Zain-ul-Abidin. Baba Payam-Din died in 1480 at this shrine after meditating and praying.

This shrine's centerpiece is Baba Payam-Din's burial, draped in a hand-embroidered fabric. The temple is known for blessing worshippers. Devotees who receive boons return to this shrine to thank the holy saint.

Rani Temple

Snow covers the Shiva-Parvati Rani shrine in winter. The most popular Rajesh Khanna song, Jay Jay Shiv Shankar, was filmed here in this temple. Snow-covered mountains all around. This temple is visible over Gulmarg.

Ningle Nallah

Ningle Nallah is 10km from Gulmarg. Mountains always have wild streams. Gulmarg's Ningle Nallah mountain stream attracts tourists. Green meadows with wildflowers flank the stream. This stream's bubbling is soul-healing.

Alpathar Lake

Alpathar Lake is a small lake on Apharwat Peak in Gulmarg near Gondola Phase 2. Locals call it the frozen lake since it freezes entirely in winter. The post below describes how we completed the Alpathar Lake trip alone. The lake is Gulmarg's main tourist attraction at 4,390 meters. Wildflower-covered meadows and steep mountains surround it. The entire trek to the lake is an experience.

Drung Waterfall

In Tangmarg, Gulmarg, Baramulla, the Drung Waterfall is a renowned tourist attraction. The unusually low winter temperatures freeze this gushing waterfall in magnificent mountains. Locals must see this frozen waterfall.

Shrunz Fall

Shrunz fall is 22 kilometers from Srinagar-Baramulla highway from Tapper Kreeri and Putkhah intersections in Chandoosa, Baramulla.

St. Mary Church, Gulmarg, Baramulla

Near Gulmarg's Golf Course is century-old St. Mary's Church. Victorian architecture awes. Its brownstone walls make it look like a rustic chapel. Winter, especially snow, makes it shine. The church is one of Gulmarg's most serene attractions. Its green-tiled ceiling and wooden walls are ornamented. Biblical frescoes are inside. Stained glass enhances its brilliance from afar. The church

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stands on a lovely green field surrounded by golf courses on three sides and a mountain on the fourth, making it only accessible by foot. In 1902, the British-style church was completed. The church was refurbished in 2003, upgrading its façade. After 14 years, Christmas mass was held after 2003 renovations. Mass is no longer held here.

Khilanmarg

Khilanmarg, a small valley in Jammu and Kashmir, India, lies 6 kilometres (3.7 mi) from Gulmarg. Spring flowers cover Gulmarg's winter ski trails, which overlook the Kashmir Valley and neighboring peaks. Gulmarg to Khilanmarg is a 600-meter (2,000-foot) climb. From Nanga Parbat to Nun and Kun, the Himalayas are visible.

Zaloora-Zaingeer-Baramulla

Zaloora is in Zaingeer Tehsil, Baramulla District, Jammu & Kashmir, India. Zaloora Gram Panchayat rules under Zaingeer Community Development Block. Sopore, 14 kilometers from Zaloora, is the nearest town. The settlement is a popular new tourist destination. In 2019, Zaloora's magnificent tourist spots, such as Hilltop Zaloora, Hawa Kayar, Phall Dhaffer, Mujhadroo, Khukar Nallah, and others, were visited by local youth and other Kashmir Valley residents. Haji Lola Reshi Baba sahib shrine is very popular in the village. Zaloora is recognized for its beauty, Jamatei-Islami, sports, fruit business, and education. Kashmiri pandits in the hamlet celebrated Hindu and Muslim holidays together for generations. Summertime residents visit Zaloora's Mujhadroo for its apricots and waterfall. It is said that there exists a Buddhist University in Zaloora during the reign of Ashoka who was a follower of Buddhism.

Hazrat Baba Shukur Ud Din RA, Kashmir Torchbearer

The shrine located at the Spiritual Sharikot Hill Top in Watlub Sopore dedicated to Hazrat Baba Shakoor ud din RA is nothing short of a spiritual wonder. According to the details provided by the mosque's administration, this renowned saint was born during the rule of Sultan Qutub Din. Hazrat Baba Shakoor ud din wali RA was known for his exemplary character, sincerity, and profound devotion to Allah and the Prophet, peace be upon him, right from his early years. His days were spent in devout prayers and recitations of the Quran. As he matured, he also engaged in agricultural work to sustain himself.

