

## Chapter XIX

### PLACES OF INTEREST

Apart from the places of interest and archaeological sites described here, an attempt has been made to highlight the picnic resorts from the tourist's angle. Their details have been provided in the latter part of this Chapter, and it explains a certain amount of unavoidable repetition here and there.

The towns of Ballabgarh, Faridabad Old and Faridabad Township described here as separate entities, were included in the Faridabad Complex on January 15, 1972. This complex was constituted to promote the planned development of the region, particularly on the industrial side. The complex which has been put under the charge of the Chief Administrator, comprises the areas earlier covered by the three municipalities of Ballabgarh, Faridabad Old and Faridabad Township, and 17 villages.<sup>1</sup> Under the new scheme of development, the areas from Ballabgarh to Badarpur between 35 to 16 kilometres from Delhi around Delhi-Mathura National Highway are proposed to be developed into a big industrial-cum-housing estate having a population of about 3.5 lakh by 1981 and Faridabad Township as its nucleus. The complex is being developed on the most modern lines and efforts are being made to make it a harmonious combination of living conditions as in New Delhi and Chandigarh. Nearly 20,000 residential plots and 1,000 industrial plots were sold by March 31, 1977 in various sectors where all the development facilities like water, roads, sewer, drainage, schools, colleges, etc., are being provided. More than one thousand houses have also been constructed by the Government. The Delhi-Mathura National Highway passing through the complex has been developed into 4 traffic lanes with a green central verge and made a picturesque, safe and most convenient approach to New Delhi and Delhi. The railway track is also being converted into four lanes and it is proposed to introduce electric local trains running between Palwal and Delhi.

#### BALLABGARH (TAHSIL BALLABGARH)

Ballabgarh is the headquarters of the tahsil of this name in the Gurgaon district. It has an altitude of 200 metres and lies on the Delhi-Mathura National Highway in 28° 20' 22" North Latitude and 77° 19' 37" East Longitude. The town is about 48 kilometres away from Gurgaon to the east and at a distance of

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1. For details, see Chapter on 'Local Government.'



about 35.4 kilometres from Delhi to the south. It is also a railway station on the Delhi-Mathura double-track broad-gauge line of the Central Railway. Its population according to the 1971 Census was 17,411.

Legend, however fanciful, has it that the town was founded by Ballhab Singh, the son of a poverty-stricken cultivator. His mother as usual carried a few pieces of dry bread and onions as a midday repast for her husband who was tilling a tiny patch. She put down the child whom she had also carried in her lap in the shade under a tree and took the food to her husband where he was working. When she returned, she found a black serpent hovering with its hood raised over the baby. As the men around rushed to kill the snake, a passing *sadhu* pleaded with them to desist, and prophesied the child would one day be a king. His words came true; Ballhab struck great fortune when two mules laden with gold *mohurs* strayed into the farm. This was the beginning of his rise. He and his successors ruled over 200 surrounding villages as fiefs of the Mughals for seven generations.

The fort in the town is said to have been built by Balram and possibly the name may be a corruption from Balramgarh.<sup>1</sup> The township outside the fort precincts was laid out by Raja Bahadur Singh of Ballabgarh.<sup>2</sup> It still bears the trace of his careful planning—quadrangular market-places, wells at cross-roads, and a large garden which he named Dilkusha. A *chhatri* and a pakka tank were constructed by the widow of Anrudh Singh, Raja of Ballabgarh till 1818, in the memory of her deceased husband. The fort, the tank and the *chhatri* are still there. The inner part of the fort now houses the police station and tahsil offices. The last of this dynasty was Nahar Singh, a martyr of the great Uprising of 1857. A monument and Nahar Singh Memorial Park have been raised by the municipal committee on the outskirts of the town to mark the centenary of the event.

The rapid industrial development along Faridabad has reached Ballabgarh. All along the national highway new factories have come up. An alloy steel plant (Globe Steels), Goodyear Tyres, Escorts' Rajdoot Scooters and Motor Cycles, Pearl Cycles, Auto-Motors, Kanodia and Vohra Oil Mills, a concern manufacturing concrete mixers and a chemical unit are among the important industries established in the vicinity of this town.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, 6 branches of commercial banks, Aggarwal College

1. According to another version, the fort was built by Maharaja of Bharatpur who took a fancy to the site when visiting a nearby village.

2. *Delhi District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p. 213.



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besides a higher secondary school, 3 high schools, 2 primary schools, a primary health centre, an artificial insemination centre, an E.S.I. dispensary, a veterinary hospital, a rest house (P.W.D.), a complex library and a cinema house.

## FARIDABAD OLD (TAHSIL BALLABGARH)

This town in the Ballabgarh tahsil having an altitude of 204 metres, is situated at about 25 kilometres from Delhi in 28° 25' 16" North Latitude, and 77° 18' 28" East Longitude. It has a railway station to the west of the town across Delhi-Mathura National Highway on the Delhi-Mathura double track broad-gauge line of the Central Railway.<sup>1</sup> Its population according to the 1971 Census was 19,644.

It is said to have been founded in A.D. 1607 by Shaikh Farid, treasurer of Jahangir, with the object of protecting the highway which passed through the town. Shaikh Farid built a fort, a tank and a mosque.<sup>2</sup> Later, it came to be the headquarters of a pargana which was held in jagir by the Ballabgarh ruler. It was confiscated by the Government as the ruler took part in the 1857 Uprising.

The places of public utility include a post office, a commercial bank, 2 high schools, one higher secondary school, 6 primary schools, a civil dispensary, a touring talkie and an E.S.I. dispensary.

## FARIDABAD TOWNSHIP

Situated on the Delhi-Mathura National Highway at a distance of about 29 kilometres from Delhi, the New Industrial Township, Faridabad has an altitude of 204 metres. It has a railway station on the Delhi-Mathura double-track broad-gauge line of the Central Railway, which is at a distance of about 4 kilometres from Faridabad railway station. Its population according to the 1971 Census was 85,762.

