

## WADWAL A NEGLECTED RELIGIOUS TOURISM PLACE: A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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### Abstract:

Humans have been traveling for some reason since ancient times. Earlier tourism was limited due to lack of transport facilities. But today the means of transportation has increased to a great extent. Therefore, tourists are seen visiting various tourist places. This helps the local people in their economic development by providing employment. Wadwal is a religious tourist spot five km east of Mohol in Mohol taluka of Solapur district in Maharashtra and it is a neglected tourist spot. This tourist spot does not seem to be developed as it was expected. This a research paper titled “Wadwal A Neglected Religious Tourist Place: A Geographical Study” aims to introduce this religious tourist place to everyone.

**Key Words:** Neglected Tourist Place, Facilities, Problems and Solutions.

### Introduction:

Tourism is travel undertaken for a period of time for various reasons such as entertainment, study, religious affairs, sports, business etc. Tourism develops the mental attitude of human beings. Tourism enables humans to cultivate social commitment. Tourism helps us in socio-economic and cultural exchange. Today people visit pleasant climates, cool places, sanctuaries, national parks, historical places, religious places for tourism purposes. Many around the world enjoy tourism by visiting such places. There are various types of tourist destinations in India, with religious tourism having a high proportion.

Maharashtra also has various religious places like Shirdi, Shani Shingnapur, Tuljapur, Narsobachi Wadi, Trimbakeshwar, Nashik, Lenyadri, Alandi, Dehu, Jejuri, Pali, Hari-Hareshwar, Ganapati Pule.

There are many places of pilgrimage, historical places and tourist destinations in Solapur district. Mainly Sri Siddharameshwar Temple (Solapur City), Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj Samadhi (Akkalkot), Sri Vitthal-Rukmini Temple (Pandharpur), Sri Bhagwanta Temple (Barshi), Damaji Pant (Mangalvedha), Ancient ruins of Ardhnari Nateswara Temple (Velapur, Tal. Malshiras), Sri Nagnath Temple (Mohol), Maldhok Rare Bird and Deer Sanctuary (Nannaj Dist. North Solapur) are notable tourist places in the district. Some of these tourist spots are seen to be developed, thus providing employment opportunities to locals, increase in means of transportation, while some tourist spots are still neglected. One of them is Sri Nagnath Temple (Wadwal Tal. Mohol).

### Objectives:

- 1) To study the geographical position of the study area.
- 2) To study the current status of Wadwal in terms of tourism.
- 3) To study the facilities available in the field of study.
- 4) To study the economic condition of the local people in the study area.

### Hypotheses:

- 1) There is lack of transport facilities in the study area.
- 2) There is no availability of good accommodation and good hotel facilities for tourists in the study area.
- 3) There is environmental pollution from tourists in the study area.

Research paper

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4) Due to non-recognition as a tourist destination, the tourism sector does not get the benefit of any kind of government facilities.

#### Data collection & Methodology:

The primary information required for the present research paper has been collected through direct field visit, observation, interview and questionnaire survey while the secondary information has been collected through various bibliographies, Temple committee and website. The information collected is analyzed in terms of tourism and shown in appropriate charts.

#### Study of area:

Wadwal is a village in Mohol taluka of Solapur district. Its geographic location is between 17°44'39"N to 17°44'53"N and 75°37'15"E to 75°37'30"E. Generally, the height of this village is 472 meters above sea level. The location of Wadwal village is 5 km from Mohol taluka. The railway line and National Highway No. 65 (formerly No. 9) pass through this village. Wadwal village is situated at a distance of 1 km on the south side of the highway. However, the development of this tourist spot is not seen.

#### Delhi Darbar: The main entrance to Sri Nagnath Temple.



#### Subject Analysis:

The Nagnath temple of Wadwal is of unique general importance. This temple is Hemadpanthi and is considered as a symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity. A large number of tourists visit here, it is said that Sri Lord Shankara himself descended on earth and lived in Wadwal village of Nagnath from the eleventh century, bearing the name of Nagnath. It is also said by the people of this place that he himself entered the Khargatirtha and took water samadhi. Therefore, in Wadwal villages, this village has a special religious significance as the God incarnate as Nagesha has become a man incarnate.

While living in Mohol, some people of the village started harassing him, fed up with their troubles, he left from the village and stopped under a tree in a grove. The tree was standing. The city got its name 'Vadwal' because Nagnath made palvi flowers on the dried vada.

