

# **HISTORICAL SITES AND THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS IN THE HILLY LANDSCAPES OF J&K**

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## **Abstract**

A large number of historical tourist sites including forts, religious places, and tourist places located in Jammu division of Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Some of them get good attention from the governments and were promoted as tourist economic hubs like Mata Shri Vaishno Devi Katra, and some in the vicinity of Jammu district and its adjacent areas. However the sites located in the hilly geographical region of Jammu division were neglected either due to the policies of successive governments or by non availability of transport facility and not giving much attention for developing tourist infrastructures in these areas of the erstwhile state. In this paper we tried to highlight the important sites which were important from religious historical geographical and economic point of view.

## **Sites and their locations**

### **Manda**

It is a village and an archaeological site in the Jammu district of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, India. It was excavated by Archaeological Survey of India during 1976-77 by J. P. Joshi. The site contains ruins of an ancient Indus Valley civilization. Diggings at Manda exposed a 9.20 m deposit with threefold arrangement with two sub periods in Period I. Period II has early historical pottery of types comparable with those of same period from Northern part of India and period III is represented by Kushan antiquities and house walls with 3 m wide streets. After the Kushan period, the site seems to have been deserted. Manda is situated on the right bank of Chenab River in the foothills of Pir Panjal range, 28 km northwest of Jammu, and was considered the northernmost limit of the Harappan civilisation. It is considered the northern most sites (excluding Shortugai) of Indus Valley civilisation. It is considered a site established to procure wood from Himalayan Sub hills and send it downriver to other towns of the Indus Valley Civilisation. Pre Harappan Red ware (15%-25%) Harappan Red ware, including jars, dishes, dishes-on-stand, beakers, goblets etc. and copper double spiral headed spin (having west Asian affinity), tangled bone arrow-heads, terracotta bangles, cakes, chert blade etc. Significant finds include potsherds bearing incised Harappan Script and one unfinished seals. Due to the restricted nature of the dig undertaken, no specific structures could be exposed, except a collapsed rubble wall-like structure

### **Ambaran**

Ambaran, also locally known as Pambaran, is a village of Akhnoor tehsil in Jammu district and is said to have been founded by Amba Jagdev Pawar. A scion of Pawar dynasty of Dhar Ujjain which seems to have been the original capital of Akhnoor. It was named Ambari after the family diety Amba, one of the names of goddess Durga. The name got changed gradually into Ambaran. Ambaran is the eighth place in the world, where relics of Buddha have been found in a stupa. Historians are of the opinion that the place might have been an important centre of Buddhism between the 1st and 7th century B.C. A cultural sequence of four historical periods has already been unravelled at Ambaran. It is believed to be the only early Buddhist site in Jammu region. Excavations have unearthed terracotta figures, small sculptures, pottery and burnt brick structures dating back to pre Kushan and post Gupta period.

### **Jajjar Kotli**

Its 35 kms from Jammu on the National highway leading towards Srinagar is the Jajjar Kotli Tourist Complex, built on the banks of the Jajjar rivulet. The crystal clear, cool water of Jajjar attract picnickers in large numbers during summer. A Tourist Cafeteria, a Bar and a small Tourist Bungalow are the facilities provided here by JKTDC.

### **Baba Dhansar**

From Jammu, on way to Salal Dam, Baba Dhan sar is a beautiful and cool picnic spot. Here, a huge spring gushes out of the mountainside in a thick grove of trees and forms a number of small water-falls before flowing into the Holy Banganga. Next to the spring in a small grove in the rock face is a naturally formed Shivaling on which droplets of water fall naturally all the year round. A big mela is held here during Shivratri.