The site for the township was selected by the Government of India for rehabilitating the displaced persons migrating from the North Western Frontier Province and Dera Ghazi Khan district (now in Pakistan) consequent upon the Partition of India in 1947. To start with, the control of this township was vested in the Faridabad Development Board, which functioned under the authority of the Government of India through the Ministry of Rehabilitation. It was not

1. Under the present scheme relating to the development of Faridabad, the town of Faridabad Old falls in Sector 18, and its railway station in Sector 21.

2. The fort and the mosque are in ruins but the tank was renovated at some later date and a fair is held in April.



considered desirable that the Central Government should retain a permanent enclave within the territory of the State Government and so the township was handed over to the Punjab Government in 1957.

The township covers an area of about 18.13 square kilometres on the western side of the Delhi-Mathura National Highway from 27 to 32 kilometres from Delhi and 1.5 to 6.5 kilometres from the old town of Faridabad. It is divided into 5 residential units known as Neighbourhoods. These are located around a Central Green separate from the Industrial Area. Each Neighbourhood is about 0.65 square kilometre or 150—200 acres (60—80 hectares) and comprises 1200 to 1500 two-room houses except Neighbourhood No. IV which has been developed as a residential area by the Government of India for their own employees. This township cost the Government of India nearly Rs. 6.5 crore, out of which they have recovered about Rs. 5.5 crore as sale proceeds of the plots of land. The industrial zone, immediately to the south of the township, is separated from the residential zone by a transverse road bifurcating the township.

The township being essentially an industrial area, a railway siding has been laid down right through its entire length so as to be of service to all the industrial units established here. The original industrial area of this place was 240 acres (97 hectares), divided into plots of various sizes ranging from below 1 acre (0.4 hectare) to about 10 acres (4 hectares). The Government offered a number of facilities such as electric power, piped water-supply, etc., for setting up new industries. Because of its vicinity to Delhi and the numerous incentives given by the Government, the industries developed at such a rapid speed that Faridabad now occupies a significant place on the industrial map not only of the State but also of the country.

The industries employ various types of artisans and labourers. People migrate to this place because of the employment opportunities available here. The net migration from other areas to Faridabad has been 26,653 (Faridabad Township : 24,505 and Faridabad Old : 2,148) during the period 1961-69.<sup>1</sup> An employment exchange has been opened by the Government for the benefit of both the employers and the employees. A branch of the National Productivity Council functions here. Voluntary social service organisations like the Rotary Club and the Lions Club have also been chartered here. Just outside the township, opposite the approach road to Bata Shoe Company and on the western side of the Delhi-Mathura National Highway, there is a 3-star modern hotel

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1. *Trends in Population of Important Industrial Towns of Haryana*, 1970, p. 5. (Publication No. 59 of the Economic and Statistical Organisation, Haryana.)



(Holiday Inn)<sup>1</sup> which caters to the boarding and lodging needs of the industrialists and other visitors. Wayside catering facilities are also provided at the State-run Magpie Tourist Restaurant situated on the Delhi-Agra Road close to the Canal Rest House. The beautiful Badkhal Lake<sup>2</sup>, which lies close to the township in the north-west, is popular with picnickers and tourists.

To accelerate the development of the region, particularly the industrial part of it, Faridabad Complex was constituted on January 15, 1972, under the charge of a Chief Administrator. The complex comprises the areas earlier covered by the three municipal committees of Faridabad Old, Faridabad Township and Ballabgarh besides 17 villages namely, Lakharpur, Itmadpur, Anangpur (Aurangpur), Palla, Sarai Khawaja or Ghosipur, Wazirpur, Mevla Maharajpur, Fatehpur Chandila, Budina, Daultabad, Ajraunda, Saran, Kujesar, Ranhera, Unchagaon, Jharsainthli and Sihi.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, 27 branches of commercial banks, Government College, Daya Nand College for Women, 2 high schools and 2 higher secondary schools, 7 middle schools, 10 primary schools an industrial training institute, Badshah Khan Hospital, an E.S.I. Hospital, Sewa Samiti dispensary, a veterinary hospital, an artificial insemination centre, 3 rest houses (2 Canal and 1 P.W.D.) and 4 cinema houses.

#### FARRUKHNAGAR (TAHSIL GURGAON)

A town in the Gurgaon tahsil and having an altitude of 220 metres, it lies in 28° 27' 09" North Latitude and 76° 49' 30" East Longitude at a distance of about 21 kilometres from the tahsil/district headquarters to the north-west near the border of the Rohtak district. It is linked to Delhi-Rewari metre-gauge railway by a branch line of the Northern Railway. Its population according to the 1971 Census was 5,487.

The town, octagonal in shape,<sup>3</sup> was founded by a Baluch chief, Faujdar Khan, who was a Governor appointed by emperor Farrukhsiyar, after whom the place was presumably named. Faujdar Khan assumed the title of Nawab in A.D. 1738 and the Nawabs of Farrukhnagar played an important part in the history of the tract till its annexation by the British. This estate was confiscated in 1858 because the Nawab had participated in the 1857 Uprising. A monument has recently been raised here in the memory of martyrs.

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1. For more details about 'Holiday Inn', see Chapter on 'Communications'.
  2. For details about Badkhal Lake, see 'Tourist Resorts' described in this Chapter.
  3. The town was previously surrounded with a high wall which is now in ruins. The wall had four gates, but all except Delhi Gate have collapsed.



The old buildings in the town include Shish Mahal<sup>1</sup> and its attendant gateways built by Faujdar Khan in A.D. 1733, *baradari* of Nawab where the municipal committee is housed at present, a fine mosque known as Jami Masjid and a large octagonal *baoli* (well) with stone staircases made during the Jat occupancy.

The tourist attraction is Jami Masjid built of Agra red stone, which was constructed by Faujdar Khan.<sup>2</sup> It is ornamented with a commemorative marble tablet. Besides, two slabs of red sand stone are affixed in the southern wall of courtyard. These slabs are inscribed with Arabic legends which date back to the reign of Ghiyas-ud-din Balban, Sultan of Delhi. The slabs are stated to have been brought from an ancient mosque in Sultanpur about 5 kilometres away in the direction of Delhi.

There is also a shrine of Budho Mata situated at Mubarakpur, a village about 5 kilometres from Farrukhnagar. It is a well frequented shrine and a fair is held every Wednesday.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, a commercial bank, a high school, a middle school, a primary school, a primary health centre (Red Cross) and a veterinary hospital.