Fruit Mandi Sopore

Sopore, Baramulla district, 50 km north of Srinagar, has Asia's second largest fruit mandi. Dusty, hilly roads lead to the 372-kanal Sopore fruit mandi. It closed August 5, when the state lost its special status. Since militancy began, the mandi shuttered. The mandi's half-open gate has a guard car. Security but no traders. No trucks hoot or laborers hurry to load fruit boxes onto trucks. The mandi is mostly empty. Amritsar trucker Jaspreet Singh said, "Apple prices are low. Low rates prevent apple shipment. We've lost truck financing. Return in two days." Jaspreet said Valley conditions prevented growers from selling food. Jammu trucker Puran Chand said, "Nobody listens. 5 days. I'll carry fruit." Truckers said 200-250 apple box-carrying trucks left the mandi everyday in regular times, compared to 10 or so now.

Economic basis Kashmir produces 75% of the nation's apples, although trading has weakened this year. Horticulture sustains J&K. 12 lakh families exchange apples. The militant attack on fruit growers on September 6 in Dangerpora hamlet of Sopore appears to have been a warning shot and keeps the mandi closed. Growers said truckers avoided the Valley, hampering transport. Valley apples yield 24 lakh metric tonne (14 crore apple boxes). President of the Sopore fruit mandi Fayaz Ahmed Malik, nicknamed Kakaji, claimed about two crore boxes had been sold, but that was a bad sign.

Market decline since October 2018. National highway closures caused the drop. "We didn't even get good money for the early apple varieties, which arrive in the market from July to August-end," said Kakaji. Bank loans affect fruit producers. The August clampdown and communication cutoff worsened this. "We don't know how much apple is sold outside," Kakaji remarked.

Eco-Park

Eco Park, situated on an island within the Jhelum River along the Baramulla-Uri route, is accessible via charming wooden bridges. Crafted by the J&K Tourism Development Corporation,

this scenic tourism destination combines contemporary architecture with the region's natural splendor. With a backdrop of majestic mountains, the tranquil flow of the Jhelum River, vibrant green gardens, and meticulously designed wooden cabins, it ranks among Baramulla's premier attractions and is particularly popular during the summer season. There are also future plans for the addition of cable cars and an expansion of the Eco Park facilities. **Gulnar Park**

Gulnar Park is one of the India city. It is located at the longitude of 74.342759 and latitude of 34.1974165. Baramulla is a India city located at the longitude of 74.3560842 and latitude of 34.196187 . The total distance between Gulnar Park and Baramulla is 1 KM (kilometers) and 233.3 meters. The mile based measurement distance is 0.8 miles.

Tehsils of District Baramulla

1.[Boniyar](#) 2. [Dangerpora](#) 3. [KhoiePanzipora](#) 4.[Kwarhama](#) 5.[Watergam](#) 6.[Baramulla](#) 7.[Kreeri](#) 8.[Kunzer](#) 9.[Pattan](#) 10.[Sopore](#) 11.[Tangmarg](#) 12.[Uri](#) 13.[Wagoora](#) 14.[Dangiawacha](#) 15.[Rohama](#) 16.[Zaingeer](#)

CONCLUSION

Baramulla relies on tourism and Fruit business. Tourism can unite the universe. Tourism creates jobs and socioeconomic growth by opening new investment and revenue streams. Tourism produces jobs and boosts the economy, but it may not reduce poverty. Thus, the state government, local investors, and other stakeholders must actively participate in tourism-related activities. Local workers can also promote local businesses for transportation, services, and food to reduce poverty. The state's diversified landscape and law and order challenges have hampered connectivity. Province rail-road ratio is very low. Connectivity requires alternative roadways in some areas. Many two-lane roads need four-lane upgrades. Sparsely populated and fragmented, the state needs more airports and better aviation connectivity. Tourism infrastructure in Baramulla should include broader and smoother roads, transport, including airlines and rail services, hotel upgrades, and tourist destinations. Some areas need new roads for better connectivity. The poorly populated and fragmented state needs new airports and better air connectivity. Monuments should be restored. To attract pilgrims, Baramulla's sacred sites need specific attention for infrastructure development. Baramulla has significant tourism potential and is a development leader. Baramulla is the most exclusive destination. State tourism dominates. The multi-segmented industry employs hotel managers, guides, travel brokers, and others. Baramulla's beautiful landscape and ecosystems impress visitors.

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