**Heritage Temples of Udhampur**

The Shivalik foothills of Jammu are dotted with innumerable heritage sites: forts, temples and bowlies some of which date back to over a thousand years. Udhampur stands out in the Jammu region for having the largest concentration of ancient temples located in clusters or alone all over the district. These temples are fascinating for their antiquity and architecture. Of particular interest are the Temples of Manwal, Ladan Kotli and Kirmachi dating back to the 8th-11th century AD, which not only make for a compelling circuit but also an idyllic sojourn through the foothills. Manwal is located at a distance of about 70 km from Jammu. Manwal, in the ancient times went by the name Babbapura as mentioned in the Rajtarangini and was possibly during this time the capital of the Duggar(Jammu) region. The place is also linked with Babruvahan of the Mahabhartha on account of the name Babbapura and is believed to have been built by him. Later the name got distorted to Babour. The villages of Manwal and Thalora on the Udhampur-Dhar road have among themselves five ancient temples scattered over an area of one square kilometer viz. the Devi Bhagwati Temple, the Dera Temple, the Kala Dera-I Temple and the Kala Dera-II Temple and the Nand Babour Temple. These temples dating to 10th-11th century AD were grand edifices but have considerably lost their original shape over time. Architecturally, these temples mark a high point in temple building in the Jammu region for the uniqueness of their form and features. The temples are generally positioned on high platforms with stairs leading up to the mandapa in front of the garbhagriha. Large pillared halls – mandapas in front of the sanctum. The fluted columns around the mandapas which are reminiscent of the Hellenic columns and may perhaps suggest influence of the Greco-Roman architectural style are another interesting feature. The temples were devoted to Shiva, Shakti and Vishnu and are richly embellished with carvings of Gods and Goddesses. The Devi Bhagwati is the only living temple where local folk still offer prayers. Ladan Kotli is the Jalandara Devi Temple. Dating back to the 11th century AD the temple is quite like the temples of Chamba and Bharmour. An example of the nagara style, the temple has a curvilinear shikhara and profuse carvings of deities besides floral motifs and geometrical designs. The temple is said to have been made by king Jallandra of Trigarta, which in those times was the name for Kangra. A singularly stunning feature of this temple is the erotic carvings on one of the exterior walls quite like those found on the walls of Khajuraho temples! Kirmachi group of temples. Oddly enough, there is still no road right up to one of the most impressive heritage sites in Jammu region. However, a short walk from the village along the Biru Nallah leads one to the magnificent group of temples perched atop a small hillock. Dating back to possibly the 8th-9th century AD the complex consists of four temples which stand on an elevated platform with the fifth one standing on a lower level in a corner of the complex. Fine specimens of the nagara style, it is not difficult to miss the similarity of these temples with the Bhuvneshwar temples albeit on a smaller scale, and the likeness to the temples of Chamba and Bharmour. Like the Manwal temples, fluted columns are found here at the entrances of the sanctum sanctorum of the temples. Legend has it that Kirmachi was founded by Raja Kichak of the Mahabhartha. History, however, speaks of it as the capital of the Bhutiyals, the ruling clan of this region during this period. Excavations have revealed pottery and brickwork indicating that these temples stand on a site which dates to the Gupta period. Mostly facing east these temples are devoted to Lord Shiva. As is the belief in the hills, these temples are associated with the agyatvas of the Pandavas and are locally called Pandu temples which further adds to their allure. The Archeological Survey of India is doing a great job in maintaining the Manwal and Kirmachi temples. It is significant that these temples are located along what was a thriving trade route in the ancient and medieval times. Tourists and heritage aficionados can have an entirely satisfying day in exploring the priceless heritage of our region. Even yatis from Katra can be brought on this circuit in a reverse direction on their way back from Mata Vaishno Devi via Tikri. Our past has laid out this interesting circuit; all it requires at present is good promotion and marketing.

**Ramnagar Fort**

It is situated on the left bank of Kud waterway in mid Himalayan range, around 38 kms west of Udhampur. Ramnagar likewise filled in as the capital of old Bandarlta State. During the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, it went under Sikh rule and Raja Suchet Singh. Ramnagar Fort is believed to have been built by Raja Suchet Singh, who died in 1844. His wife performed sati nearby. There is a Samadhi of Maharani at the site where the sati was performed. The fort was renovated and undertaken by the Archaeological Survey of India in 1972. It is a protected monument of the Archaeological department. The antiquated fortress is square on plan with polygonal bastions to help its four corners. The strongholds divider and the bastions are high and ascend to three stories delegated with towers and merinos. Around the focal patio inside, there are cells and vaulted loads where gun balls are put away. There are pictures of Ganesha, Durga and Hanuman in the entryway. The stronghold is conquered by a canal remotely and the entrance to it is increased through a limited extension over the canal on the southeastern side. Different sights to be visited during the visit to Ramnagar are Purana Mahal (Old Palace), Nawa Mahal (New Palace), Sheesh Mahal and Samadhi of Queen of Raja Suchet Singh.

