

MIRROR ON BETTIAH RAJ & WILDLIFE: A PLACE TO VISIT

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Abstract: The Diwani Bettiah Raj held the largest territory under its jurisdiction. It consisted of all of Champaran except for a small portion held by the Ram Nagar Raj (also held by Bhumihars). Bettiah Raj also came into being as a result of mallikana chaudharai, the connection with the revenue administration building on local dominance and the capability of controlling and protecting hundreds of villages. Internal disputes and family quarrels divided the Raj in course of time. The last zamindar was Harendra Kishore Singh, who was born in 1854 and succeeded his father, Rajendra Kishore Singh in 1883. In 1884, he received the title of Maharaja Bahadur as a personal distinction and a Khilat and a send from the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, Sir Augustus Rivers Thompson. He was created a Knight Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire on 1 March 1889. He was appointed a member of the Legislative Council of Bengal in January 1891. He was also a member of The Asiatic Society He was the last ruler of Bettiah Raj. West Champaran District was carved out of the old Champaran District in the year 1972 as a result of re-organization of the District in the state. It was formerly a subdivision of Saran District and then Champaran District with its Headquarters as Bettiah. It is said that Bettiah got its name from Baint (Cane) plants commonly found in this District. The name Champaran is a degenerate form of Champaka aranya, a name which dates back to the time when the District was a tract of the forest of Champa (Magnolia) trees and was the abode of solitary ascetics. Valmikinagar, formerly known as Bhainsa Lotan, is one of the famous tourist attractions of West Champaran. Surrounded by the picturesque beauty of the countryside, the tourist spot is a visual treat for nature and wildlife lovers. Valmiki Ashram is located at a distance of about 7 kms from Valmikinagar, the Gandak barrage, in the deep forest of Chitwan National Park in Nepal. Rishi Valmiki had written the great epic, "Ramayana", here. Various points of interest around the ashram are: Birthplace of Luv & Kush (the two sons of Lord Ram and his divine wife- Sita); Sita's 'Falahaar' eating place; Meditation place of the great Sage-Valmiki; the place where the Ashwamedh horse was tied; Amrit Kuan; Vishnu Chakra; Gagristhan and the Hawan Kund. The magnificent Himalayas provide a backdrop to the sanctuary. Adjacent to the sanctuary, in the forests of Nepal, is the historic Valmiki Ashram in the Chitwan National Park of Nepal. The One-horned rhinoceros and Indian bison often migrate from Chitwan to Valmikinagar. The forest here is a mix of extensive Savannah lands and swamp forests. The forest in the sanctuary is rich in Bhabar-Dun sal, dry Siwalik sal, khair, cane etc. The extensive forest area of Valmikinagar was owned by the Bettiah Raj and Raman Nagar Raj until early 1950s. Tigers dominate the wildlife landscape while other attractions include chitals, sambars, nilgais, leopards, hyenas, Indian civets, Jungle cats, Hog deer and wild dogs. The wildlife sanctuary is predominantly wetland, located on an oxbow lake in the floodplain of the Gandaki River. It is home to a variety of water birds, both resident and migratory. The sanctuary has areas of swamp forest, dry riverine forest, and khair-sissoo forest (Acacia catechu-Dalbergia sissoo). It is in the Lower Gangetic Plains moist deciduous forests Eco region. West Champaran offers its tourists the choice of exploring the picturesque beauty that is spread over the entire district. Places of historic importance of the district are also worth visiting.

Key Words: Diwani Bettiah Raj, West Champaran, wildlife sanctuary, Ramayana, Valmikinagar,

INTRODUCTION TO WEST CHAMPARAN:

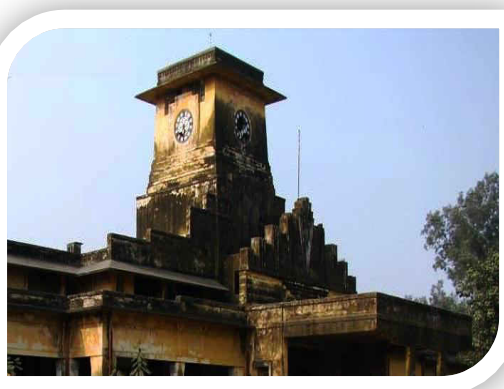
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District with its Headquarters as Bettiah. It is said that Bettiah got its name from Baint (Cane) plants commonly found in this District. The name Champaran is a degenerate form of Champaka aranya, a name which dates back to the time when the District was a tract of the forest of Champa (Magnolia) trees and was the abode of solitary ascetics.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES: To explore the potential of west Champaran tourism.