#### FIROZPUR JHIRKA (TAHSIL FIROZPUR JHIRKA)

Firozpur Jhirka, the headquarters of the tahsil of the same name and having an altitude of 205 metres, is situated on the main road from Gurgaon to Alwar, about 82 kilometres south of Gurgaon. It lies in 27° 47' 40" North Latitude and 76° 56' 34" East Longitude. Its population according to the 1971 Census was 7,962.

The town is said to have been founded by Firuz Shah Tughluq as a military post for putting down neighbouring turbulent tribes. The remains of the old town named Dhand still exist to the north of the present site where there are many tombs and shrines in ruins. The old part of the town is rectangular in shape and surrounded with a high wall which is now in ruins. This place is called Jhirka because of a Jhir, a spung, from a perennial stream which issues from a number of fissures in the rocks nearby. The spring is about

1. Shish Mahal ceased to be of 'national importance' from January 1, 1968, but has since then been deemed to be 'protected monument' under the Punjab Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1964.

2. R.B.Whitehead, *An Inscription of the Reign of Ghiyas-ud-din Balban*. (*Journal of the Punjab Historical Society*, Volume IV, Part II.)



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4 kilometres from the town on the western side and is connected with a metal-led road. This picturesque gorge has been described by Babar in his memoirs as a beautiful spot.<sup>1</sup> Fairs are held twice a year in the month of August and November.

The legend also links the place with the sojourn of Pandavas during their exile.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, 2 branches of commercial banks, 3 high schools, 3 primary schools, a Government general hospital, a maternity and child welfare centre (Red Cross), a veterinary dispensary, rest house (P.W.D.) and a municipal library.

## GURGAON (TAHSIL GURGAON)

The headquarters of the district of the same name, Gurgaon town, having an altitude of 229 metres, lies at a distance of 32 kilometres from Delhi on the Delhi Bikaner railway in 28° 28' 0" North Latitude and 77° 01' 43" East Longitude. It is a railway station (5.6 kilometres from the town) on the Delhi-Rewari double-track metre-gauge line of the Northern Railway. The population of the town was 57,151 persons according to the 1971 Census:

The town was first occupied by cavalry unit posted to watch the army of Begum Samru of Sirdhana, whose principal cantonment was at the village of Jharsa, 1.5 kilometres to the south-east of the town. The civil offices were removed from Bharawas (tahsil Rewari) in 1821, when the British frontier was advanced by the acquisition of the Ajmer territory.<sup>2</sup>

The principal buildings of interest include Cawn Sarai, Nehru Stadium and Kamla Nehru Park. Cawn Sarai was constructed in 1925 and various offices and a private printing press are at present housed in it. A portion of it is used for residential purposes. Nehru Stadium was constructed in 1955 by public contributions to provide facilities for sports. Kamla Nehru Park was constructed by public contributions in 1957. An open air theatre and a swimming pool have also been provided in this park.

About 1.5 kilometres away from the Gurgaon town is a village by the same

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1. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, p. 250.

2. *Ibid*, p. 245.



name which is known far and wide for its temple of Sitla Mata where a fair is held every Monday and Tuesday.<sup>1</sup>

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, 16 branches of commercial banks, Government College, Dronacharya Sanatan Dharma College, 2 higher secondary schools, 9 high schools, 3 middle schools, 9 primary schools, an industrial training institute, an industrial school for girls, a Government general hospital, a police hospital, a T.B. clinic, a school health clinic, an E.S.I. dispensary, a veterinary hospital, a surra centre, 3 rest houses (one each of P.W.D., Zila Parishad and Sainik Board), 3 cinema houses and 3 libraries. Shama, a State-run restaurant, has been located on the national highway near the old district courts.<sup>2</sup>

#### HODAL (TAHSIL PALWAL)

Hodal, a small town on the Delhi-Mathura National Highway, has an altitude of 190 metres and lies at a distance of about 87 kilometres from Delhi and 72 kilometres to the south-east of Gurgaon in 28° 53' 15" North Latitude and 77° 21' 52" East Longitude. It is also a railway station on the Delhi-Mathura double-track broad-gauge line of the Central Railway. Its population according to the 1971 Census was 14,144.

The oldest part of the town is on the hill formed by the debris of a still older habitation.<sup>3</sup> Suraj Mal of Bharatpur was connected by marriage with the Jats of Hodal. During his time many magnificent buildings were erected : a fine old serai, a *baoli* and a masonry tank; but all these are now in ruins. Mention may, however, be made of a tank and a copse called Pando Ban with the shrine of Radha Krishna, situated at about a kilometre from the town. The tank and the temple are held in high esteem by the Hindus.

The places of public utility include a police post, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, 3 branches of commercial banks, Braj Mandal College, a higher secondary school, a high school, 4 primary schools, a civil dispensary, a maternity and child welfare centre (Red Cross), a veterinary hospital, a surra centre, a regional artificial insemination centre, a rest house (P.W.D.) and a library/reading room.

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1. For more details, see Chapter on 'People'.

2. For details, see 'Tourist Resorts' described in this Chapter.

3. Legend runs that Odes, a gypsy clan, shifted here from Western India and they formed the military force of Brahmans, the priests of Pando Ban, to whom this was given as jagir. Fearing that Odes may not overpower them, the Jats were invited by Brahmans. The Jats held sway over the area where they were confirmed by the later Mughals.



Dabchick Tourist Complex on the Delhi-Agra National Highway offers ideal way-side tourist facilities.<sup>1</sup>

#### NUH (TAHSIL NUH)

Nuh, the headquarters of the tahsil of the same name and having an altitude of 190 metres, is situated about 45 kilometres south of Gurgaon on Delhi-Alwar Road. It lies in 28° 06' 19" North Latitude and 77° 00' 09" East Longitude. Its population was 4,730 persons according to the 1971 Census.

The town assumed importance in the time of Bahadur Singh of Ghasera because of the trade in salt which was manufactured in the neighbouring villages.