**Shiv Khori**

Khori means cave (Guffa) and Shiv Khori thus denotes Shiva's cave. This natural cave is about 100 metres long, one metre wide and two to three metres high and contains a self-made Lingam, which according to the people is unending. This holy place, nearly a kilometre long with a 4-feet high naturally formed Shivling, is considered second only to the shrine of Vaisnodevi ji. A major festival is held here on Shivratri day. The first entrance of the cave is so wide that 300 devotees can be accommodated at a time. Its cavern is spacious to accommodate large number of people. The inner

chamber of the cave is smaller. A number of legends are associated with the discovery of this holy cave. One of the most important legends among them is that a demon named Bhasmasura after a long meditation of Lord Shiva obtained blessing to end the life of any one with that blessing and then tried to kill Lord Shiva but in turn he killed himself. As per the legend, 33 crore deities exist in this cave in shape of Pindis. Natural milky water is falling on them from the top of the cave. In this cave there is also a cave which directly goes to Amaranth according to a saint who lived there named as Baba Rameshgiri.

**Dera Baba Banda**

It is a shrine which is held in reverence by the Sikhs. Dera Baba Banda is another place of the tourist attraction. Baba Banda Singh was a famous saint soldier of Guru Gobind Singh. A Gurdwara on the bank of Chenab is reminding memories of his time. He spent his last days here. Here a Beri sahib tree and 48ft long Nishaan Sahib can be seen made of deodar and erected by great Baba Banda Bahadur himself. This place is considered as a major pilgrimage centre for Hindus and Sikhs situated in Reasi district. People from outside state also come to this place for pilgrimage particularly on the festival of Baisakhi in the month of April every year.

**Baba Aghar Jitto**

He was a spiritual devotee of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi. The farmer sacrificed his life for getting due right share of agriculture crop from Jagirdar Bir Singh who denied giving the committed share. This is why he sacrificed his life for getting his right and became famous among the farmers. The statue of Baba Jitto is situated near road side in the lap of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi.

**Rajouri**

Rajouri is widely known for its monumental heritage and has several places worth visiting. Archaeological remains of district comprise sarais, mosques, temples, royal palaces, forts and gardens of different periods ranging from Kushan to the medieval period. These monuments are lying under historical tourism. Rajouri town lies on the imperial Mughal road which is connectivity to Kashmir. The Mughal remain scattered on either sides of the river flowing in the centre of the town comprises forts, sarais, palaces mosques etc. These ancient monuments are now occupied by civil hospital, police and forest department and almost stand renovated leaving only a portion of these in their original positions. The garden situated on the top of small plateau is most interesting of all the Mughal remains in Rajouri. It consists of walled enclosure by four part of channels with in a fountain at the centre. The glimpses of history of Rajouri are recorded by Kalhana's Rajtrangani that before advent of Islam in 1343 AD, there was ruled by karkotas, Loharas, and Mauryas. At the time of Alexander 'invasion Rajouri was also included at the height of its glory, as the town of Rajouri was a great trading centre. During the Mughal period Rajouri was ruled by local dynasty who had good relations with Mughal kings.

**Chingus Fort**

It is a small and scattered village situated on the right bank of the river on Rajouri Jammu highway. Mughal Sarai of the village is historical renowned for containing mortal remains of Emperor Jahangir who died on his way to Kashmir. It is well planned building with two apartment's viz residential complex and open yard. Both the apartments have separate gateway and area has connected to each other internally. Nowshera is a town in Rajouri district; it is located 110kms from Jammu on old Mughal route. A sarai is built by Emperor Akbar as an inspiration the western gateway opposite to main gateway lies as Shahi Mosque. Another memorial has been constructed at Jhangar (Nowshera) in the memory of Brig. Mohammad Usman who was mainly responsible for freeing the captured area around Jhangar. After having captured this strategic area Brig Mohammad Usman convened a conference of army officers to decide about the future courts of action, meanwhile he fell to the heavy shelling of the enemy in July 1948. The infantry unit located at Jhangar maintain this great memorial the hero deeds of army men as well as civilians who died while fighting in this area commemorated every 3rd July as Jhangar Day. Another war memorial has been raised at Gujjar Mandi Chowk in Rajouri town. An Army mela is organized on the month of April every year in the memory of martyrs. I think there is scope of heritage tourism because various structures, buildings and remains of the past still exist and the only need of the hour is to renovate them.

