



MANIFESTING THE TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PILGRIMAGE TOWN – CASE OF PAITHAN, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

There are many large and small pilgrimage centers in India with a lot of potential in the field of tourism. These pilgrimage towns are always flourished with the religious, cultural, and traditional activities around the tangible heritage. The communities and these allied activities have a connect which generates the source of economy for the town. Taking into consideration the heritage and tourism linked urban development, the comprehensive and holistic approach in such small pilgrimage towns is unaddressed and unacknowledged. The research will put forward the study of one such town – Paithan, Maharashtra, India. The town of Paithan is graced with rich and diverse natural, historic, social, and cultural heritage. The inheritance of culture and the communal diversity of the town is responsible for the various architectural styles. This 'Land of Saints' makes it more culturally flourished which attracts the floating population. This sacred town has experienced the metamorphosis through many years which has generated a cover of secularism around it. To maintain its significant glory and grandeur, this research proposal will attempt to achieve the comprehensive and holistic development through the study of 'evolution and potential' and suggestions and recommendations for the present scenario.

Key words – Pilgrimage, heritage, tourism, communities, comprehensive development



1. INTRODUCTION

In the era of urbanization, sustainability is the most acknowledged term. Based on this concept UN-Habitat New Urban Agenda of 2030 has adopted the sustainable Development Goal for the Sustainability and better life. It is also addressing the critical issues for achieving the sustainability such as Urban-Rural linkages. This issue of Urban-Rural linkages is acknowledged through certain pillars such as Tools Development, Capacity development and sharing best practices, Technical / Advisory services, Advocacy and Partnership Building, Normative work. Besides this, there is one more pillar which can add a value to it by retaining the cultural values.

India is the second largest urban system in the world with almost 11% of the total global urban population living in Indian cities. In absolute numbers, the urban population in India is more than highly urbanized countries/regions across the globe (REFORMS IN URBAN PLANNING CAPACITY IN INDIA, Report-September 2021). The process of urbanization in India is considered transformative as it is driven by many indigenous aspects such as changing demographics, size of cities and towns, income inequality and cultural diversity (Patil Simran, Dhavale Swapna, 2022). The connecting thread of the urban and rural area are the towns which generates the economy from the rural area, and which are dependent on the urban area for their needs.

Embedded in the local discourse, culture has emerged as a significant local, place-based determinant in the urban planning process necessary for achieving sustainable urban development (Patil Simran, Dhavale Swapna, 2022). UNESCO has initiated preparation of a 'Global Report on Culture and Sustainable Urban Development' which aims to provide guidelines and recommendations aimed to foster culture-based urban sustainable development initiatives at the different levels (UNESCO, 2015). Along with the culture, communities also contribute for the sustainable development. To understand the interlinkage between culture-community-sustainable development a broad conceptualization is required (Patil Simran, Dhavale Swapna, 2022). Culture is perceived as a 'way of life' and a way of living together (UNU-IAS and IICRC, 2002). It includes a diverse set of activities responding to the place, values, and aspirations of the communities (Patil Simran, Dhavale Swapna, 2022). Basically, it is a medium through which the activities are performed and can be perceived through the tangible and intangible factors as well.

India is graced with the rich and diverse natural, historic, and cultural heritage which awaits to be explored to its full potential. From the historic perspective, there were two types of towns which used to generate economy through its cultural and traditional activities. One was the 'Temple town' and other one was the 'Pilgrimage town'. These towns used to generate economy through communities, businesses, and tourism. Great centers of pilgrimage attract visitors from widely dispersed cultural backgrounds and geographic locations, often enabling them to commemorate the origins of their faith (Britannica). Pilgrimage, a journey undertaken for a religious motive. Although some pilgrims have wandered continuously with no fixed destination, pilgrims more commonly seek a specific place that has been sanctified by association with a divinity or other holy personage (Britannica). Such pilgrimage centers show the human – water – culture relationships which is an important determinant of urban

planning and designing (Patil Simran, Dhavale Swapna, 2022). These allied activities are inseparable and have connection and significance at regional level. Altering frequencies of the visitation of the pilgrims offers peculiar character to the urban form of the pilgrimage town.

For the conservation of heritage and promoting cultures, Government of India and Ministry of tourism has launched consecutive schemes like HRIDAY (2014-19), PRASAD (2015-15) and PRASHAD (Beyond 2019) respectively. Under these schemes few heritage and pilgrimage cities and towns were selected to boost the tourism activities for the economic growth. For selecting the cities few attributes were considered such as Historic background, Cultural identity, Tourism value, Architectural value, Varying Communities, Potential in Urban growth, Involved stakeholders, Economy generation, Heritage value, etc. These pilgrimage towns and cities are adapting secularism around the sacred core.

Such pilgrimage towns are always flooded with the pilgrims, considering the situation new tourism opportunities were developed. Crowd of the Pilgrimage and religious tourism is then segregated into leisure and recreational tourism, ecotourism, and cultural tourism. This diversification of the crowd is responsible for the economic development through the development of secondary and tertiary sectors.

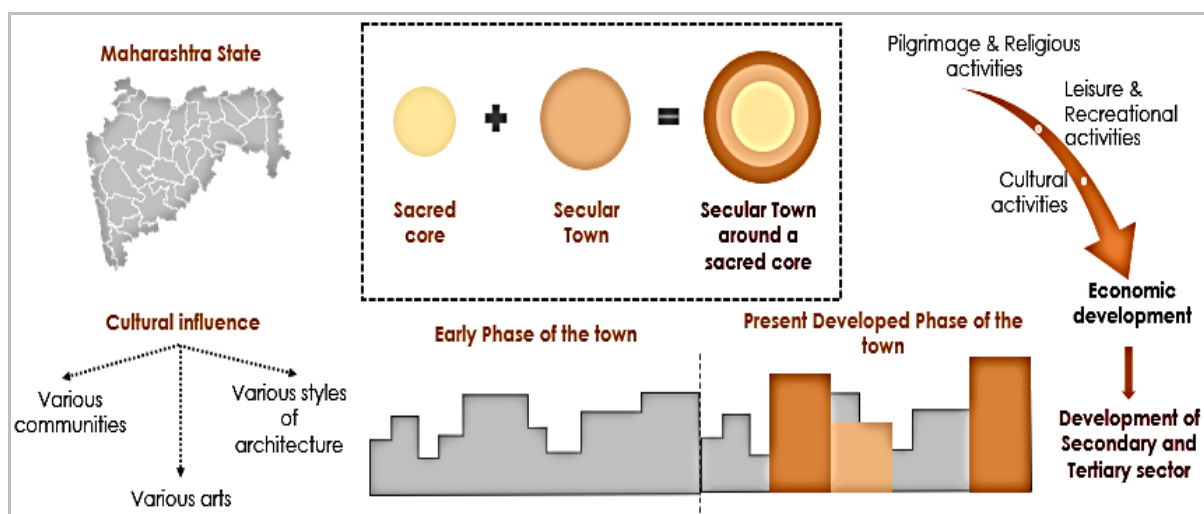


Figure 1: Present development scenario

Source - Patil Simran, Dhavale Swapna, 2022

Based on the above argument, this research identifies such pilgrimage towns in the Aurangabad district of Maharashtra state. It explores the place specific tangible and intangible characteristics and manifest it as a tool for comprehensive and holistic development to achieve the heritage and tourism linked urban development. The research will proceed with the site selection with a criterion, and it will find the connection between the cultural characteristics such as values and aspirations of the communities, activities, processes and patterns of a place, and urban designing are examined with a case study of one pilgrimage town.