History and Back ground of the Bettiah Raj

Bettiah Raj was once a great estate. Gorakh Ray, a scion of the Bhumihars Shah family, was killed while fighting alongside Prithvi Raj Chauhan against Mohammad Ghauri at Taraori, in 1192 CE. Gorakh Ray's descendants are among the present-day Vaid Caste of Mohyals and they still prefix the honorific Raizada (prince) to their names. Another branch of this clan, that first set up residence at a place called Jai Theriya near Lucknow, later moved east and established a state at Bettiah in Bihar. They were known as Jaitheriyas, now a sect of Bhumihars. In 1765, when the East India Company acquired the *Diwani* Bettiah Raj held the largest territory under its jurisdiction. It consisted of all of Champaran except for a small portion held by the Ram Nagar Raj (also held by Bhumihars). Bettiah Raj also came into being as a result of *mallikana chaudharai* and *quanungoi*, the connection with the revenue administration building on local dominance and the capability of controlling and protecting hundreds of villages. Internal disputes and family quarrels divided the Raj in course of time. Madhuban Raj was created as a consequence.



But Bettiah Raj was the oldest in the region and had also been a branch of Raj Riya sat Sarkar of Champaran since the 16th century (the time of Shah Jahan) when the raja of Bettiah was Ugrasen Singh. Both the Madhuban Raj and Ram Nagar estates had broken off from Bettiah Raj. Even then making it the largest zamindari in Bihar.

The last zamindar was Harendra Kishore Singh, who was born in 1854 and succeeded his father, Rajendra Kishore Singh in 1883. In 1884, he received the title of Maharaja Bahadur as a personal distinction and a *Khilat* and a *send* from the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, Sir Augustus Rivers Thompson. He was created a Knight Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire on 1 March 1889. He was appointed a member of the Legislative Council of Bengal in

January 1891. He was also a member of The Asiatic Society. He was the last ruler of Bettiah Raj.

Maharaja Sir Harendra Kishore Singh Bahadur died issueless on 26 March 1893 leaving behind him two widows, Maharani Sheo Ratna Kuer and Maharani Janki Kuer. Maharani Sheo Ratna Kuer who succeeded to the estate of Maharaja Harendra Kishore Singh on his death as his senior widow died on 24 March 1896 and on her death Maharani Janki Kuer became entitled to the possession of the estate. Since it was found that Maharani Janki Kuer was not able to administer the estate, its management was taken over by the Court of Wards, Bihar in 1897. Maharani Janki Kuer who was a limited holder of the estate died on 27 November 1954.

The Bettiah Raj forests were managed for timber production. Bihar state government took over management of the Bettiah Raj forests in 1953 and 1954 under the Bihar Private Protected Forests Act (1947). Valmiki National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary include portion of the former Bettiah Raj estate.

- **Maharani Janki Kuwar**, 12th Rani of Bettiah 1896/1897, born 1870, daughter of Babu Shri Sidha Narain Singh of Anapur Zamindari in Bihar, she was unable to manage the estate, which was taken over by the Court of Wards till her death, whereupon it escheated to the state. She died *sp* on 27th November 1954.