The other thing is that most of the buildings are captured by the army and paramilitary troops which are using them as the headquarters and are used as office buildings. I think if these monuments are preserved and open for the tourists then they can generate a good income as cultural heritage tourists always remain interested in visiting these sites. There is need that state government should involve itself in heritage tourism activities in particular and also promote other tourism activities. It should be linked properly to various parts of the state and country. Maintenance of roads is essential and awareness programmes about tourism should be encouraged.

**Dehra Ki Gali**

This beautiful scenic spot is situated at a height of plus 6600 feet above sea level, in the Pir Panjal Range and is one of the passes connecting Rajouri and Poonch districts. It experiences heavy snowfall during winter months. Thick vegetation cover attracts and charms the visitor. On the top of this hill Project Beacon has constructed a one-room apartment, which is indeed a fine sight-seeing spot of the whole of the area. The State PWD Department has recently constructed a two-room inspection hut, which can be rented out to the visitors by the Executive Engineer, R&B, Rajouri but it has not to be booked in advance. It would be in the fitness of things if government considers constructing more huts there in order to give fillip to tourism in this area of the state. Famous shrine of Rattan Pir is also situated nearby.

**Lah Bawli**

At about 20 kms from Rajouri, on the Rajouri-Thannamandi road this spring of fresh water abounds with fish. It is believed that the spring is linked underground with the lake NANDANSAR at the top of Pir Panjal. In case proper attention is given to the beautiful scenic spot, it can prove more attractive like Cheshma Shahi of Kashmir.

**Thana Mandi**

This is an important historical place right from the time of Mughals, who used to stay there during their journey from Delhi to Kashmir and vice-versa. An old Mughal Sarai still exists there which speaks of its glorious time. The climate of this place is very charming and in fact is a health resort. It is also famous for its artistic wooden products. The famous Shrine of Shahdara Sharief is just 6-7 kms from this place.

**Darhal**

In the northeast of Rajouri town, at a distance of 25 kms DarhalMalkan, a bowl shaped valley surrounded by gentle sloping mountains on all sides, is situated. Nature seems to have carved a stadium for the prospective sport lovers, who could be attracted here in thousands, if sport facilities were created. Enroute to Darhal is the Khanqah of Sain Ganj Baba, which accords religious importance to this area. The perennial flow of limpid water in Darhal Tawi adds more charm to its beauty.

**Koteranka Budhal**

Kotranka at the distance of 40 kms is an attractive tourist spot situated on the right bank of river Ans. During summer this spot affords a great attraction to the nature lovers and tourists. This is a picturesque charming and peaceful spot to retire to in the summer heat. This is the coldest place of the district Rajouri, which remains under the blanket of snow for more than four-five months. This town serves as base camp for the long and arduous journey to ARNAS and SEDHUE, for trekkers as well as the nomads and their flocks. This spot remain a source of special attraction for those who intend to track though this way to the Kashmir valley. Kihad is another beautiful place near Budhal. It is a small beautiful plateau, the waters there remains cold in summer and hot in winter. Nambal is yet another beautiful place 6 kms from Budhal and famous for its natural scenery.

**Dhanidar fort**

Maharaja Gulab Singh appointed Mian Hathu the Governor of Rajouri. Mian Hathu governed Rajouri from 1846-1856 AD. In this very period, he started the construction of Dhannidhar Fort. He used the stones and material in the construction of Fort of those buildings which were belonging to Jaral Rajas and destroyed during the invasion of Maharaja Ranjit Singh on Kashmir. The Fort was completed in 1855 AD. The main intention for the construction of the Fort was to keep Dogra Forces in this safer place because from this place, the whole Valley of Rajouri could be viewed. Apart from this during the Dogra regime, the revenue was collected from the farmers in the shape of grains and this grain was dumped in this Fort which was sold later on. This Fort has been used by the defence in the past.