The research is organized into the following sections, where section 1 discusses site selection criteria. Section 2 explores the introduction, evolution, and the potentials of the selected pilgrimage town. Section 3 identifies the issues related to the current scenario and section 4 includes some strategies and recommendations for the discussed issues.

2. SITE SELECTION CRITERIA –

For the site selection criteria, various pilgrimage towns around the heritage city that is Aurangabad was taken into consideration. This ‘City of Gates’ has endured and adopted various cultural, communal, social, artistic, reigning changes. The different communities, rulers, environmental factors have influenced the architecture as well as urban development over the years. The same city has many pilgrimage centres around it such as Devgad, Shani-Shingnapur, Verul (Ellora), Paithan, etc. All these towns are flourished with the number of pilgrims every day. The allied religious activities make town active and lively. Those activities help the communities in their occupational development. The community involvement is not just in the businesses, but they keep alive the culture and tradition of the place for which the tangible heritage contributes.

This site selection criteria were decided in the same way the criteria decided for the Government of India Schemes such as the HRIDAY, PRASAD and PRASHAD. There were few attributes which was considered and with the help of those attributes’ comparison between all the pilgrimage towns has been done. The research and the comparison of those attributes was based on the book readings, articles, Gazettes.

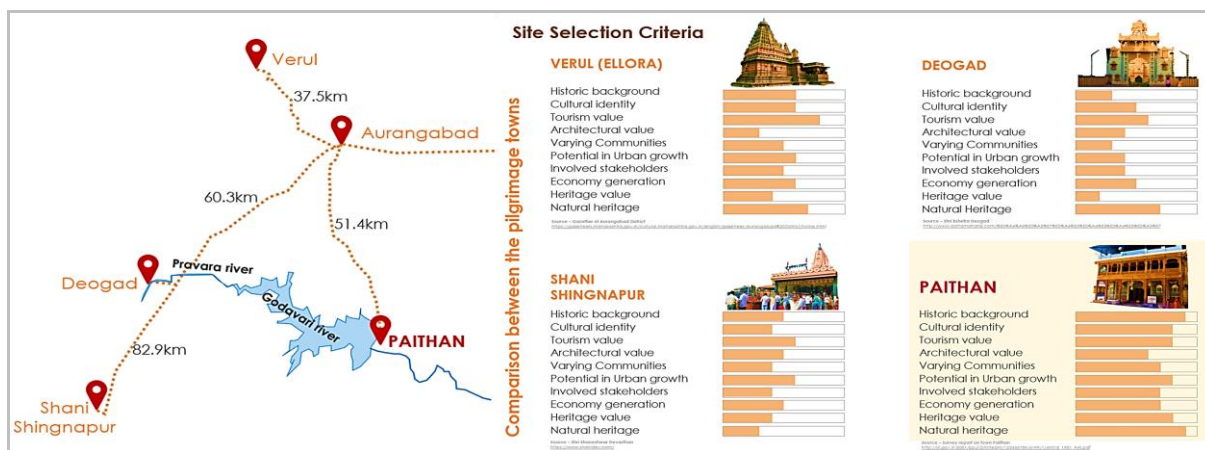


Figure 2: Proximity and Site Selection Criteria

Source – Author

Based on this comparison the town of Paithan was selected for the further research. The town is very historic and has an importance since the period of mythology. It has its own cultural identity as a pilgrimage town which further converted into tourism. Due to multiple rulers and the religious communities’ various architectural styles were developed over there. It has a potential to grow because multiple stakeholders are also involved in the process of development. It can generate its economy by conserving its natural and cultural heritage.

3. ABOUT PAITHAN –

Paithan is a pilgrimage town in the Aurangabad district of Maharashtra. It is situated on the banks of River 'Godavari' and it is located 56 kilometers (35 mi) south of present-day Aurangabad. The town is under Municipal Council. The total revenue area of Paithan is 2239.029 Ha but only approximately 501.75 Ha area is included in the Municipal Council. As per 2011 census population of Paithan town is 41514 souls. The projected population of Paithan municipal limits for year 2023 is 55,000 souls and is 70,000 souls by year 2033. The town shows various significant characteristics of the Indian Urbanism as it is a pilgrimage town for the surrounding region. Many historic events have influenced the existing urban setting of the town.

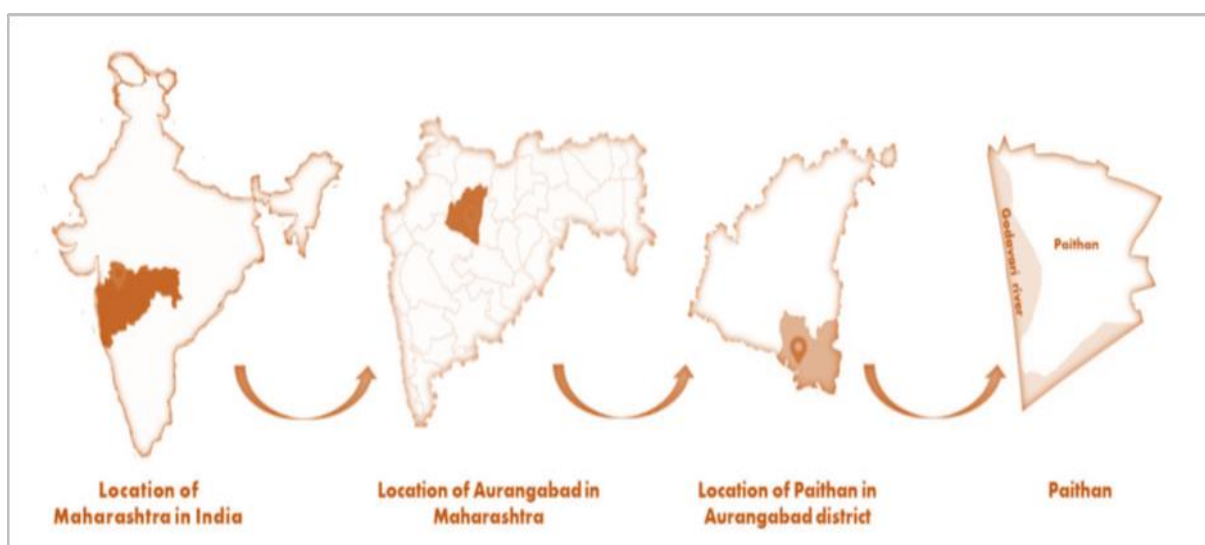


Figure 3: Location maps of Paithan

Source - Patil Simran, Dhavale Swapna, 2022

The town of Paithan has a rich and diverse natural, cultural, historic heritage. The town is flourished with many communities whose businesses are dependent on the religious activities happening over there. Paithan has been one of the largest religious centres along Godavari River since many years. The town has religious importance, and it can be found in the mythological narratives. It is mentioned to be as 'Dakshin - Kashi' because it is situated on the Godavari River which is considered to be as a 'Dakshin – Ganga'. Paithan has become the Moksha tirtha because many people come there to perform after death rituals.

