

HUNGRY STONES-The Sahyadris

HOW LUCKY WE ARE TO HAVE SAHYADRIS-
Delhi has only Babus

There are mountains almost all places in the world. And they are enjoyed in far greater numbers than we do in India or Maharashtra.

After football trekking is biggest sport in Europe/USA and money earner.

In the Alps there are monuments and history. HANNIBAL crossing the Alps with Elephants.

England: preserving hills and areas where Wordsworth wrote poetry or Shakespeare walked.

France will preserve every fort of Napoleon. They call it GREEN GOLD

Mach Pichhu on hills is ruins most visited in the world but well preserved.

These hills and forts are not just stones, they are HUNGRY STONES and they speak history,

Now a days they cry and decay for those who will listen.

The movements for protections of mountains is everywhere. The Alps are well looked after with large numbers of visitors. There are strict laws about environment and movements. There is no garbage and huts are clean and there are rescue facilities.

The Sahyadris and its forts are existing for Centuries almost on their own- no one has protected them, restored them and looked at its environment. Perhaps now time has come to take examples of the world and these hills must be allowed to regenerate.

As young student of Salher and Monuments at its foot listening to war stories.

Konkan Kada and the Brocken Spectre. British on horse. So this is not a sport for monkeys, bullocks or hardy types – this is sport of knowledge and to generate interest in many aspects.

FIRST WHAT NOT TO DO:

A. Garbage – Noise Pollution – Social culture – Thakre with 2 wives

B. No drinking – nature itself is a drink- British pubs and clinging of pitons will drive you out.

C. No writing on walls – those I love yous are washed away faster than your girl friends go away. Nane Ghat inscriptions over written which would have killed heart of many.

D. Toilets – biggest problem – even villages do not have it- so at present digging a hole and using water is the only solution on forts.

These pressures are on about 10 to 25% of forts only – difficult ones will look after itself- like Madangad. Theory of Tourist Drains in Nepal.

WHAT TO DO:

1. To take pride in them- educate about its history, society and importance. Can be done by Websites, books, booklets and talking to schools/colleges.
2. Local Involvement: Revenue model- Guides, provide food-shelter at small charge, local food shops, and teach them to take pride in their heritage.

3. Careful restoration: many ways of restorations are now available – from museum pieces to largest forts are restored the world over. The techniques is to involve experts – and ONLY experts to do the job.
4. Maps to spread knowledge.
5. Battle descriptions may in small iron plaques on the top, view to be explained. Audio visuals at foot village school. Knowledge of flora, fauna, saints and soldiers. THE STORY OF JAPANESE INN KEEPER SHOWING IT WITH GREAT PRIDE.
6. Tea House trek like in Nepal across valleys and passes. Maybe something built in forests like old forest rest house. Becoming popular in the Himalaya and new culture trails are new age in the higher ranges.
7. Sports like Orienteering, etriers – iron hand hold ladders like in World war I, and map reading skills can be developed.

CORPORATE SECTOR:

8. - You talk in Kilometres we walk in meters. But they are financially fit and could be involved to invest and look after the hills. Example of Shell- who do much environment protection world wide. They can help by:
 - A. Nothing on Forts to take away challenges, but many things at foot – stay, food, phone, toilets and generate local employment.
 - B. Organise and manage an Institute which will involve and train persons in al aspects of the Sahyadris - spread knowledge, not only rock climbing training but cultural training, historical training. Collect historical anecdotes, legends, items. In about a decade it will have a large fund of knowledge which will help future generations.

If we do these simple things then the Hungry Stones of the Sahyadris will speak again- loudly. They are waiting to tell stories to next generation. And we have the history. An American will proudly say that we have no history as ancient as India, but we have Nature !

So if the British could preserve hills and surrounding where Wordsworth wrote his poetry, there is no reason why we cannot protect the places where Swami Ramdas wrote his poems. If the French can preserve every fort of Napoleon, we can certainly preserve the forts where Shivaji Maharaj fought. I hope we can begin now.

With these few thoughts I will leave with these group friends of mountains !