**Shahdara Sharief**

A religious site visited by people of all religions, the Shahdara Shareif was built by Maharaja Gulab Singh in the 19th century to pay tribute to Baba Ghulam Shah. It is believed that Pir Ghulam Shah, who was born at Saidian (now Rawalpindi, in Pakistan), made Shahdara his home for life. Legend has it that Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab in 1820 AD, sent his army general, Gulab Singh, to conquer his adversary. However, the general lost most of his soldiers and when he was camping at Thanna-Mandi, he found out about Baba Ghulam Shah and went to see him. When the baba saw him, he smiled. On being asked the reason, he said that he was smiling at the good future of Gulab Singh. Then, baba asked the general to climb on top of a mountain and look around. He said that all the places he saw with his naked eye would be a part of his territory someday. The general saw Jammu, Kashmir, Tibet and Kishtwar and as thanks asked the baba to take some land from him, who asked him for the land of Shahdra Sharief in Jammu. Later, Gulab Singh became the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir and went on to express his gratitude to the baba. However, baba had left his abode and Gulab Singh got a shrine constructed for him. The shrine lies at a distance of about 177 km from Jammu.

**Poonch**

In the 6th Century A.D. Chinese traveller Huien Tsang passed through Poonch. He wrote that Poonch was famous for graphics, fine tea (Musloon) and good horses. Around 850 A.D., Poonch became a sovereign state when Mr. Nar, a horse trader declared himself Raja of Poonch. In 1596 A.D. Mughal King Jehangir nominated Siraj-ud-din of village Kahuta as Raja of Poonch. In 1798 A.D. a Gujjar leader Rooh-ullah-Sangu became the ruler of this area.

From 1819 A.D. to 1850 A.D. Poonch remained a part of Khalsa Darbar, Lahore. In 1850 A.D. Dogra Raja Moti Singh laid the foundation of Dogra Raj in Poonch. On the death of Raja Jagat Dev Singh in 1940, Sardar Abdul Qayoom Khan became administrator of Poonch under the orders of the Kashmir Government. In 1947 two and a half tehsils of Poonch principality went under the illegal occupation of Pakistan.

**Noori Chammb**

Noori Chammb associated with the name of Mughal Queen Noor Jahan is famous for its scenic beauty & water fall. It is situated near Behram Galla in Surankote Tehsil about 45 kms from Poonch town. The fall of the stream gives rise to dense clouds of water vapours which engulfs the area & spread all over. The Emperor Jahangir had developed so much fancy & liking for this fall that he named it Noori Chammb after the name of his beloved queen Noor Jahan. Mughal queen used to stay here for relaxation. She had got fixed a mirror besides the fall on the mountain wall where she used to have her make-up after the bath.

**Girgan Dhokes and Lakes**

It is a valley of seven lakes which is located about 70 kms from Poonch town. Tourists during the course of their visit to Poonch should not miss the opportunity to see the lovely and beautiful seven lakes namely Sukhsar, Neelsar, Bhagsar, Katorasar, Kaldachnisar and Nandansar situated at the high altitude of 12000 ft. in the Buffliaz belt. Nandansar is one of the biggest lakes near Girgen dhok. The length of this lake is about one mile and its breadth is half a mile. These lovely lakes have their own charm which a visitor would long remember.

**Mandi**

It is a small village in a narrow valley enclosed by steep and grassy hills of no great elevation, situated near the confluence of two streams namely Gagri and Pulsta. Mandir Swami Budha Amar Nath Ji is situated in this village. Mandi is about 20 kms. from Poonch town. Due to cool climate and proximity to the Poonch town, Mandi has become a favourable place for tourists to visit, in summer. Most of the people of Mandi area speak Kashmiri language

**Loran**

Loran is a small village 35 kms away from Poonch town and is situated at the foot of high mountains of Pir Panjal range and is another attraction for the tourists. Loran Nallah which flows through this beautiful village makes the place more enchanting to the eyes. Loran was once the capital of Poonch state under Hindu rulers upto 1542 A.D. It was then known as Loran-Kote. There are ruins of the Lohar Kote fort which was once called the Gateway of Kashmir.

**Surankote**

Surankote is a small village situated on the banks of river Suran and has very charming valley surrounded by lofty peaks which are covered with snow during winter and is popularly called Pahalgam of Poonch. In Rajatarangini, this town was described as Sawernik in the past. Nearly in 1036 A.D. there was a big fort called Kote which ultimately changed to its present name of Surankote.