In Paithan, various architectural styles depict the story of social, cultural, and communal diversity since ages. During the Metamorphosis of this town, it has experienced the downfall, industrial development, migration, changing environmental circumstances, hypocritical social conventions, rigid class stratifications, and urban development (Patil Simran, Dhavale Swapna, 2022). It is also called to be as a 'land of Saints' as the writings of Sant Dnyaneshwar and Sant Eknath exhibits 'Wisdom and Power'.

The urbanization is happening, rapid transformation is changing the rich cultural heritage of the town. In absence of an appropriate and envisioned inclusive approach there will always

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be a threat of losing this rich cultural heritage (Patil Simran, Dhavale Swapna, 2022). This will affect the urban growth and it will lose its significant and glorious identity.



Figure 4: About Paithan

Source – Author

3.1 Urban evolution of Paithan

Urban evolution of Paithan has been divided into some very influencing and significant events. The timeline of these events starts from the period of mythology where lord Brahma has created a settlement near the river name it as 'Pattan' which means flourishing and renamed it as 'Pratishthan' which means celestial abode of the Gods. Many temples were found even now at Paithan which was mentioned in the mythological narratives. After that, the significant period of Shalivahana king has many influences on the town. Trading was started during his reign. After the death of Shalivahana capital was then shifted to Devgad which was captured by the Mohammed's in 1260A.D. Shifting of capital has an influence in the declining prosperity of the town Paithan. After Satavahana, during the period of Mughals since 1260 A.D. the urban growth started happening. Many old mosques in Paithan are the proof of it. The period of Saints has followed the Mughal's reign in 15th century. Presence of different saints flourished the town again in the medieval period with their writings and definition of the culture.

The growth of Paithan has also witnessed the glory of many great rulers like Shivaji Maharaj, Peshwas and Nizams. Their influence on the town's architecture can be seen within the historic core of the town. From the early 20th century till independence many events have happened which has influenced the community settlements and decreasing growth of the population. Community formation has started. In 1911 to 1921, irregular and deficient rains have affected the agriculture. In 1918 to 1919, influenza epidemic was responsible for the outmigration. In 1943, Paithan was considered as a municipal town and ward formation has started. In 1948, abolition of Nizam state resulted into outmigration. Earlier, the communities

were occupation based that too of mixed religions. But today's scenario is different as Occupation based communities have adopted different occupation for their livelihood.

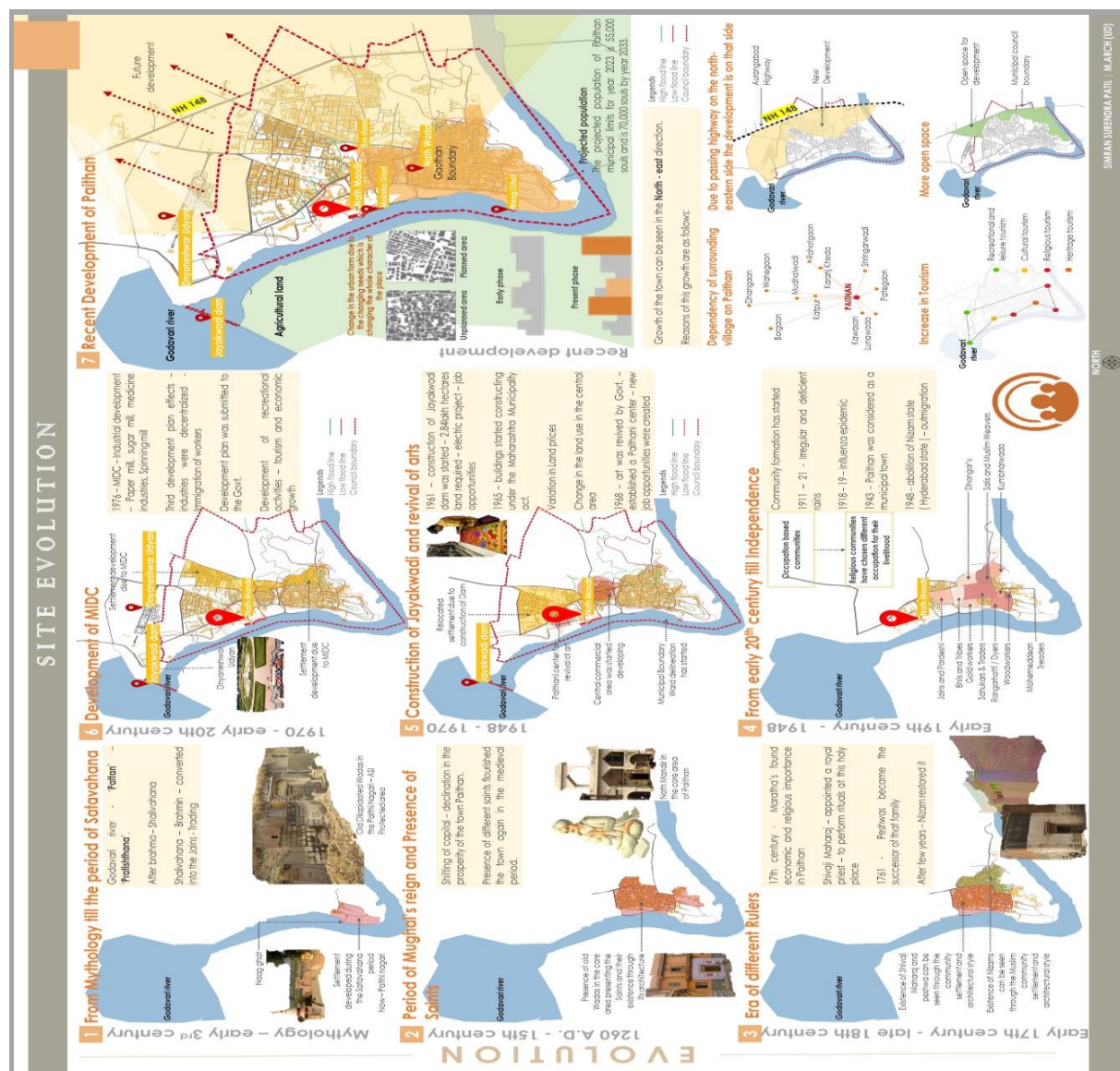


Figure 5: Urban evolution of Paithan

Source – Author

In 1961, construction of Jayakwadi dam was started where 2.84lakh hectares land was required. Due to the additional electric project job opportunities were increased. It has influenced the immigration a lot. In 1965, buildings started constructing under the Maharashtra Municipality act. Variation in Land prices was there because of the development of the CBD. Change in the land use in the central area. In 1968, art was revived by Government and established a Paithani center which generated new job opportunities. In 1976, MIDC Industrial area was started developing where Paper mill, sugar mill, medicine industries, spinning mill were dominant. Third development plan effects were the decentralization of industries which increased the immigration of workers. Development plan

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was submitted to the Government due to the frequent development of the town. Then all these things were responsible for the development of recreational activities like tourism, and it increased economic growth.

3.2 Paithan: tourism pattern

Paithan being a pilgrimage centre, it was also developed into the tourist place. People not just visits Paithan for religious purpose but hey visits there for other purposes like leisure and recreational tourism, cultural tourism, heritage tourism and ecotourism. The intention of people coming there is to spend one day time and taking some experience of the history from the town. Tourism can be beneficial for the pilgrimage town for the economy generation because the floating population helps the occupational communities to grow.