To the west of the town is a fine masonry tank of red sandstone with a *chhatra* possibly connected with the name of Chuhi Mal, adorned with beautiful floral designs. The tomb of Sheikh Musa, an example of the combination of Muslim and Rajput architecture, is at a distance of about two kilometres and a half from the town. It is famous for its shaking minarets. The shaking of the minarets can be distinctly felt. The beauty lies in the fact that if one minaret is shaken, the other automatically gets shaken.

There are two monuments in village Kotla<sup>2</sup> about 6.5 kilometres south of Nuh. These are "the mosque and the tomb of Bahadur Khan Nahir. In these buildings, red sandstone and grey quartzite are skilfully combined in a very effective and well-built structure. Over the ruined gateway is an inscription giving the date of its building as A.D. 1392—1400. The group is raised on a high platform and is very strikingly situated in a hollow of the hills which at this point are crowned by the ruins of an ancient fortress."<sup>3</sup>

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, 2 branches of commercial banks, Yasin Meo Degree College, 2 high schools, a middle school, 3 primary schools, a Government general hospital, a veterinary hospital, a regional artificial insemination centre, a rest house (P.W.D.) and a library/reading room.

#### PALWAL (TAHSIL PALWAL)

The headquarters of the tahsil of the same name and having an altitude of 195 metres, Palwal is situated on the Delhi-Mathura National Highway about

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1. For details, see 'Tourist Resorts' described in this Chapter.

2. Babar in his memoirs made a mention of this village and a lake nearby. (Gurgaon District Gazetteer, 1910, p. 28.)

3. Ibid.



61 kilometres from Delhi. It lies in 28° 08' 26" North Latitude and 77° 19' 33" East Longitude. It is also a railway station on the Delhi-Mathura double-track broad-gauge line of the Central Railway. Its population was 36,207 persons according to the 1971 Census as against 27,863 persons in 1961 and 13,915 in 1951.

The origin of the town is lost in legend and it is identified with the Apelava of the Mahabharata, a part of the Pandava kingdom of Indraprastha.<sup>1</sup> Tradition associates with the same period the high mound of Aharwan, a village, a few kilometres to the south-west of the town. According to tradition, the town is said to have decayed for long and then been restored by Vikramaditya. The oldest part covers a high mound formed by the accumulated debris of many centuries. At the downfall of the Mughal empire, along with the surrounding territory, it was given to General Due Boigne as a jagir and after the conquest of Lord Lake to Murtaza Khan of Delhi for a few years, after which it was annexed by the British.

The places of interest are: Panchayati Temple (situated on the south of Palwal town, it is associated with the Pandavas in popular belief); an old fort which was constructed during the Mughal period, now in ruins; Jama Masjid, which appears to date back to A.D. 1210; Idgah of Shihab-ud-Din, built about A.D. 1211, presently in ruins and occupied by Jawahar Gaushala; and Tomb of Roshan Chiragh, which dates back to A.D. 1661, and was constructed by the saint, Roshan Chiragh, who levied a tax of one stone from every cartload that passed from Bharatpur to Delhi for building Shah Jahan's palace and with these the tomb was constructed.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, 6 branches of commercial banks, Sanatan Dharma College, an industrial training institute, an industrial school for girls, 3 higher secondary schools, 2 high schools, 12 primary schools, a Government general hospital, Christian general hospital, a maternity and child welfare centre (Red Cross), a veterinary hospital, a surra centre, a regional artificial insemination centre, a rest house (P.W.D.), a cinema and a municipal library/reading room.

#### PATAUDI (TAHSIL GURGAON)

Pataudi, the headquarters of the sub-tahsil of the same name and having an altitude of 280 metres, lies at about a distance of 29 kilometres from Gurgaon, and in 28° 19' 29" North Latitude and 76° 46' 36" East Longitude. It is also a railway station on the Delhi Rewari double-track metre-gauge line of the

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1. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, p. 248.



Northern Railway. Its population according to the 1971 Census was 6,045 persons.

The town was founded in the reign of Jalal-ud-Din Khalji by a Mewati Chieftain, Pata, who named it Patodhi, which seems to have been corrupted to Pataudi. During Aurangzeb's reign, it was made a pargana and was attached to Rewari. But in 1803, it was granted as jagir to Faiz Talab Khan.

The palace of the Nawab built in 1934 is a remarkable building in the town. It has a cricket ground in its premises.

There is a famous temple of Mahadeva at Inchapuri, about 8 kilometres from the town. A fair is held here during November. Ashram Hari Mandir Sanskrit Vidyalaya is worth paying a visit.<sup>1</sup>

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, 2 branches of commercial banks, Kamla Nehru College (at Jatauli, about a kilometre from the railway station), a higher secondary school, a high school, 3 primary schools, a primary health centre and a veterinary hospital.

#### SOHNA (TAHSIL GURGAON)

This town, in the Gurgaon tahsil and having an altitude of 230 metres, is situated on the highway from Gurgaon to Alwar, 24 kilometres from Gurgaon and 56 kilometres from Delhi. It lies in 28° 14' 51" North Latitude and 77° 05' East Longitude. Its population according to the 1971 Census was 8,775 persons.

Sohna is a corrupted form of Sona meaning gold. The town is said to have derived its name from the gold dust which was found after heavy rains in the beds of the neighbouring torrents.<sup>2</sup>

The town is of great antiquity and has been occupied in succession by three different races, viz. the Kambhos, the Khanzadas and the Rajputs, traces of whom still exist in the extensive ruins by which the town is surrounded. Tradition attributes the expulsion of Kambhos to the Nawab Kutab Khan Khanzada who came with a large army from Indor near Nuh and slaughtered the Kambhos in about A.D. 1570. The Khanzadas built a town further to the

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1. It is one of the biggest Sanskrit educational institutions in Haryana where students are provided with free board and lodging.