**Behramgala**

It is situated at the foot hill of 8,600 feet high Rattan Peak on the historic Mughal Road in Poonch. Behramgala is a small plateau surrounded by mountains and forests. It is near the confluence of Parnai & Thata Pani streams which further adds to its otherwise scenic and natural beauty. It is about 40 kms. from Poonch town.

**Qilla Kishtwar**

To the south west of Kishtwar town is a hillock where a fort and palace existed during the rule of the Raja's of Kishtwar. There are said to be built by Raja Kahan Paul. With the passage of time, the house and the fort at Kishtwar became non-existent excepting the throne, made of stone, which stands there even today. The one piece seat of stone slab with a thickness of 15cms, stands on four stone pillars of greenish colour 42 cms high. As it is a heritage site, it needs be preserved, otherwise the slab too will get lost in due course of time. The two guns locally called 'TOPE' have been preserved and installed within the premises of the office of the Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar.

**Katarsamna**

The place at a distance of three kilometers from Kishtwar and connected with a road is another beauty-spot, wherefrom the view of Kishtwar town, Dul-Hasti Project Colony, and its beautiful surroundings, Nagin- Shiru peak to its North and

roaring river Chenab to its South can be seen. The premises of the 'Kartik' Swami temple are situated at a prominent place.

**Bharnoin**

The picnic spot of Bharnoin, below Pochhal village, 3 kilometers away from Kishtwar town is known for its eye-captivating beauty. The place is situated in a forest area dense with conifers like deodar and kale trees. The place nearby bustling Kishtwar town is cool, calm and pollution free. Down below the slopes of Bharnoin is the majestic view of roaring Chenab whose roar is heard here. Side by side is the beautiful forest patch of 'Bindraban'. The whole area is, indeed, full of mesmerizing beauty.

**Saffron Safari**

A place of attraction for the tourists are the saffron fields of Kishtwar located mainly in Pochhal, Hatta, Bera-Bhatta, Matta and Berwar villages nearby Kishtwar town. Saffron flowers are in full blossom in the months of October and November every year, so this time is the best for visit to Saffron Safari. The view of purple colored Saffron flowers, spread like a blanket over the fields, early in the morning is, really, enthralling and mesmerizing. The fragrance scattered by this blossom in the atmosphere gives a heavenly touch the environment. Early in the morning women folk, men and children in their colorful attires go to the saffron fields for plucking flowers, preferably, before sun-rise otherwise its red carpel's get separated from the petals after sun rise, causing inconvenience in handling these later on.

**Bhandarkoot**

The place is situated at a distance of about 12 Kms from kishtwar town on Kishtwar-Synthen-Anantnag road. A big mela is held here on Baisakhi every year. After a dip in the 'Sangam', the visitors pay their obeisance to the two most revered religious places, the Astaan of 'Shah Zain-ud-Din' on the left side of Chanderbhaga, an the ancient 'Neelgangeswar' pond and the temples of other gods and goddesses on the right bank of the river. These two places of religious importance attract thousands of pilgrims not only on Baisakhi but for the whole year round. Cocks and Sheep are offered at the Astaan by both the main communities for taking the blessings of the great saint. Bhandarkoot, thus, is symbolic of complete mutual brotherhood and communal harmony.

**Mughal Maidan**

Eight kilometers ahead of Bhandaroot comes Mughal-Maidan a scenic spot on the bank of Chatroo river. The market place and some govt. buildings add to the beauty of this place. The place is being developed as tourist spot. Chatroo River is known for rearing 'Trout' fish.

**Padyarna**

At a distance of about 30 Kms from kishtwar town by bus we reach Padyarna village, the block headquarter of Nagseni block where from historical sites of Nagseni block can be visited. 8 to 20 Kms above Padyarna are some villages where ruins of stone- temples, broken idols and stone inscriptions have been found. Padyarna, a picturesque spot on the right bank of Chenab. Qomiye Naag is also a place where you must visit.

