Chapter - VI

ECO-AGRI-RURAL TOURISM IN AURANGABAD DISTRICT
PAITHAN, KANNAD, SILLOD, KHULDABAD AND SOYGAON
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6.1 INTRODUCTION

What is agri tourism in Aurangabad district? This is one of the fastest growing tourism activities. Agri tourism is however not all about staying in a village and relishing the food. This is an opportunity to be close to where the 75% of Indians live. One of the best things about staying on a farm, is that guests can contribute to the place through their involvement. The idea is to make tourists live life like a villager, right from milking the cow, ploughing the field, bathing in a well to climbing a tree and plucking fruits. International tourists are very much interested in knowing the history of the India, since most of the people come from an agricultural ancestry, they would want to know what their forefathers did for a living. This is great opportunity to get back to the rural roots.

Aurangabad district offers a variety of tourist attractions varying from pilgrimage centers, forts, dam sites, eco tourism areas to World Heritage sites. The famous World Heritage sites of Ajanta and Ellora are located in these this region. Aurangabad has eco agri rural tourism destinations such as Paithan, Khuldabad, Kannad, Sillod and Soygaon.
Accessibility

Road – Aurangabad is well connected with all major cities of Maharashtra and other states. Though no national highway passes through Aurangabad, state highway connect Ahmednagar, Nasik, Jalna and Parbhani to Aurangabad.

From Pune to Aurangabad 235 km.
From Mumbai to Aurangabad 388 km.
From Delhi to Aurangabad 1323 km.

Railway – Aurangabad is connected to Mumbai by railway linkage, but only one direct train runs from Mumbai to Aurangabad.

Air – Aurangabad airport is connected to cities of New Delhi and Mumbai.

6.2 TRANSPORTATION

From Aurangabad all these sites like Sillod, Khuldabad, Paithan, Soygaon and Kannad are well connected by road.

Aurangabad to Paithan 50 km.
Aurangabad to Kannad 60 km.
Aurangabad to Sillod 70 km.
Aurangabad to Khuldabad 30 km.
Aurangabad to Soygaon 130 km.

Aurangabad district is historically and naturally rich for upgradation of farmers and local craftsman. Aurangabad, Paithan, Khuldabad, Sillod, Soygaon and Kannad have been considered to be a land with rich culture heritage in a following way.

02) Sillod :- The world famous Buddhist caves at Ajanta also a world heritage site, it is in Sillod taluka caves are in the hills of
Sahyadri ranges, Waghul river flowing through mountains, water fall, other natural flora and fauna.

03) **Kannad** :- Pitalkhora caves older than Ellora are 20 km away from Kannad in the satmala ranges of the Sahyadri and Gautala sanctuary spread in the hills of Sahyadri.

04) **Paithan** :- It is an ancient taluka on the Godavari river, home of great Maharashtrian saint Eknath whose Samadhi can be found here, birth place of saint Dnyaneshwar in Apegaon, famous yatra Nath Shasthi. The town is mostly famous for Paithani Sarees, Sant Dnyaneshwar Udyan and major dam named Jayakwadi.

05) **Khuldabad** :- Is known as valley of saints, it is holy shrine of deccan Mughal emperor Auranzeb tomb, several sufis saints of chisti dargah, famous devotee place it has Bhadra Maruti temple, World Heritage sites Ellora caves and Ghrishneshwar temple, Ahilya Devi Holkar temple nearby. Another tourist spot Maheshmal is a beautiful hill station.

06) **Soygaon** :- Soygaon is located near Ajanta caves. Soygaon has dense forest which are the main natural wealth of Aurangabad district.

### 6.3 CLIMATE

Climate is an important factor in the development of destination. Ideal and favorable climate enhances the tourist flow. Aurangabad sites possess good and ideal climatic condition for tourism. It has moderate temperature. The minimum temperature is
10°C and maximum is 35°C to 45°C. August to October is the monsoon season and November to February the winter season.