2. In *Ain-e-Akbari*, the Mughal Emperor, Akbar, is also reported to have mentioned that gold was found to be deep down there and had to be dug out by crude mechanical means. But it was later given up by the people for it was too laborious and expensive.



east but were expelled in A.D. 1620 by the Sisodia (Raghubansi) Rajputs of Jalandhar (Jullundur). These Rajputs are stated to have migrated in obedience to a warning voice of their patron saint, who according to a tradition, appeared in a dream and indicated Sohna as the place where he wished them to settle. They first settled at Punchgarh, but after a great victory over the Khanzadas, their Raja, Sawan Singh, founded the present town.<sup>1</sup>

The town is specially remarkable for its hot springs.<sup>2</sup> In ancient times, it was a place of the *rishis* and the main *kund* (tank) was called Shiv Kund. During the Mughal period, Akbar, on his visit to this place had praised the place as one of the best in the suburbs of Delhi. Famed for medicinal properties, these sulphur springs were visited by foreign tourists during the British period. Now the State Government has developed this place into a tourist and pilgrim centre.<sup>3</sup>

The places of antiquarian or archeological interest in the town are : The Khamba, lately known as Gora Barak along with a mosque attached to it, is believed to date back to A.D. 1301; the Dargah of Nazzam-ul-Haqq, with a picturesque tomb and a mosque made of red and buff sandstone bearing the date A.D. 1461, and Quto Khan-ki-Masjid, built of variegated local stone with redstone, now in ruins.

Besides, mention may be made of the dome over the famous hot springs in the centre of the town, said to be of great antiquity; tombs locally known as Lal and Kala Gumbaz lying to the west of the town, and extensive ruins of the Kamboh settlement. The fort on the top of the rock in the south-west of the town was constructed by the Jats of Bharatpur. It was unfinished when the British occupied it. The ruins of the fort are still seen at the brow of the hill overhanging towards the town.

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1. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, p. 246.

2. The story about discovery of spring runs that in c.A.D. 1647, "a faqir named Rakishu, who dwelt on a rocky plain at the base of the hills, hollowed out a small basin to hold water. One day a Banjara trader, Chattar Bhoj, arrived with 1,00,000 laden bullocks weary and thirsty, besought the faqir to give his cattle drink, and promised him a great reward in return. The faqir bade him drink and by the blessing of God men and beast would be satisfied. The 1,00,000 cattle drank, and the water did not fail until the thirst of all had been quenched. Chattar Bhoj sold his merchandise, and presented the whole profit of the expedition to the faqir, who determined to devote the money to the construction of an enormous tank; but no sooner had the first piece of rock been removed than hot water began to well up and has flowed without intermission ever since".

(*Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, p. 247.)

3. More details in this behalf are given in this Chapter under "Tourist Resorts".



There is also a fine mosque at Bhondsi, 12 kilometres north of Sohna, which is said to have been built by the Khanzadas of Mewat.

The places of public utility include a police station, a post and telegraph office, a telephone exchange, 2 branches of commercial banks, a rural artisans training centre, Sant Nirankari Lokpriya College, 2 high schools, 3 primary schools, a civil dispensary, a veterinary hospital, 2 rest houses (canal and Panchayat Samiti) and a library/reading room.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

A number of Painted Grey Ware sites have been found spread over the Gurgaon district. This can be attributed to the nearness of this area to Indraprastha (Delhi), Hastinapur and Mathura. A research scholar from Kurukshetra University has identified 161 such sites ranging in date from proto-historic (late Harappan) to late medieval time<sup>1</sup>. A brief account of some of the more important sites is given below.

##### *Tahsil Gurgaon*

**Dhankot.**— It lies 11 km west of Gurgaon on Gurgaon-Farrukhnagar Road. Tradition has it that milk was supplied from this place to Guru Dronacharya and his pupils at Gurugram (Gurgaon). It is also identified as Thullkottihā (of the Buddhist literature) and was visited by Lord Buddha. The site has yielded Painted Grey Ware and other early historic pottery. The burnt bricks found at the site measure 36.83 x 21.59 x 6.35 cm. Besides, beads of terracotta and bangles of shell, faience and glass were also recovered from the site.

**Saiyad.**— It lies 3 km west of Gurgaon on Gurgaon-Dharampur Road. Traditionally, the site is believed to be the residential place of Guru Dronacharya and his pupils. The site has yielded Painted Grey Ware and late medieval remains. Besides, pieces of faience and two copper objects have also been recovered from the site.

##### *Tahsil Nuh*

**Ata.**— It is situated 5 km east of Sohna on Sohna-Hathin Road. The archaeological fields located at the site show that it probably had been an important centre of art and architecture in the time of Gurjara-Pratiharas. Two beautiful icons—one representing Uma Maheshvara seated on Nandi of early medieval period and the other representing Adinath (the first Jain

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1. Dharam Pal Singh Punia, *Archaeology of Mahendragarh and Gurgaon Districts Haryana*, Ph. D. Thesis MSS, 1976, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.



Tirthankar) of medieval period—have been found at the site. It has also yielded early historic pottery and late medieval remains.

**Hathin.**— It is located 16 km west-south of Palwal on Palwal-Hathin Road. According to local tradition, the site was founded by a king in the heart of a jungle. A number of elephants used to graze in this jungle. Later on the place was named as Hastin (elephant) and its corrupt form became Hathin. This tradition seems to be borne out by the discovery of a skeleton of an elephant during excavations at Autha, 15 km south-west of Hathin. There are many mutilated art pieces near the site, but the most important and interesting piece is the railing pillar of Sunga period which is fixed in the wall of a tank and is worshipped as Khera Devta. The site has also yielded Painted Grey Ware, early and later historic pottery.

**Malab.**— Situated 5 km south of Nuh on Gurgaon-Alwar Road, the village contains one of the highest mounds in the region. A coin of Kanishka, some coins of late Kushanas and a number of coins of Muslim rulers have been found at the site. The other finds include terracotta beads, balls, shell beads and pieces of faience and glass bangles. The site has also yielded Painted Grey Ware, early historic wares and late medieval remains.

**Sanghel.**— It is situated 13 km east-south of Nuh on Nuh-Hodal Road. It is also one of the highest mounds in the district. It has yielded Painted Grey Ware, early historic wares and late medieval remains. However, the most important finds from the site are the remains of art which include stone sculptures of Mahishasuramardini, a female attendant, lower portion of a sculpture of Kushana period, two female attendants of Gupta period, an image of Ardhnarishvara of medieval period and two terracotta male heads of Kushana period.