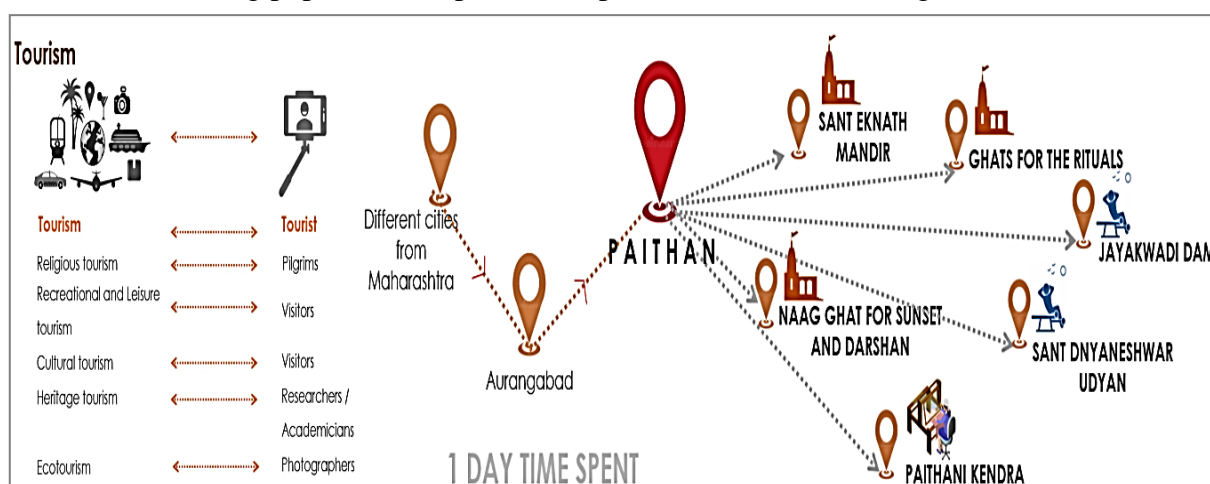


Figure 6: Tourism pattern

Source – Author

As there are many types of tourism, people with various perspectives visits there. If a tourist coming for the religious tourism, that person would be a pilgrim likewise for other types of tourism the category of the person and the age group of the person varies. In the case of Paithan, people come from the various districts for the religious tourism such as Aurangabad, Jalna, Nashik, Pune, Ahmednagar, Beed, Nanded, Parbhani, Buldhana, Yavatmal, Akola, Amravati, Wardha, Nagpur, etc. For coming to Paithan, various modes of transportation is used.

3.3 Paithan: current urban development scenario

Paithan's spatial growth was predominantly influenced by the availability of natural resources, religious patterns, different rulers, art forms, natural or man-made hazards, cultural influence, architectural styles, industrial development (Patil Simran, Dhavale Swapna, 2022). Some of the categories into which the development of this town is divided are the infrastructure of the pilgrimage town (for residents and pilgrims), the use and function of open spaces in the pilgrimage town, tourism (religious, pilgrimage, leisure, ecotourism, cultural, rural), the land use pattern of the pilgrimage towns, imageability of the pilgrimage

towns, heritage conservation (both tangible and intangible), connectivity, ecology, urban governance, and so on.

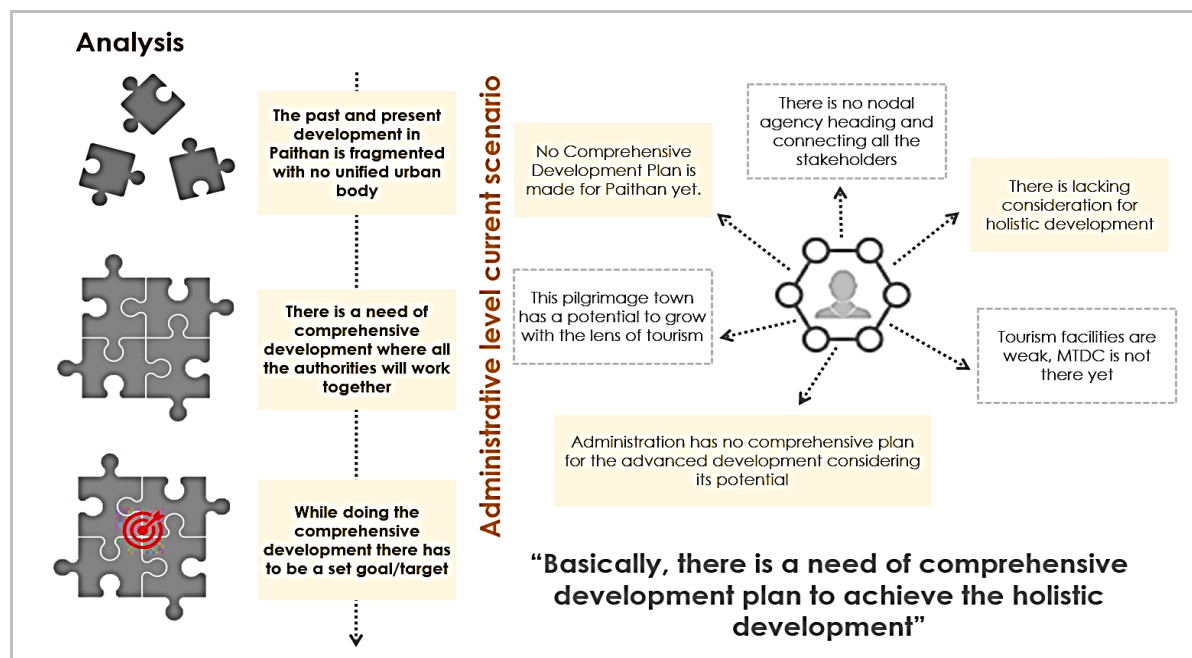


Figure 7: Current Urban Development Scenario

Source – Author

Pilgrims, tourists, locals, and authorities are all stakeholders in the development process. Pilgrims are devotees who visit the deity or a holy place, whereas tourists are those who visit for recreational and leisure purposes. Locals are those who are the town's heirs, and they also contribute to the town's economic development. The authorities maintain the town and encourage development, as well as actively participate in the changing dynamics of the town. They are further classified as follows: Paithan Municipal Council, Maharashtra Small Scale Industrial Development Corporation, Paithan – Apegaon Development Authority (PADA), Transport Department, Police Department, State Archaeological Department, Shri Sant Eknath Temple trust, Irrigation Department of Maharashtra, Government Health Department, Politician, Forest Department, National Highway Authority, Town Planning Department, Collector, SDO, Tehsildar, Public Works Department, Maharashtra State Electrical Board, etc. Each of these departments is responsible for its own work. Few authorities work solely within their jurisdiction or territory. They do not interfere with other people's work and are not responsible for developing the tourist management plan, festival management plan, or traffic management plan. Their work has been assigned to various departments; for example, if development work is required in the temple complex, the temple trust recommends the development authority.