PLACES TO VISIT IN WEST CHAMPARAN:

Kali Bagh Temple-A picnic like atmosphere prevails as people come in busloads to spend the day here. The neat and clean temple complex with the pond in the centre truly looks beautiful. The Kali Bagh temple situated in Bettiah is one of the most magnificent and diversified temples of Bihar. The temple complex has so many



statues of different deities that a person has to spend a lot of time worshipping. The temple is spread in ten acres, in which four acres is temple complex and six is the garden surrounding it. The temple has two divisions- Deva Paksha and Devi Paksha, the deities of former being worshipped by tantrik methods. This temple was built around 400 years ago (around 1614 AD) by the royal family of Bettiah, Maharaja Harish Chandra Singh. Main deity of the temple is Goddess Kali but Mahakali is also a centre of attraction for devotees. The temple complex has a big open space in the middle surrounded by small temples of different deities. It is divided into five blocks of some small temples each. Each block has a main deity, a separate priest called tahloo or sevaka and an individual kitchen, where bhoga is prepared.

"Each of the five blocks has a main deity, a separate priest and an individual kitchen."

The sanctum of Ma Kali is on an elevated platform where statue of Chaturbhuj Ma Kali is placed on a Dias facing south. It is said that this Dias was built above 108 narmundas (human skulls). On the left of Kali is the statue of Tara Mata and on the right is Mahakal Bhargava. Below the Dias on left are the statues of Chhinnamastika and Tripurasundari and to the right is Mahalakshmi and Bhuvaneshwari. Outside the sanctum are statues of Ganesha and Batuk Bhairav in the verandah. Temples of Ma Kali, Nava Durga, Das Mahavidya, Ashta Bhairava and Kal Bhairava constitute the first block where the main deity is Ma Kali. Says Biharilal Sahu, patron of Ma Kali Sewa Vivaha Samiti that Das Mahavidya temple has ten statues and Nava Durga has nine forms of Goddess Durga separately.

"The importance of Mahakali temple is that it has fifty six arms and five faces."

Chaturth Shashtha Yogini and Mahakali temple constitute the second block and has statues of 74 warriors, who fought with Goddess Durga. Also eight statues of Ashtamata (Adi Shakti) are there. The main deity of this block is Ugratara. The importance of Mahakali temple is that it has 56 arms and five faces while the Ma Kali statue at the main temple has four arms and one face.

The third block has temples of, Dashavtar that has 24 statues including Panch Ganga, Garuda of Vishnu, Vinayak Ganesha with Riddhi and Siddhi and the main deity Radha-Krishna. This temple also has an idol of Lord Mahamrityunjaya Mahadeva.



The fourth block has temples of Ekadashrudra, Dashodeerghapaal, Patitpawaneshwar Mahadeva and Pashupatinath Mahadeva. The Ekadashrudra temple has 12 statues of Rudra. It has a unique Shivalinga about which there is a belief that it increases daily in size. The Pashupatinath temple has a replica of the statue at Pashupatinath temple of Kathmandu. The main deity here is Haratmak Mahadeva.

Temples of Dwadash Kala Surya Narayana, nine graha (planets), nine Mahadasha and Shyam Karthik Maharaja make up the fifth block. Women are not allowed darshan of

God Shyam Karthik. People offer bhoga of Rohu fish. Devotees sacrifice goats and offer coconut too.

Valmikinagar -Valmikinagar, formerly known as Bhainsa Lotan, is one of the famous tourist attractions of West Champaran. Surrounded by the picturesque beauty of the countryside, the tourist spot is a visual treat for nature and wildlife lovers. It is abode of a dam built on river Gandak. The dam and its channels have been irrigating the north-western part of Bihar and some portions of eastern Uttar Pradesh. Valmiki wildlife sanctuary, spread across 544sq km, is a home for myriad wild animals and birds. Magnificent Himalayas provide a backdrop for this calm wild land. The historic Valmiki Ashram, located in the forests adjacent to the sanctuary, is also worth paying a visit.