**Ujina.**— It lies 10 km east of Nuh on Nuh-Hodal Road. The village is known for its lake. The mound has yielded Painted Grey Ware and early historic wares. The other finds recovered from the site include pieces of faience bangles, terracotta beads and glass bangles. The stone sculptures located at the site represent Varaha and Nrsimha (incarnations of Vishnu) of medieval period, and Lakshmi of late medieval period.

#### *Tahsil Firozpur Jhirka*

**Autha.**— It lies 6 km east of village Pinangwan on Nagina-Hodel Road. At the time of Buddha, it might have been called Autla' from which the present name of the village Autha might have been derived. Probably

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1. Upadhyaya, B. S. *Buddhakalina Bharatiya Bhugola* (Prayag, Samvat 2018), p. 424.



Lord Buddha visited the site while he was going from Mathura to Sravasti via Veranja.<sup>1</sup>

An excavation at the site<sup>2</sup> was undertaken by K. M. Srivastava to determine the age of skeleton of an elephant found here. On the basis of stratification, the elephant skeleton has been roughly placed in the last stages of the Northern Black Polished Ware period, i. e. *circa* second century B.C.

The earliest occupations were represented by the Painted Grey Ware. Iron, mostly in lumps, was found to be associated with this Ware at all stages. Glass objects, terracotta wheels and animal figurines, stone pestles and bulls comprised the other important finds of the period.

**Bhadas.**— It is located 19 km north of Firozpur Jhirka on Gurgaon-Alwar Road. The Bhadanakas who fought against Chahamanas (Chauhans) rulers, belonged to this place. It has yielded Painted Grey Ware, early historic wares and late medieval remains. The other finds include terracotta balls, beads and glass bangles. Besides, a stone railing pillar of Sunga period has also been located at the site.

**Havananagar.**— It lies 6 km east of Nagina on Nagina-Hodal Road. Tradition has it that the Pandavas performed *yajna* on the site during their exile. Therefore, the site was called after the *yajna* as Havananagar. It has yielded Painted Grey Ware, early historic pottery and some late medieval remains. Other finds include terracotta balls and beads and glass bangles. The burnt bricks found at the site measure 34.29 x 20.32 x 6.35 cm.

#### *Tahsil Palwal*

**Ahranva.**— It lies 7 km south-west of Palwal. It has yielded Painted Grey Ware, early historic pottery and late medieval remains. The other finds recovered from the site include beads, balls, decorated discs and figurines of Yaksha Vamanakas of Kushana period, figurines of elephant belonging to Gupta period and a seal in terracotta, bangles of copper, faience and glass and copper coins of Hagamasa, Sodasa, Brahnamitra, Kota and later Kushanas.

**Sondh.**— It lies 4 km south of Hodal on Nuh-Hodal Road. According to local tradition, the village was founded during the Mahabharata period.

1. Ibid, pp. 425-26.

2. *Indian Archaeological Review*, 1964-65, pp. 33-4.



In addition to Painted Grey Ware, the site has yielded a number of art pieces in stone, viz. image of Vishnu of Kushana period, a bust of female attendant and head of a figure of Gupta period, Vishnu with Ayudhapurusas and Vidyadharayugala of early medieval period. A terracotta female figurine of Gupta period has also been recovered.

*Tahsil Ballabgarh*

**Chhayasa.**— It lies 20 km south of Ballabgarh on Ballabgarh-Mahana Road and is situated on the right bank of Yamuna. According to local tradition, the site is connected with Pandavas. It is also said that Sravan Kumar with his parents stayed here while he was coming from Mathura. The site has yielded Painted Grey Ware, early historic pottery and late medieval remains.

**Tilpat or Tilaprastha.**— It lies 5 km east of Faridabad on Faridabad Tilpat Road. It was one of the five territories which were demanded by the Pandavas and the denial of which by their cousin Duryodhana led to the Great Mahabharata War. The place has yielded Painted Grey Ware and early historic pottery.

**Sihigram.**—This village lies at a distance of about 37 km from Delhi on Delhi-Mathura Highway. It has been included in Faridabad Complex since January 15, 1972.

Here is a temple situated on a mound, which according to the popular belief, marks the birth place of Sur Dass,<sup>1</sup> a great devotee of Lord Krishna, and a well-known poet of Bhakti movement of the medieval period.

Some sherds of the Painted Gray Ware have been discovered on a mound nearby.<sup>2</sup>

**TOURIST RESORTS**

The keen interest of the Haryana Government in providing amenities for tourists has opened new vistas in the district for week-enders and holiday-

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1. Legend has it that blinded by wordly love, Bilvamangal took hectic efforts to reach the house of his beloved. It was night. Swimming across a river that was in spate, and by clambering unto a python hanging down from the bough of a tree, he reached the chamber of his lady-love. Pointing out to him what an enormous risk he had taken to reach her, she said, "Instead of being so frantic after me, had you directed this kind of madness towards God, how blessed would you have been". Disillusionment at once set in his mind. In an act of self-mortification, he blinded himself. The mortal Bilvamangal became the immortal Sur Das.

2. *Indian Archaeology, 1969-70, A Review*, p. 59.



makers particularly from Delhi. The tourist complexes at Suraj Kund, Faridabad (Badkhal and Magpie), Hodal (Dabchick), Gurgaon (Shama), Sultanpur and Sohna, make ideal picnic and holiday spots. These also attract the foreign and domestic tourists who motor through the district en route to the three major tourist centres of India, viz. Delhi, Agra and Jaipur, popularly known as the Golden Triangle of Indian tourism.

**Suraj Kund Tourist Complex.**—Close to Tughlakabad and almost in Delhi itself, it is set amidst picturesque surroundings about 20 kilometres south of Delhi. A water tank, resembling a Roman amphitheatre, Suraj Kund is believed to have been constructed by the Tomara king, Surajpal, whose existence is based on bardic tradition.<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly the most remarkable Hindu monument, it dates back to the pre-Islamic period (10th century A.D.), of temples and sun worship much before the mosques and tombs of Delhi were built.

