

AMAL LAL | Dr. Manoj Kumar Kini

Urban Design Strategies For An Ecologically Sensitive Highland Pilgrim Centre: Sabarimala A Case

Pilgrimages are usually places of mass movement and sudden influx of people to every pilgrimage has been affected by the physical, social, ecological as well as the cultural fabric of that place. Recent transformation trends of pilgrimages have shown that 21st century has brought up comparatively bigger concerns and threats to their values and assets and is reflected in the overall structure of that place. Pilgrimages in India have strong environmental and cultural relationship with that of the physical structure and are interdependent. There are many highland pilgrimages in the nation associated with the Himalayas, Deccan plateau and the Western Ghats. Out of which “Sabarimala” is one of the most visited seasonal temples with over 25 millions of visitors every year. The temple which is in a forest area surrounded by a tiger reserve has a ritualistic association with a river Ghat the “Pamba”. Being associated to each other, both the places are connected by a forest path with a lot of animal crossing points and ecological interfaces. The temple precinct and the river valley have developed over these years to form clusters of institutionalized towns which work continuously for three months every year. Drastic changes in the ecological and physical structure of the place have been experienced over these years have brought the concern of reducing the manmade impact on the forest region that surrounds the temple and the river basin which has undergone dramatic deformations in the last decade. The project aims to give a certain design strategies that could manage the future population needs at the forest temple and the surrounding precincts without harming the environmental and ecological factors of the region.

Key Words: *Ecologically sensitive highland pilgrimage, Pilgrimage as a situation, Seasonal pilgrimages, Influx-people relation*