According to the administrative level scenario, there is no nodal agency in charge of overseeing and connecting all stakeholders. Paithan also lacks a Comprehensive Development Plan. Consideration for holistic development is lacking. Tourism infrastructure is lacking, and the MTDC is still in its early stages. Because this pilgrimage town has the

potential to grow through the lens of tourism, the administration has no comprehensive plan for advanced development. According to the analysis, Paithan's past and present development is fragmented, with no unified urban body. There is a need for comprehensive development in which all authorities collaborate. There must be a goal or target in place while doing comprehensive development.

Sr. No.	Urban issues	Previous and present development	Existing situation and issues
1	Infrastructure of the pilgrimage town (for locals and pilgrims)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chowk development • Temple complex and surrounding premises infrastructure (for pilgrims and locals) • PMAY scheme • BSUP components in the old town • Pilgrim required infrastructure for rituals on Ghats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No consideration for future projection of population • For the locals, the infrastructure is not completely provided near temple premises.
2	Tourism (Religious, Pilgrimage, Leisure, Ecotourism, Cultural, Rural)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure for religious pilgrimage tourism is provided only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No infrastructure and less economy generation from other types of tourism. • Less funding (Rs. 5,00,000 per year) from the government for development. • Lack of connectivity issue towards the tourist spots.
3	Land use pattern of the pilgrimage towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latest development plan (2016) is working. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the red flood line there is no permission for the development except for public facilities.
4	Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River cleaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing more has been done to clean the river and the ecology.
5	Utilization and role of Open spaces in the pilgrimage town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of open spaces by PWD • Mostly parks and temples are developed within an open space. • Less urban level open space is developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dnyaneshwar Udyan is completely not in use. • Open spaces are not treated as an urban open space.
6	Consideration of communities for urban designing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some open spaces are developed. • For some of the occupational communities, infrastructure is developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resettlement of the communities • Shifting of the communities changed the land use and unplanned developments. • Communities seems satisfied with what they have without any aspirations.

7	Imageability of the pilgrimage town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Except for few open space developments nothing has been done. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Character of the place is lost.
8	Heritage conservation (Both tangible and intangible)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASI registered few old structures. Intangible factors are considered for the development of some open space's infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indian Urbanism Character of the place is lost, and it is heading towards modernism. ASI is only working there for maintainance, restoration of the place or the structure is very less.
9	Urban Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many government authorities like Municipal council, PFDA, irrigation department, Jeeva Pradhikaran, Nath temple trust are working there for the development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every government authority and SPV works there for the fragmented development under the name of inclusive development.
10	Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve the connectivity new road infrastructure started developing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the regularization of the existing unplanned settlements, the road infrastructure is not proper for the vehicular transportation. Lack of connectivity towards the viewpoints.

Table 1. Previous and present development

Source – Author

4. ANALYSIS OF PAITHAN -

Paithan's site analysis as a pilgrimage town is divided into three sections. The first section examines the site's potential using urban heritage points (both tangible and intangible). The second section describes the tangibles and intangibles using the character appraisal method. The third section uses documentation to examine the urban environment.

4.1 Site potential

The study investigates how the cultural characteristics of Indian pilgrimage sites can be incorporated into urban design efforts to achieve sustainability. The study investigates the relationship between culture, community, and sustainable development. The empirical research will be useful in determining how culture influences urban planning and design.

The Paithan case study uncovers several distinct characteristics that clearly demonstrate the significance of the cultural factor in spatial planning. Among the attributes identified are the importance of natural resources, historical development and its impact on urban morphology

and spatial growth, architectural development, community values, beliefs, needs, and aspirations, tangible and intangible heritage, urban governance, and economy.

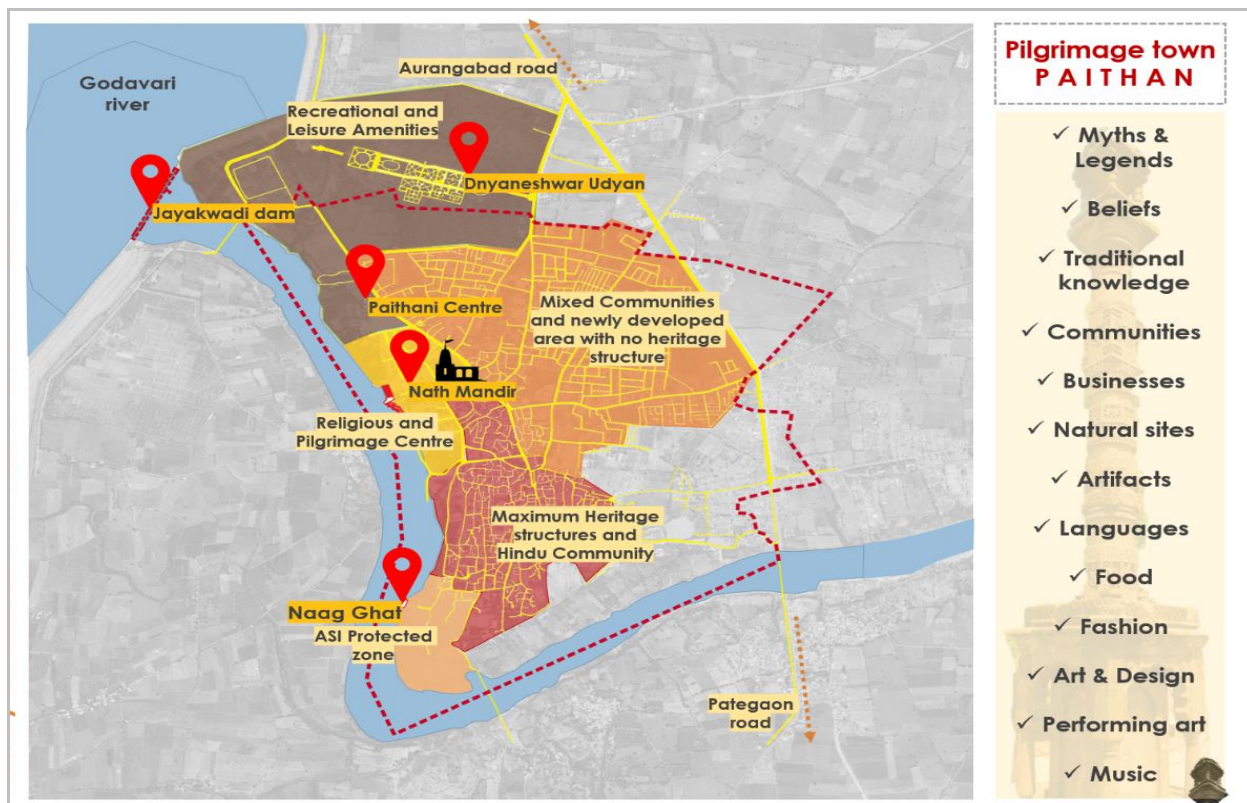


Figure 8: Unique characteristics for exploring the pilgrimage town

Source – Author

This case has been investigated from the perspectives of Myths and Legends, Beliefs, Traditional knowledge, Communities, Businesses, Natural sites, Artifacts, Languages, Food, Fashion, Art & Design, Performing art, Music, and so on. There are numerous myths, legends, beliefs, and traditional knowledge associated with specific locations, monuments, buildings, and rituals. The main belief in Paithan is that because the Godavari River is known as 'Dakshin - Ganga,' this pilgrimage town is known as 'Dakshin - Kashi.' Also, after Sant Eknath attained Jal Samadhi, Paithan became a Moksha Tirtha, and people from the surrounding region come there to perform after-death rituals.