It is a small town with scattered inhabitation, mostly within the forest area and a railroad station in the district of West Champaran close to the railhead of Narkatiaganj. After covering 30 kms from Bagaha one enters Valmiki Tiger reserves forest at Rampur, and confronts the tack, which is broken and undulating, often showing highly fragile geological formations. The great Gandak and Masan rivers collect all the water from numerous, tortuous tributaries. The hill system is a continuation of the Shiwalik Range, largely made of imperfectly compacted and ill formed sandstone dotted with pebbles and boulders. Valmiki sanctuary covering approximately 800 sq. km of

forest and is the 18th Tiger Reserve of the country and ranked fourth with density of Tiger population. Adjacent to the sanctuary in the forest in Chitwan National Park of Nepal, lies the historic Valmiki Ashram and surrounding temples. The place has the major religious and historical attraction of the Valmiki Ashram. Although it is located in Nepal, but one has to travel through the forests of Valmikinagar to reach the Ashram, and that is through India. Even the Nepalese have to travel through Valmikinagar, in India to reach the Ashram.

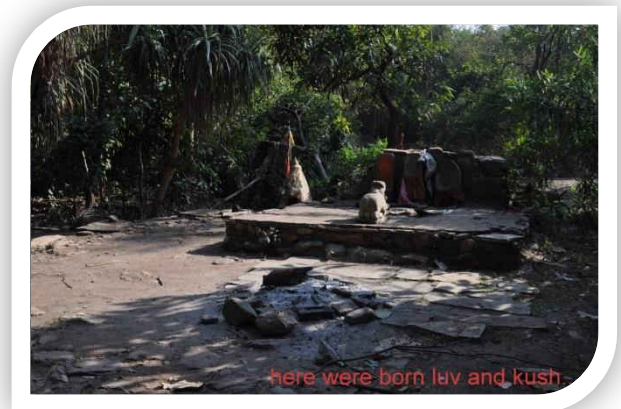


Valmiki Ashram is located at a distance of about 7 kms from Valmikinagar, the Gandak barrage, in the deep forest of Chitwan National Park in Nepal. Rishi Valmiki had written the great epic, “Ramayana”, here. Various points of interest around the ashram are: Birthplace of Luv & Kush (the two sons of Lord Ram and his divine wife- Sita); Sita’s ‘Falahar’ eating place; Meditation place of the great Sage-Valmiki; the place where the Ashwamedh horse was tied; Amrit Kuan; Vishnu Chakra; Gagristhan and the Hawan Kund. Various temples, which are located in the periphery of 3 - 4 kms around the Valmiki Ashram, are the Jatashankar Temple, Nar

Devi Temple and Kaleshwar Temple, surrounded by green forest in the backdrop of the Himalayan Mountains. Triveni Temple is located across the Gandak barrage in the Nepal territory at a motor able distance of 2-3 kms from Gandak barrage. Apart from the natural beauty, it offers a lot to the tourists who are basically the adventure seekers and nature lovers. The peaceful environment of variety of activities in which the tourists of different age groups having different tastes can engage themselves.

With Valmikinagar as base, a tourist can find expression to his nomadic instincts by visiting a number of places, the grandeur and beauty of which are bound to make one experience the heights of ecstasy.

Triveni is also believed to be the site at which the fight commenced between the Lords of Forest and Water (Gaj and Grah or the Elephant and the Crocodile). The main fauna of Valmiki Tiger Reserve consists of Tiger, Leopard, Fishing Cat, Chital, Sambar, Hog Deer, Black Buck, Gaur, Sloth Bear, Languor and Rhesus Monkey, while the flora consists of Sal (Shorea Robusta), As an, Karama, Semal, Khair, Cane (Calamus tenuis), Jamun, Siccharum, and Teak etc.



The Valmiki National Park:-

Valmiki nagar the nearest airport is 295 km away at Patna, while Valmiki Nagar (5 km) is the closest railhead.