**Bhaderwah fort**

It is also known as Ratangarh Fort is one of the most historical and cultural assets of Bhaderwah. Located on a small flat-topped hillock, this fort gives a scenic backdrop of pine trees and a complete panoramic view of Bhaderwah Valley. Constructed in the year 1733 by Raja Methni Pal, this fort changed hands several times. In 1821 it was captured by Chamba rulers, and such assaults were said to be quite frequent back in the era. In 1854, it is said that a great confrontation happened between the Bhadarwahi's led by Gen. Shagtu Kotwal and Chamba led by Gen Nathu Ram at Padhri Dhar. The engagement lasted for 3 days which finally separated Bhaderwah from Chamba. After that, The General offered Bhaderwah to be annexed with J&K to then Maharaja Gulab Singh. The Raja who was pleased with the general offered him an Estate in Bhaderwah. In 1919, this fort was converted into a jail and gave shelter to many freedom fighters like Sant Singh, Pandit Kashyap Bandu and even the ex-chief minister Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah. In 2007, after 88 years the J&K government decided to restore this heritage monument to its former glory and decided to send the 60 prisoners back to Jammu jail.

**Vasuki Naag Temple**

There are four Vasukinag temples In Bhadarwah: one at Gatha, second at Nalthi, third at Bheja and fourth at Nagar Bhadarwah. But the idol of Vasukinag at Bhadarwah is marvelous and a wonder of art and sculpture. Two idols of Nagraj Vasuki and Raja Jamute Vahan, are made of black stone which stands at an angle of 87° without any support from either sides. The statues have been standing as they 'were, on small feet in their original position for thousands of years, although the place has witnessed so many upheavals and geographical changes, including quakes of intense severity. Their inclined position can well be compared with the leaning towers of Egypt. The art of sculptures itself is of unique type.

**Gupt Ganga Temple**

To the east of the town on the bank of river Neru at a distance of 0.5 km, is the old Shiv temple, made of purely stone slabs. It has a tomb like construction and long stone slabs have been used in it. Here Ganga abruptly falls on the Lingam and then disappears. Inside the temple, there is a footprint of Bhimsen on a rock. There is a long cave said to have been used by the Pandavas to reach Kashmir from Bhadarwah during the period of their Agyat-Vaas.

This is an ancient and greatly revered Shiv Temple situated on the bank of Neru river near the first bridge on Bhadarwah Jai Road. A stream of pure water flows from inside of the temple and drops on the ShivLing day and night. The whole sight is so attractive that visitors desire to go on seeing it again and again. The inside water then flows to a "Bawali" (Pond) where Sadhus, devotees and visitors take bath. The water of the Bawali is cold in summer and warm in winter. Since the stream of water comes into the temple in a hidden mysterious way, and the water of this stream is considered as sacred as the water of the Ganga, so it is called Gupt Ganga.

**Jamia Masjid Bhaderwah**

It is a splendid mosque situated in the town and is a marvelous sample of ancient art of construction. People from far and near come to see it. Greatest gatherings of Muslims can be seen in this mosque on Fridays. Oldest Mosque in Distt. Doda (118 Years) The Jamia Masjid is one of the most imposing of constructions in the town of Bhadarwah. Its impressive design arrests the eyes at once. It is a standing monument and testimony of the faith of the followers. It consists of central building with two halls and side rooms and four lofty minarets at the four corners. The workmanship of its architectural quality can easily compare with the similar structures in rest of India. The present Jamia Masjid has a history of its own. There was a jamia Masjid standing about fifty yards below the present one, built on the bank of the mountain stream that flows nearby.

**Shitla Mata Roshera**

This is a very old temple of Shitla Mata. It is situated on a sloping hilltop. People continuously throng the spot from Chamba, Bani-Billawar, Kathua, Doda, Kishtwar through out the year for paying obeisance and have the hair of their children cut called as 'Mundan Ceremony' in full musical sounds.

**Ziyarat Bangla Nallah**

It is situated to the North East of Bhadarwah at a distance of 20 Kms. In Chirala range amidst thick forests on the side of Chirrala Nallah. Whenever animals of the farmers suffer from mouth and feet trouble, they make some offer to this Ziyarat and the Cattle recover from the disease. Thousands of pilgrims visit this Ziyarat every year.

**Lakshmi Narayan Temple**

The Lakshmi Narayan temple is one of the famous temples of Bhadarwah. This temple was built by a resident of Sarolbagh and Prime Minister of Maharaja Hari Singh Wazir Sobha Ram. This temple was built about a century back. There is a big inn by the side of this splendid temple. It was built for the travelers. In this temple very beautiful statues of Lord Vishnu & Goddess Laxmi made of white marble were installed.

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