Paithan's urban setting is based on the presence of natural resources such as the Godavari River. For many, this river is a place of worship as well as a source of life. This location attracts pilgrims as well as tourists for a variety of reasons, including religious tourism, recreational and leisure tourism, and eco-tourism. The Jayakwadi Dam (Earthen dam) was built on this river. Many visitors come to this dam's wall for fishing, recreation, and leisure activities. Because of the water, they established recreational areas such as Sant Dnyaneshwar Udyan. A 120-hectare garden is being developed on the bae of the Nath Sagar Dam. Plans from Vrindavan on the southern side and Pinjore on the northern side have been incorporated

into the development of this garden. Shri Dnyaneshwar temple and philosophy bench, nature garden, fruit garden, and tourism department are all located within this garden.

The flora and fauna of this area are extremely diverse, as migratory birds visit the Jayakwadi Dam area every year during the summer months. The tourist attraction there is flamingos. Furthermore, because of the Godavari River, Vam and Maral Fish are mostly available there. Tourists are drawn to these types of fish.



Figure 9: Flora and Fauna of Paithan

Source – Author

There are also inherited communities such as fishermen's community - Kahar Samaj, Jain and Pardeshi community, weavers' community, woodworkers' community, Brahmin community, and so on. These communities are classified as religious or occupational communities. According to the facts, occupation-based communities have now been transformed into religious communities that have chosen a different occupation for their livelihood. The communities' needs and occupations have shifted in response to the urban setting and atmosphere.

The emergence of various small-scale businesses can be seen over there as the communities have adopted various occupations. Religious tourism is the mainstay of the businesses. These businesses are mobile, which adds to the urban character of the area. These communities are either from the town or from the surrounding villages, and they come up for business. The languages were very different over there due to the presence of various religious priests. Because of the diversity of the communities, languages such as Marathi, English, Hindi,

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Gujarati, Marwari, and Urdu are spoken there. Sugarcane juice is the most famous drink in Paithan, attracting tourists and pilgrims, as there is more sugarcane production in this area. They make jaggery, a byproduct of sugarcane, which is also produced and sold there. During the Nath Shashti period, this drink becomes essential for the Warkari's while walking. It quenches thirst and transforms into an energy drink.

The town is not only endowed with communities and flora and fauna, but it also has a rich intangible heritage as well as artistic architecture, art, and design. The Wada style of architecture is well-known there, as are some intricate designs on the walls. The planning for these Wada's was meticulous and minute. Along with the Wada style of architecture, the town exhibits some peculiar old era characteristics such as wooden arched windows, wooden column design, and so on. There is one artefact such as 'Tirtha Stambha' that captures the essence of the Satavahana Period. Researchers and academics see great potential in preserving such heritage. It is the town's untapped potential. Art and music can be seen in performing arts such as Bhajan, kirtan, and Pawali, as well as performing artists. These art forms are seen on the Math, Temple, Dharamshala, Fad (tents for the Warkari), Mangal Karyalay, Ghats, Chowks, and Riverbank (Wavant Marg which the riverbank).

The morphological study of this town shows that the town has evolved based on the requirements of the handloom weaving over the years. It had evolved in response to the prevailing economic (weaving industry- flow of raw material, process involved) social (communities involved in the skilled processes) and political (rulers and their aspirations) conditions (Swapna Dhavale, 2017). Traditionally, many families over there have had taken up weaving as their source of income and livelihood. The working space is in their house itself where they accommodate the handlooms machinery and processes. The old town has been divided into different 'Puras' or suburbs belonging to people of different communities. There are different 'Alis' named after professions of their people (Swapna Dhavale, 2017).

With so much history, this town's potential remains untapped. Many researchers and academicians are working to maximize its potential for the development of this pilgrimage town as a comprehensive and holistic entity. The only way to use it is to show it to the people and give them an experience about the heritage that they have seen in the town.

There are numerous festivals held in this town, the majority of which are centred on religious culture, tradition, and beliefs (fig no). Some of these festivals, such as Nath Shashti, Gudi Padwa, Aashadhi Ekadashi, Urus, and others, are celebrated on a larger scale. The floating population comes from various districts for these festivals and events. The procession takes place on the major streets of Paithan on special occasions such as Ambedkar Jayanti and Shiv Jayanti. During these events, the nodes become congested and change in character. The market street develops and creates its own personality. These streets cause traffic congestion and make circulation unsafe. Some open spaces are used for these events, and people stay in some of them for a few days.

During major festivals and events, accommodation becomes a critical factor. Temples, Dharamshala, Math, Aashrams, Mangal Karyalay, Temple trust lodging, Fad (tents), and other forms of accommodation are used by people.

Most people prefer to live in Math, Fad (tents), or Temple trust lodging. Various stakeholders participate in these events to make them lively.

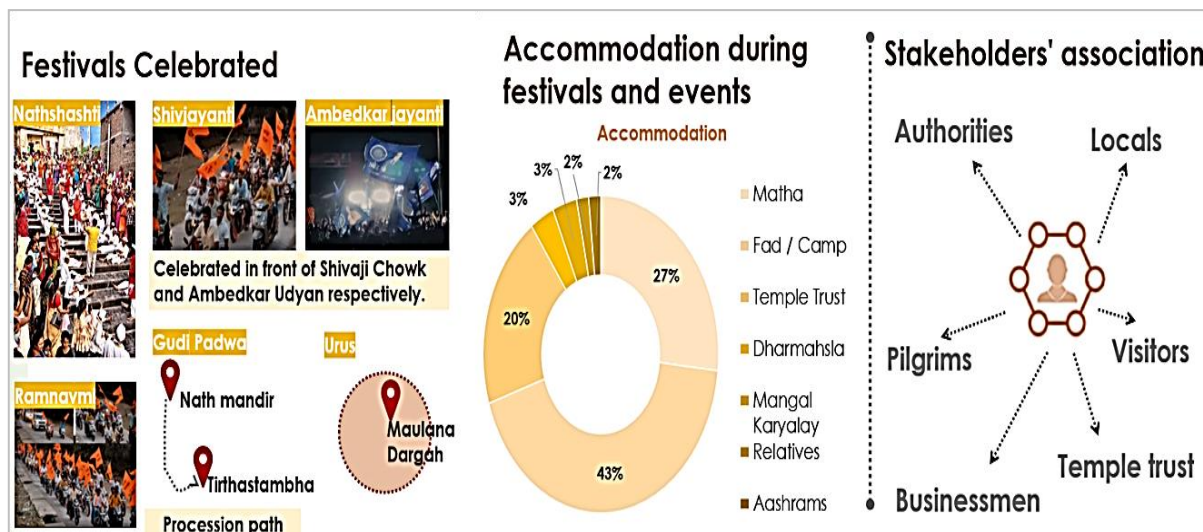


Figure 10: Various festivals and types of accommodation
Source – Author

The spaces become crowded and congested at times during these events. People of various ages interact with one another. As a result, diverting pilgrimage tourism traffic to recreational activities will benefit both the economy and tourism management. When people come to the event, proper service provision must be present. And here comes the concept of integrated design and comprehensive development, in which not only basic but also advanced services should be provided. This will create an experience while also increasing the frequency of pilgrim visits.