The Valmiki National Park (335 sq. km) has been created amidst 544 sq. km of the Valmiki Sanctuary in the West Champaran district of Bihar, bordering Nepal. The magnificent Himalayas provide a backdrop to the sanctuary. Adjacent to the sanctuary, in the forests of Nepal, is the historic Valmiki Ashram in the Chitwan National Park of Nepal. The One-horned rhinoceros and Indian bison often migrate from Chitwan to Valmikinagar. The forest here is a mix of extensive Savannah lands and swamp forests. The forest in the sanctuary is rich in Bhabar-Dun sal, dry Siwalik sal, khair, cane etc. The extensive forest area of Valmikinagar was owned by the Bettiah Raj and Raman Nagar Raj until early 1950s. Tigers dominate the wildlife landscape while other attractions include



chitals, sambars, nilgais, leopards, hyenas, Indian civets, Jungle cats, Hog deer and wild dogs. As far as the density of the tiger population is concerned, Valmikinagar ranks fourth in the state. Valmiki is the 18th Tiger Reserve of the country and the second in Bihar. Eco-development activities were initiated in the Reserve in 1997-98. Activities such as distribution of fruit bearing plants, installation of hand pumps, construction of ponds, shed, irrigation channel were undertaken. Eco-awareness programmes were conducted. The response of the villagers has been overwhelming. The inhabitants of some of the villages are coming forward voluntarily to assist forest staff in the protection of forest as well as in developmental activities. There is a vast scope of eco-tourism, the essential facilities will be generated in future.

Bheriyari Watch tower

This wooden watch tower is situated in the Bheriyari Grassland where herds of herbivores can be seen in their natural habitat. Most Suitable site for peep through watch tower & bird watching also.



Boating in Rohua Nala (Tributary of Gandak River)

This site is located in Madanpur range. This range is unique in the sense as it has diversity in the forms of wetland, swamps & mixed forest along with canebrakes. It is the potential site for Rhinoceros sighting, visiting here from Chitwan Reserve forest, of Nepal. This area is also designated as Important Bird Area (IBA) by the Indian Bird Conservation Network.

- One can enjoy boating in Sikara (Modified Country boat) along with Bird watching.



Kapan- One of the major, perennial rivers of Raghia Range, journey along it northwards is a memorable experience. On

both banks are lovely forests and in between flows the river, abode of green pigeons & Indian bison. Varieties of kingfishers and owls are a common sighting.

Lalbhitiva- On way to Gobardhana from Manguraha, made of red clayey soil, this elevated patch gives a bird-eye view of pure-sal forest. Dawn and Dusk view from here is enchanting. On clear days, one can see snowy Himalayan peaks. This is a vintage point for bird watchers and solace seekers.

Manor Trek- This short trek (1.5 Km) is open for tourist. One can enjoy the beautiful trek along the dense forest to the Manor watch tower. From the wooden tower the majestic view of river Manor & hills of snow-clad Himalaya (Nepal) is quite visible.

Pandai River- Deriving its name from "Pandavas" one of the major rivers of VTR, it is known for its high speed and massive erosion during rains. Round and colourful pebbles found in river-bed attract everyone. One can see locals mining gold very crudely from its streams. During sunrise and in moonlight the river shines splendidly. Watch tower at Thori gives a nice view of this meandering river.

Parewa dah- "Parewa" or "parba" in local, means pigeon and "dah" means water body. So Parewa dah is a place where both co-exist. One of the most beautiful places of tiger Reserve, it is on way to Someshwar temple. One can see numerous fishes in the emerald blue crystal clear water found here. Water continuously flows down the waterfall. Doves and bee-eaters swarming in hundreds reside in high burrows surrounding this place. No visit to forest is complete without visiting this place.

Someshwar peak- Someshwar is the highest peak of VTR situated at a height of 2884 feet. One can reach here trekking 14 Kms from base camp. On way is titanic point & Hill top, from where the view is splendid. At the international border is an ancient temple dedicated to Lord Someshwar or Shiva and Goddess Kali. Below the temple are ruins of hermitage of sage Bheriyari.

Bank of Triveni (Confluence)-Bank of Triveni is located about five miles above the Valmikinagar dam. Positioned in the Indo-Nepal border, the Bank of Triveni offers its visitors the unique vision of confluence of river Gandak, Panchanand and Sonaha. The confluence is mentioned in Hindu Holy book – “Srimad Bhagwat”, according to which, the thousand years battle between Gaj (Elephant) and Grah (Crocodile) was commenced at this place. An annual fair is held at this holy place on the eve of “Magh Sankranti” in the 11th month of the Hindu Lunar calendar. This occasion is also known as ‘bathing festival in holy rivers’.