#### Religious and other tourist places:

##### 1) Gopalkrishna Temple:

On the south side of the main temple is the Gopalkrishna temple and that temple is Hemadpanthi. It is known as a rare temple in Maharashtra. In this temple, the idol of Gopal Krishna is about six feet tall and

stands on the pindi of Mahadeva, Krishna has a mustache and snakes on his shoulders and head, this idol is made with great craftsmanship.

**2) Vada (Banyan) tree planted by Nagnath himself:**

The tree under which Nagnath Maharaj stopped was a fallen tree. After sitting under that tree, the disciple watered the tree and the same tree that had grown fell apart and that tree still exists today. It is also a must see place for tourism.

**3) Sanjeevani Samadhi of Hegrus Maharaj:**

Sanjeevani Samadhi of Nagnath's chief disciple Hegres. Hegres are said to offer their heads to Nagnath as Gurudakshina. This place is also worth seeing for tourism.

**4) Khargatirtha:**

Nagnath appeared in the Manas Saravara, so when the people were going to Kashi, Nagnath is believed to have dug an import-sized pit with Kharg (Weapon) in his own hands in Wadwal and brought the Ganga of Kashi into it. Even today there is a spring of living water at this place, in the center of which a wall is built, called Binda. Kharg (Weapon) got the name Khargatirtha as it was dug up. Legend has it that Hegrus and Nagnath meet at this place every year on Chaitra-Pournima day.

**Tourists:**

It can be seen that the number of tourists coming to Wadwal has been steadily increasing since the last decade on Mondays and Thursdays. Tourists visit for religious purposes and also every Monday in the month of Shravan and every month on Amavasya lakhs of devotees come to this place for darshan. One day's financial turnover can be seen to provide a month's worth of employment to the natives. From the chart below you can see how the number of tourists has increased over the last decade.

**Estimated Number of Tourists Visiting Wadwal Place (Year 2010 to 2019)**

Sr. No.	Years	Number of Visitors to Temple	Sr. No.	Years	Number of Visitors to Temple
1)	2010	60,124	6)	2015	76,233
2)	2011	63,675	7)	2016	79,989
3)	2012	66,456	8)	2017	83,349
4)	2013	70,238	9)	2018	85,650
5)	2014	73,876	10)	2019	87,342

**Source: Estimated figures given by Devasthan Panch Committee.**

**Wadwal Yatra and Festival:**

There is a temple of Hemadpanthi Nagnath at Wadwal. In the month of Shravan, every Monday, Thursday and Sunday Yatra takes place. The Yatra starts at Pournimas in the month of Chaitra. The festival lasts for seven days during this festival there is oil application, Kharg and on the seventh day Gana is yatra. Lakhs of Shiva devotees from Panchkroshi and Maharashtra attend this yatra.

**Problems:**

- 1) The development of transport means in the study area is less.
- 2) There is lack of residential arrangement and good hotel facilities for tourists to stay/ rest in the study area.
- 3) Lack of good quality roads, intermittent light supply, unhygienic surroundings, lack of toilet facilities in the study area.
- 4) Direct-indirect environmental pollution caused by tourists in the study area.
- 5) Since the study area is not recognized as a tourist destination, tourists do not get any kind of facilities from the government.

**Solutions:**

- 1) Solapur Municipal Corporation transport buses are available only on Amavasya to go to Wadwal. The same facility should be provided daily.
- 2) Information here is essential for tourism development. The facility of a guide who gives historical and geographical information of that region should be made available.
- 3) Good type of accommodation or lodges should be provided for accommodation.
- 4) Government of Maharashtra should declare this study area or tourism area as tourist destination, this will provide all facilities to the tourists.

**Conclusion:**

- 1) Due to lack of transport facilities in the study area, tourism sector is not developed.
- 2) Lack of good road facilities, lack of light facilities, lack of good accommodation and hotel facilities etc. in the study area, the development of this tourist destination is not seen due to many reasons.
- 3) Due to lack of facilities of guide to provide historical and geographical information of tourist places to tourists, development of tourist place is not seen.
- 4) Due to the lack of status of the tourism sector as a tourist destination by the Government of Maharashtra, the development of tourism is not seen to a greater extent.
- 5) Due to less development of tourism sector, employment opportunities for local people will be less.

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