4.1.1 About Nath Shashti

To be more specific, Eknath Shashti is believed to be the day when Sant Eknath Swami left for heavenly abode by voluntarily laying down his life. Eknath Maharaj (1533 AD to 1599 AD) is one of Maharashtra's most important Bhakti Saints. He was also an accomplished author and social reformer. According to the traditional lunar Marathi calendar, Eknath Shashti is observed on the sixth day of the Krishna Paksha (waning phase of the moon) of the Phalguna month. He is said to have performed Jal Samadhi in the sacred Godavari River on this day, leaving his body and merging with the Supreme Soul. In 2022, the event attracted over 500,000 pilgrims. It is a five-day-long event in which 600 Dindi walk from various districts. The Temple Trust, Paithan Municipal Council, Pilgrims, Locals, Occupational communities, Government offices, Police services, various squads, and other stakeholders are all involved. During the events, active spaces include Ghats, Streets, Nodes/Chowks, Temples, Open Space, Maths, Dharmshala, Wada, and Riverbank.

One meeting is held under the chairperson of Collector of Aurangabad, Tehsildar of Paithan, and Sub-Divisional Officer of Paithan-Phulambri department for the festival's pre-management plan, where all the concerned authorities are assigned a work.



Figure 11: About Nath Shashti, Paithan

Source – Author

Paithan Municipal Council, Maharashtra Small Scale Industrial Development Corporation, Transport Department, Police Department, Shri Sant Eknath Temple Trust, Maharashtra Irrigation Department, Government Health Department, Politicians, Collector, SDO (Sub-Divisional Officer), Tehsildar, Public Works Department, and Maharashtra State Electrical Board are the concerned authorities. This meeting is held one month before the event, after which all of these authorities work, and another meeting called 'Aadhava Baithak' is held to understand the stage of work. The authorities are given orders to complete the remaining work. This demonstrates that there is no festival management plan that is in sync with urban planning and design. Given the floating populations during this event, a festival management plan is required.

Pilgrim visits increased until the year 2019, when the number reached 9,00,000, but after the Covid, the number dropped to 5,000 in the year 2022. The celebration of this event in 2022 was uncertain, and people were afraid to go into the crowd because of the Covid. If the population distribution is examined, it is more concentrated on the third and fifth days of the event. People's activities at that event are Dindi, who come from various locations and make their way to the temple via the Riverbank (Walthan Marg). The Warkari's take a bath in the river on their way to the temple, which is known as 'Godavari Mahadwar,' and enter through the back door. People worship the deity before proceeding through the front entrance to engage in other activities such as shopping, Bhajan, Kirtan, Pawali, and returning to their accommodations. Temples, Dharamshala, Math, Aashrams, Mangal Karyalay, Temple trust lodging, Fad (tents), and other types of accommodations are used during the event. The market's character changes because of this event, depending on the physical situation. Furthermore, the open spaces change their character by accommodating certain activities such as commercial, touring talkies, fairs, and so on.

One sample questionnaire was prepared to better understand the behavioural patterns of pilgrims from other places. This questionnaire was created with the when, which, where, what, and how in mind. This sample includes questions about 'what all activities people do from the time they arrive in town until they leave it.' This will give an idea of their behavioural pattern during this event, as well as how the town reacts to it. This sample questionnaire was given to 30 men and 30 women. The reasons for asking these questions to 30 male and 30 female participants are that they may arrive in a group or alone, their priorities and challenges differ, they are concerned about safety and security, and their modes of transportation differ depending on the safety. These people were very welcoming and enthusiastic about the entire process as they asked these questions. It demonstrates how development, along with spiritual experience, is important to them.

“Basically, this event is all about the religious crowd and their culture, so it is necessary to give them the better experience to expect their repetitive visits”

4.2 Character appraisal

Type	Name	Ownership	Use	Age	Heritage Value Classification								Condition	output
					Architectural	Historic	Religious	Social	Cultural	Economic	Educational	Ecological		
Water Body	Godavari River	GoM	Reli / Soc / Cul / Rec	-										Conservation
	Jayakwadi Dam	GoM	Rec	1976										
Ghats	Godavari Ghat	PMC	Reli / Soc / Cul / Rec	20 th Cen										Re - development and Rejuvenation
	Maksha Ghat	PMC	Reli / Soc / Cul / Rec	20 th Cen										
	Naag Ghat	PMC	Reli / Soc / Cul / Rec	1756										
	Ganesh Ghat	PMC	Reli / Soc / Cul / Rec	19 th Cen										
	Siddheshwar Ghat	PMC	Reli / Soc / Cul / Rec	19 th Cen										
	Amruteswar Ghat	PMC	Reli / Soc / Cul / Rec	19 th Cen										
Temple	Eknath Samadhi Mandir	Temple Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	16 th Cen										Re - development and rejuvenation for the utilization as the open spaces for locals
	Geeta Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	20 th Cen										
	Dholeshwar Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
	Kalka Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	19 th Cen										
	Chichaya Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	19 th Cen										
	Sapta Matrubha Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	18 th Cen										
	Pilija Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	3 rd Cen										
	Bhognarayan Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
	Devgruha	Community	Reli / Soc / Cul	19 th Cen										
	Eknath Wada Mandir	Temple Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	16 th Cen										
	Navagraha Mandir	Community	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
	Mahanubhav Pantha Datta Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
	Maruti Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
	Jain Temple	Community	Reli / Soc / Cul	1964										
	Gadheshwar Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
	Bhadrakali Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
	Nageshwar Mahadev Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
	Siddheshwar Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	19 th Cen										
	Sant Tukaram Maharaj Mandir	Community	Reli / Soc / Cul	20 th Cen										
	Jagrut Ganapati Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	18 th Cen										
	Shani Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
	Tarakeshwar Mahadev Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
	Navnath Mandir	Trust	Reli / Soc / Cul	-										
Math	Sant Ramlal Baba Math	Trust	Resi / Cul	20 th Cen										Retrofitting and revival of this category of accommodation
	Sadguru Zenduji Maharaj Math	Trust	Resi / Cul	-										
	Anantacharya Math	Trust	Resi / Cul	20 th Cen										
	Sant Shri Amrutrayji Maharaj Math	Trust	Resi / Cul	19 th Cen										
	Navle Maharaj Math	Trust	Resi / Cul	20 th Cen										
	Kashtha Math	Trust	Resi / Cul	-										
	Shivalay Math	Trust	Resi / Cul	-										
	Udasi Maharaj Math	Trust	Resi / Cul	20 th Cen										
	Shivdin Kesari Math	Trust	Resi / Cul	18 th Cen										
	Gangai Math	Trust	Resi / Cul	19 th Cen										

Figure 12: Character Appraisal

Source – Author



A character appraisal defines how anything contributes to the unique importance that creates the character. These studies shed light on what distinguishes a location in terms of character or appearance, as well as what should be preserved or improved, all of which contribute to a better understanding of a region's history and historical context. Furthermore, they clearly evaluate both positive and negative characteristics and identify areas for improvement. Heritage can provide an objective assessment of the area's unique architectural or historic interest. Most of these aspects will be tangible, both man-made and natural, but they will also include more ephemeral elements such as locations, perspectives, applications, and cultural trends.