Bawangarhi -Bawangarhi is a village located about 8 km from the Bank of Triveni. The village is known as Bawangarhi because it is a site for the remains of 52 forts. (‘Bawan’ means 52 and ‘Garh’ means fort). The village is sometimes referred to as Tripan Bazar, since it is a location for the ruins of 53 bazar.

Bhiknatohari -Bhiknatohari is a beautiful place situated in the Gaunaha block on the northern part of West Champaran. A number of tourists visit this place during winter to catch a glimpse of the snow-capped Himalayas and the Annapurna peak. Bhiknatohari is also significant because King George V once visited this place for hunting.

Lauria -Lauria, situated on kilometre east of Nandangarh, is a tourist place of historical significance. The 2300-years-old lion pillar of Asoka is located in Lauria. The base diameter of the 35-foot tall pillar is 35 inches and its upper diameter is 22 inches. The exquisitely finished massive pillar stands as the best example of the dexterity of workers in Asokan Age. Two more such pillars have been excavated in Rampurwa village, adjacent to Gandhiji’s Bhitiharwa Ashram in Gaunaha block of West Champaran. Lauria has 15 Stupa mounds in three rows, each row upwards of 600 m; the first row begins near the pillar and goes E to W, while the other two are at right angles to it and parallel to each other.



In 1935-36, archaeologist Nani Gopal Majumdar re-examined the four mounds with important results. He found that all of them were earthen burial memorials with burnt brick revetments, two being faced with a brick lining in a double tier, so that there was no justification of regarding them as mere earthen barrows. He also pointed out that the golden leaves found by Block had their exact replica in the Stupa at Piprahwa which is definitely a Buddhist Stupa of 300 B.C. or earlier. The respective Lauria Stupas might be of a comparable date and there is nothing

to connect them with Vedic burial rites. Excavation of the Nandangarh site was started by Majumdar in 1935 and continued by Ghosh until 1939. Before excavation the mound had a height of 25 m and a circumference of about 460 m, standing at the East of a brick fortification about 1.6 km in perimeter and roughly oval of plan, no doubt enclosing a habitation area, perhaps the headquarters of a clan that was responsible for the erection of the Lauria Stupas. Surface finds indicate that it was inhabited in Shunga (if not earlier) and Kushans times.

In a shaft dug into centre of the mound an undisturbed filling was found at a depth of 4.3 m the remains of a brick altar 1 m high; it has previously been truncated, perhaps by one of the explorers of the 19th and the early 20th centuries. Further down at a depth of 4.6 m from the bottom of the altar the top of an intact, miniature stupa was found, complete with a surmounting square umbrella. This stupa is 3.6 m high and polygonal on plan. An examination of its interior yielded nothing meaningful, but beside there lay a tiny copper vessel with a lid fastened to it by a wire. Inside the vessel was a long strip of the birch leaf manuscript, which having been squeezed into it was so fragile that it was impossible to spread it out and examine thoroughly without damaging it. The bits that could be extricated showed Buddhist text (probably the Pratītyasamutpāda since the word nirodha could be read a few times) written in characters of the 4th century A.D. No excavations were made at a further depth.

Sumeswar fort -Someshwar hills are located at a height of 2884 feet above sea level in Ramnagar Block of the district. There is a fort on the edge of a sharp cliff at the summit of Someshwar hills. The ruined Fort Someshwar is abode of a number of reservoirs made out of solid rocks, which were used to store water for the use of its residents. The ridge, upon which the fort is located, provides a clear view of the great Himalayan peaks of Dhaulagiri, Gosainthan and Gaurishanker. It forms the boundary between West Champaran and Nepal. Someshwar Fort is situated in Narkatiaganj sub-division, near Nepal border, on top of Someshwar Hill at 2884 ft. above M.S.L. It is in a ruined state but its remains are well defined. Close to Valmikinagar is Triveni, which is a holy place for Hindus. The name is derived from the fact that three river, namely – Naraini, Sohna and Pachnad- merge here, to form Gandak, soon after they emerge from the hills.