6.4 ACTUAL FOCUS ON AGRI TOURISM ON SITE ATTRACTION IN AURANGABAD SITES.

Types of Agri Tourism

a) Rustic farm tours  
b) Farm vacations  
c) Seasonal harvest festivals  
d) Village fairs

Welcome of the Tourists

Atithi Devo Bhava is more practiced in Aurangabad than anywhere else. The guests here are welcomed in traditional way with kumkum tilak, garlands and arati.

Internal Farm Transportation System

The farm tours are arranged by Bullock cart rides or Tractor rides or buffalow rides or Horse cart rides.

Farm Accommodation at Aurangabad Sites

Farm accommodation facilities at Aurangabad sites are basic, very hygienic, neat and clean.

a) Zopdi Accommodation :- This unique type of accommodation is meant for rest, relaxation with all modern facilities. It is built with bamboo and well ventilated.

b) Floating Accommodation :- It is an special type of accommodation, specially used for honeymoon couples in a lake.
c) Tree Top Accommodation :- It is an adventurous type of accommodation built on a big tree with swing and bed material.
d) Machan :- This is open sky accommodation on the terrace and supported by bamboo.
e) Tent and Camping :- This type of accommodation is provided for adventure for young tourists.

**Cuisine**

The rural cuisines are mouth watering which include relishing and authentic breakfast made by the farmer. The fresh cultivated organic vegetables dishes are served for lunch and dinner. Non vegetarian food like semi intensive stall fed sheep and goat farm mutton, fish, eggs and chicken are served.

Milk and milk products like flavoured milk, curds, talk, khir, lassi, khoa, srikhand, desi ghee and sweets. Fresh fruits and by products such as pulp, jam, juice, syrup, jelly, tender fruits and pickles.

**Sports**

On a farm site the traditional rural games like gilli danda, gotya, galore, bhavra, experience of the rural sports as wrestling and surparambya. Adventure sports such as trekking, water sports, jungle safari, bird watching, watching wild animals at height by sitting on tree or machan.

**Entertainment**

01) Kirtan
02) Bharud
03) Gondhal
04) Lavni
05) Fugadi
06) Dhol Lezim
07) Festivals of fairs or Jatra
08) Cock fighting (zunj)
09) Sheep and male bull fighting (Takkar)
10) Folk dance, music, shekoti folk song, harvesting dance and songs.
11) Drama, acting with music and dance.

6.5 AGRI TOURISM ON SITE ATTRACTIONS / ACTIVITIES

01) Fruit plantation: ex. Grapes, fig, mango, pomegranate, sapota, custard apple, coconut, banana and vegetables etc. Understanding nutritious the growth cycle pattern, the information given to the tourists the chain cycle from farmer to the customer.

02) Cow farm tour: cow milking, cow litter by products benefits for mankind.

03) Sheep and goat farm tour: goat milking by products and their uses.

04) Seri culture farming: processing, weaving silk cloth and sarees.

05) Farm improved equipment museum.

06) Practical demonstration of various experiments on crops and fruits.

07) Demos on various modern methods of water irrigation methods and systems.
08) Soil analysis, fertilizers, plant and animal feed and agricultural know how.
09) Apiculture Bee Hive demo farm.
10) Large nursery of mother sapling to help grow superior grade fruit trees. Here tourist can get information on the different types of samplings.
11) Medicinal plantation tour understanding the uses of medicinal plants in day to day life.

6.6 NEARBY ATTRACTIONS AT AURANGABAD SITES

01) Sugar factory
02) Gardens
03) Bird / Wildlife sanctuary
04) Fairs and Festivals of taluka places
05) Village gram panchayat administration
06) Kutir Udyog
07) Big Poultry farms
08) Dairy milk collection center
09) Emu bird farm
10) Jaggery making at gural
11) Historical sites
12) Religious Places, temples, mosques

As Aurangabad district has many farm lands but due to poor rains many a times farm products are limited. This creates several problems. An alternative to such situations can be to start farm tourism. The following chapter is an analytical survey of problems and prospects of Rural Tourism in Aurangabad District.
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