Knowing and understanding the town's rich and grand potential, it is necessary to conserve it to promote the culture of the place. There is one format prepared for understanding the values of each tangible and intangible thing for the purpose. Following the assignment of values, it will notify everyone involved in the planning process, and the evaluation will attempt to describe and map these components. It will also consider any factors or problems that are currently undermining the protected area's unique characteristics.

Natural resources, flora and fauna, art, architecture, religious structures, and intangibles were all considered for this character appraisal format. These values are entirely based on primary data, questionnaires, and observations. As a designer, you should add one more lens to the output format. The need for conservation, revitalization, reuse, and revival can be justified considering the values and their analysis.

4.3 Urban analysis

The urban analysis of the location was carried out using tangible data. This analysis was divided into the main elements of urban design such as ecology, streets, nodes, open spaces, built forms, mixed use typologies, public and semi-public typologies, and public utilities. This analysis was carried out using mapping.

4.3.1 Ecology

Because of the practise of after-death rituals Water pollutes, and it pollutes an important part of this pilgrimage site. Cloth washing pollutes the water as well. Around the bird sanctuary, commercial building construction is taking place. The flora and fauna of the man-made garden are becoming agitated. Dnyaneshwar Udyan was given for maintenance to a private consultant, who was unable to maintain it, resulting in a loss, and it has been closed since then. Because of the conflict between the various authorities involved in the stake of this garden, maintenance has become difficult. The ecology is being disrupted over there as a result of illegal fishing. Pilgrims are drawn to the town because of the river's religious significance. Tourists are drawn in by the rich flora and fauna. Tourism can be increased if opportunities for non-religious tourism are created.

4.3.2 Streets

There is a lack of pilgrim infrastructure on the streets, such as seating, water kiosks, pause points, and so on. Views and vistas are jeopardised due to improper commercial activity

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placement. The land use around the streets is commercial, which causes congestion for both vehicles and pedestrians. During events and festivals, the haphazard placement of hawkers causes congestion. Congestion in vehicular traffic during festivals is caused by a lack of a traffic management plan. There is no proper street section of various layers. There are no comprehensive street guidelines. Changing the street character as the events unfold.

The streets can be pedestrianised, nodes developed, and a traffic management plan implemented. Certain sections can be worked out using guidelines and design to keep its character.

4.3.3 Nodes

The commercial use of the land around the streets causes congestion. During festivals, the haphazard placement of hawkers causes vehicular traffic congestion. Views and vistas are harmed, and there are no guidelines for advertisement boards. Changing the node's character adds more requirements. Nodes in the public realm can be created to create an experience about Paithan. This will aid in the generation of economic activity through communities.

4.3.4 Open spaces

During festivals and events, open spaces are used at random and unutilized open spaces are left unutilized. There are no land use guidelines proposed, especially during the festival season. There is no proper activity provision on unutilized open spaces. Ghats have been neglected in terms of upkeep. The changing nature of recreational open space necessitates more requirements. There is plenty of open space to accommodate the necessary amenities. Services that are currently lacking can be provided for existing open spaces such as ghats. From the point of tourism growth, new amenities can be provided.

4.3.5 Built form

There are building use and height issues, such as the mixed type of building use, which has begun. Views and vistas are being harmed as new architectural styles emerge. Contemporary architectural elements are altering the heritage area's character. There have been no guidelines proposed for character preservation. Because of a lack of maintenance, heritage buildings are losing their character. The newly developed area's changed character does not match that of the old heritage area.

Heritage conservation can be accomplished through retrofitting and reusing heritage buildings. Housing typologies can be rewarded with incentives. A design palette for heritage conservation can be created to aid in the preservation of the area's character. Guidelines for the intervention area can be provided.

4.3.6 Public utilities

During festival periods, there is a lack of utilities for the crowd. People's lack of awareness about their requirements. There are no public utilities within the temple complex or near the Jayakwadi dam.

A utility service matrix can be created to understand where it is lacking. Services can be tailored to the floating population.

5. CASE STUDIES

The case studies were selected based on the following criteria:

1. Pilgrimage town situated on the water body/river
2. High pilgrim visitation
3. Religious/spiritual value
4. Heritage value
5. Redevelopment project
6. Integrated development
7. Tourism linked development
8. Revitalization, rehabilitation project
9. Cultural conservation project
10. Festival management plan
11. Traffic management plan
12. Stakeholder's conflict resolution

The selected case studies were:

1. Sohrti Somnath, Gujarat, India
2. Kedarnath, Uttarakhand, India
3. Badrinath, Uttarakhand, India
4. Omkareshwar, Madhya Pradesh, India
5. Jagannath Puri, Orissa, India
6. Pandharpur, Maharashtra, India
7. Kumbha Mela, Nashik, Maharashtra, Aurangabad

6. CONCLUSION

The study of Paithan, a pilgrimage town, examines the potential for growing tourism, which will generate revenue for the town and benefit the secondary and tertiary sectors. This study investigates the connections between cultural heritage, tourism, communities, businesses, and the economy. This empirical study of identifying potential and issues, as well as creating opportunities for development, will aid in urban planning and the design of a comprehensive plan.

The Paithan case study uncovers several distinct characteristics that demonstrate the significance of cultural factors in spatial planning. Among the characteristics identified are the importance of natural resources, historical evolution and its impact on urban morphology and spatial growth, architectural development, community values, beliefs, needs, and aspirations, tangible and intangible heritage, various types of tourism, urban governance, and economy. Given Paithan's natural, historic, cultural, and tourism potential, the emergence of urban planners and designers with diverse ideas to address disparate issues is required. Godavari River cleaning and revitalization, riverfront development, improving existing Ghat conditions, conservation and restoration of built heritage, facilitation and promotion of pilgrim-based cultural activities, creation and promotion of local arts and crafts, and

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recreation and promotion of tourism-based activities are among these issues. The initiative taken to address such issues could serve as a framework for urban planning and design to meet the needs and aspirations of the community.

The study of Paithan acknowledges its cultural heritage and tourism potential along with the issues related to it. The development is happening in the domain of Infrastructure of the pilgrimage town (for locals and pilgrims), Utilization and role of Open spaces in the pilgrimage town, Tourism (Religious, Pilgrimage, Leisure, Ecotourism, Cultural, Rural), Land use pattern of the pilgrimage towns, Consideration of communities for urban designing, Imageability of the pilgrimage town, Heritage conservation (Both tangible and intangible), Connectivity, Ecology, Urban Governance, etc. if the administrative level scenario is analysed it describes that, there is no nodal agency heading and connecting all the stakeholders, there is lacking consideration for holistic development, tourism facilities are weak, MTDC is not working there yet and tourism untapped potential is yet to be explored, no Comprehensive Development Plan is made for Paithan yet. The stakeholders involved in this whole process of development are working in fragmented way. There is no set goal/target for the development.

While development is taking place at various levels in Paithan, a comprehensive approach to the ongoing development process is required, with culture and community at the heart of it. During urban development, the richness of culture and tradition must be overlooked. In the absence of a well-coordinated plan, people's needs, and aspirations are jeopardised.

The development scenario described above, a set of goals/targets must be established. The development process should be guided in one direction. And the factor to be followed is recreation and promotion of tourism opportunities both within and outside of town. It will benefit the local communities and businesses. It will aid in displaying local art, crafts, and culture to the public, creating an unforgettable experience, and increasing repeat visits to the town. This is possible if the proper framework for comprehensive and holistic development is implemented.

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