The shape of Suraj Kund resembles the rising sun, curving eastward. It consists of a semi-circular stepped stone embankment to impound rain water from the hills. Its bed is about 130 metres in diameter. Though in ruins, the original grandeur of this vast reservoir where royal hunting parties rested, can be very well imagined. The dancing peacocks on the bank of the Kund and in the forest-like surroundings provide a fascinating sight. The area is dotted with rocks suitable for hiking. It is believed that a sun temple existed here. Some ruins are still in evidence. Almost touching it is a fresh water pool called Peacock Lake surrounded by hillocks. In the nearby Anangpal village is a dam whose construction is ascribed to Anangpal. Here, quartzite stone is placed across the mouth of a narrow ravine to catch rain water. The neighbouring hills are dotted with the ruins of several fortifications, which lend credence to the belief that a town founded by Anangpal once existed here.

Haryana Tourism has provided a number of tourist facilities at this monumental holiday resort.

Commissioned in 1975, a modern and luxuriously furnished motel holds a star attraction for tourists. It has 13 air-conditioned rooms, fitted with four-channel piped-in-music. The view of the pool and the Peacock Lake from the bedrooms and the terrace affords a spectacular sight of the vast expanse of water.

The motel has a large sitting room with a library which specialises in books on Indian art, culture, folk music, etc. A well-furnished conference room with a seating capacity for 30 persons provides the necessary conference facilities

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1. The Tomaras originally settled in Aravalli Hills, south of Delhi, and are then believed to have moved to the Suraj Kund area.



to the tourists who want to combine business with pleasure. The Sun-bird restaurant offers catering service.

A small putting-green approach-green and a hole golf course is there for golf enthusiasts. Putters and the services of a golf-expert are provided at Surajkund.

Rowing in the quiet Peacock Lake with slender eucalyptus trees lining its shores and the plants trailing their leaves in the still green water is a great delight. Angling facility is also available.

Lush green exclusive lawns for picnickers and camping tents are there for the tourists. Camping huts with bath room facilities for budget tourists are also available.<sup>1</sup>

One can also trek from here to Badkhal Lake through a 6-kilometre inner forest road.

**Badkhal Lake Tourist Complex, Faridabad.**—Nestling amidst rocks to the west of Faridabad Old and north-west of Faridabad Township, Badkhal Lake is about 31 kilometres from Delhi and 3.5 kilometres away from Delhi-Agra National Highway to the right near Faridabad. Conceived as an irrigation project in 1947, it was also to serve as a counter-measure for floods and soil erosion. Flood water was tamed by joining toes of the two hillocks and by constructing a bund, 644.5 metres long and 6 metres wide. Later in 1958, fish farming was also started. Thus a beautiful lake was created in one side of the bund while the rock remnants of Aravalli Range on the other side presented a lovely back drop. After the Haryana State was formed in 1966, the Government decided to turn this artificial lake into a picnic-cum-holiday resort. A Master Plan was accordingly formulated in 1967.

The lake is named after the nearby Badkhal village. The name Badkhal is possibly derived from Persian word '*be dakh*' which is suggestive of a place free from any interference. And rightly so, Badkhal Lake has the reputation as an away-from-it-all tourist spot.

All tourist facilities are spread across the rocks and ridges surrounding the lake. Standing majestically amidst natural landscape, expansive lush green lawns,

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1. A new motel named 'Rajhans' is being constructed to cater to the rush in tourist traffic at Delhi during ASIAD' 82. In the first phase of construction, about 70 rooms are proposed to be built. Along with the facilities already available, a swimming pool, a bar, a shopping arcade and a golfers' club will be added to this resort.



terrace gardens, mounds, flowering trees and shrubs that lend a beautiful treatment to the surroundings, it is Haryana's prestigious 'rendezvous par excellence'.

The tourist complex offers a choice of two restaurants 'Mayur' and 'Grey Falcon'—both centrally air-conditioned and having bar facilities, each specialising in a different cuisine. The Grey Falcon is equipped with a stereo sound system, latest in sound technology.

A 13-suite motel here provides excellent well-furnished and air-conditioned accommodation.<sup>1</sup> It has also a conference room for 25 people with portable conference system. Exclusive accommodation is available in two tourist huts called Minivet. Each has two air-conditioned bedrooms, a living and dining room and balcony, a refrigerator and TV. A well equipped kitchen where tourists can cook their own meals, a garage and a room for a personal attendant are attached with each hut.

There is an exclusive swimming pool with a pool cafe; massage facilities and a choice of steam and sauna baths.

The complex has its own shopping arcade where a quick snack is provided on an easy budget. There are campers huts for budget tourists.

The lake is ideal for anglers and rowing enthusiasts. Rods, bait and lines are available at a nominal fee. Fishing permits are given on the spot and also rowing boats, pedal boats and *shikaras* for yachting.

The ridges of the Aravallis and the lake embankment serve as an impressive promenade where tourists flock. One can go hiking on the ridges and even trek from Badkhal Lake to Surajkund through a 6-kilometre inner forest road. Children have paradisaal surroundings near the playgrounds specially made for them.

The lake is equally popular with bird-watchers for a variety of beautiful birds migrating from Siberia flock here. On a quiet day at the lake, bird-watchers have been known to come across rare species.

Badkhal Lake has been attracting many a film producers for shooting of films against its beautiful and scenic locale.

In order to bring the place within the reach of the common man, special bus services have been introduced by the Haryana Roadways between Delhi and Badkhal Lake. For the affluent, the tourist luxury cars are available, at

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1. In 1981, an eight-room motel called 'Garud' has been constructed.



a very short notice, from the Tourist Bureau of the Haryana Government at New Delhi and Badkhal Lake.

**Magpie Tourist Complex, Faridabad.**—Located 30 kilometres from Delhi on the Delhi-Agra National Highway, in the midst of the industrial nerve centre of Haryana, it is a conspicuous red building with extensive and well maintained green lawns.

A very convenient motel here offers excellent stopover facilities for tourists passing by and also for those desiring a night halt while on business to Faridabad Complex. It has four well-furnished and air-conditioned suites, two single and two double-bed. On the first floor of this building, the P.W.D. has three rooms to be used as rest house and close by is the Canal Rest House. Large group bookings can be done by interested parties by contacting the authorities concerned.

The Magpie restaurant serves a choice of Indian and Western cuisine. It is an obvious choice for a garden party or a social gathering.

**Dabchick Tourist Complex, Hodal.**—Dabchick Tourist Complex at Hodal is situated 92 kilometres away from Delhi and about half way to Agra, on the Delhi-Agra National Highway.

Commissioned in December 1974, it now enjoys great popularity with both domestic and foreign tourists. Located on the main road, close to Hodal village, it has filled a vital gap in facilities offered to tourists on the golden triangle of Indian tourism.

This complex consists of residential accommodation in the form of huts, camping huts, a restaurant and a canteen. There are three one-room huts, built on stilts, each room opening out on to a balcony overlooking the landscape dotted with a variety of trees and flowers.<sup>1</sup>

A unique feature of this complex is that the restaurant here is built on stilts. Both Indian and continental cuisine is served.

Camping huts with bath room facilities are available for budget tourists.

The architectural beauty of this complex has blended with surroundings to produce an effect of pure aesthetic joy to the tourists.

**Shama Tourist Complex, Gurgaon.**—Named after the Indian popular bird, the Shama Tourist Complex at Gurgaon is located in the heart of the town.

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1. 'Dream Castle' with six rooms is the new addition made in 1981.



Only 31 kilometres away from Delhi on the Delhi-Dharuhera-Jaipur National Highway, it has become a favourite motoring stop over en route Jaipur.

A former rest house of the Zila Parishad on a spacious plot of land, it was converted into a tourist complex by completely renovating and expanding the old structures. The new structures are a cluster of square planks joined together to form sculpturesque pyramidal dome. It was commissioned in November 1973. The complex has three double-bedrooms and a restaurant.

Initially it offered only restaurant facilities. Accommodation facilities for an overnight stay were provided in 1974-75.<sup>1</sup> The accommodation and restaurant facilities provided here are perhaps the cheapest of their kind in the region. The tourist can also conveniently stop a while for quick hot and cold drinks and snacks.

**Sultanpur Lake Bird Sanctuary.**—Ten kilometres from Gurgaon and 42 kilometres from Delhi, the place is a haven for bird lovers. It is a find of Peter Jackson, the world famous authority on bird watching. Till then only a large sheet of shallow water, the sanctuary at Sultanpur Lake was formerly opened as a tourist resort on February 6, 1972. To this lonely and lovely retreat, flock the migrant birds from Europe and Siberia. These birds come here with the onset of winter and return when their colder homes have warmed up. One can see an abundance of birds, more than a 100 different species in a day, in most natural surrounding at really close quarters, at the sprawling 44.5-hectare Sultanpur Lake Bird Sanctuary.

On the north-western bank of the lake, right at the water's edge, stands by the road a commodious building, overlooking the lake and commanding a full view of the extensive magnificent landscape, which houses a tourist bungalow with two well-furnished and air-conditioned suites. For outdoor lovers, there are camping huts in the wide open spaces. Camping equipment like beds, chairs, central tables, lights, stoves, etc., are available at site on hire at reasonable rates.

Across the road, made of Haryana slate tiles, is the Rosy Pelican restaurant, having excellent cuisine.

To facilitate bird watching, there are observation hides and a watch tower. Binoculars too are available to watch the not too close birds.

There is an exclusive well stocked library to browse through bird books and also a bird museum with some rare stuffed birds to identify birds and impart knowledge.

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1. A four-room motel has been constructed in 1981.



November to March is an ideal season for a visit to view migratory birds.

**Sohna Sulphur Springs and Tourist Complex.**—The tiny town with a pretty name, Sohnā<sup>1</sup> is credited with sulphur springs. Believed to be in existence since c. A.D. 1647, these were discovered in 1872 by the British who, realising their medicinal importance, developed the tank. This is situated in the heart of the town by the side of a perpendicular rock and is approachable only on foot through small narrow lanes where vehicles cannot pass. The water is strongly sulphurate and its temperature varies from 46° C to 51.7°C. The present site of the main *kund* (tank), called Shiv Kund, is believed to have been the ancient abode of hermits.<sup>2</sup> The spring covered by a domed construction, delivers its water into a large cistern. The hot water is believed to have curative effect on skin infections and diseases like gout and rheumatism. For convenience of the visiting public, the springs have been channelled into concrete pools where thousands come to bathe. Hindus consider the tank sacred and come for a dip in its water on solar/lunar eclipse and Somavati Amavasya (moonless night falling on Monday).

The State Government decided to turn this pilgrimage centre into a health resort and tourist centre. The newly-built tourist complex was formally inaugurated on March 21, 1973. A little further from Sohnā starts a hilly tract and one reaches a plateau overlooking the town after ascending a zig zag road. Here once stood an old fort, remains of which are still in evidence. On this elevated ridge has come up a 'Spa' complex. Indigenous black slate for the structures harmoniously blends with the hilly terrain as a backdrop.

The complex is studded with an extravagance of colourful flowers, trees and shrubs. Its vast landscape with peacocks strutting about grips one with all its beauty and splendour. Sohnā by night becomes wonderland of lights, simply bewitching.

To provide hygienic bathing facilities, hot sulphur water is pumped up from the springs below to the bath complex through insulated pipes. The highly compact structure of the Spa has a sauna, sulphur baths, steam baths and a small swimming pool.

A restaurant provides snacks, wholesome food and cold drinks.

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1. As already described earlier, Sohnā town lies on the main road from Gurgaon to Alwar, 24 kilometres from Gurgaon and 56 kilometres from Delhi.

2. An interesting legend connected with the discovery of these springs has been mentioned in this Chapter while describing the town Sohnā.



For stay, there are two attractive, well-furnished and air-conditioned Barbet huts, each with two double-bedrooms, a drawing-cum-dining room, a kitchen, a garage, a refrigerator and a TV. There are camping huts/family huts for budget tourists.<sup>1</sup> Non-air-conditioned accommodation is available in the rest house just near the complex.

#### PLACES OF INTEREST IN THE RURAL AREAS

Some important details about monuments and better known places of worship or tourist interest in the rural areas of the district are given in Table LXIII of Appendix.

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1. A new four-room motel has been added in 1981.