Tupa (Nandangarh)

It is situated in Lauria block about 2 km, from the Asokan Pillar big mounds (Vedic burial mounds) which are the remains of palaces of Nanda Dynasty. At one end of the site was excavated a big stupa built of bricks and is about 80 feet high and consists of a series of terraces, raised one above the other, numbering five in all. On three of the terraces there is a passage for circumambulation. Nandangarh has also been conjectured as the ashes Stupa where the ashes of Buddha are said to have been enshrined.

The numerous antiquities found in the excavations include many terracotta figures, pottery vessels of various types, stone beads, coins, metal objects like knives, Celts, daggers, arrow-heads, inscribed terracotta ceilings, stone beads and other objects. The coins found here included a copper karshapana, a few copper cast coins one silver punch marked coins, a few round copper coins bearing legends in early Brahmin of about 1st century B.C.



Udaipur Wildlife Sanctuary- (also spelled Udaipur) is a wildlife sanctuary located in West Champaran covers an area of 8.74 km².

The wildlife sanctuary is predominantly wetland, located on an oxbow lake in the floodplain of the Gandaki River. It is home to a variety of water birds, both resident and migratory. The sanctuary has areas of swamp forest, dry riverine forest, and khair-sissoo forest (Acacia catechu-Dalbergia sissoo). It is in the Lower Gangetic Plains moist deciduous forests Eco region.

The sanctuary has a rest house. The nearest town and railhead is Bettiah. The sanctuary is under the authority of the Deputy Director of the Champaran Forest Division, headquartered in Bettiah. It is locally known as Saryaman is situated in the floodplains of Gandak River in West Champaran near district town of Bettiah. It is an Ox-bow lake surrounded by mixed forests. The decomposing seeds from the Jamun trees surrounding the lake have imparted medicinal properties to the water. Spotted deer, Barking deer, Hog deer, Python, Migratory birds, several fish are founded here.



Vrindavan-Situated at a distance of 10 Kms. from Bettiah, in Gaunaha Block, this village had the honour of being the venue of the annual conference of 'All India Gandhi Seva Sangh' in 1937. It was attended by Mahatma Gandhi, Dr.Rajendra Prasad and Shri J.B. Kripalani. From that time a basic school founded by Gandhi ji, has been functioning there. In 1938, during his second visit to Champaran, the Mahatma set up a cluster of Basic schools here. Vrindavan, a village just about seven km from Bettiah, is another important place associated with the father of the nation.



Shri Rampur-Situated in the Gaunaha Block of Bhitiharwa Panchayat. Gandhiji had stayed here on 16th November, 1917.

Bhitiharwa-Gandhi Ashram, founded by Gandhi in November 1917, near Narkatiaganj in West Champaran was renovated four years ago but by then not much remained.



Remains of an indigo factory -near Hardiya Kothi in Nautan



block, West Champaran. Farmers suffered as they got poor compensation or faced heavy taxation if they refused to plant indigo. The landlords (mostly British) would enforce this system with their agents, called Gumasta, who executed the terms brutally. The reduced production of food crops and exclusive indigo farming (they were not allowed to grow any other crop even during the indigo off-season) had led to a famine-like situation.

The Kalibag temple complex -It is an ancient temple founded by the Maharaja Harendra Kishore, the king of Bettiah Raj. It constitutes of a beautiful pond, a marriage hall, a community centre, and an open field, garden. It is famous for 36 cr gods and goddess temple. The Maharaja had collected about 480 images of Hindu deities from all over India. He had installed them in this temple around a pond. Each and every image is duly worshipped even now by a large number of pujaries. Pilgrims can be spotted feeding fishes at this central pond.



St Ghat temple-St Ghat temple, Bettiah is a perfect destination for a great time with your dear ones. Enjoy the attractions of this popular tourist spot. With so much to lure your senses and offer you recreation at its best, get drenched in the spirit of adventure that you get to explore at st Ghat temple, Bettiah. Enjoy together all the points of popular interests and bring back several memorable moments. St Ghat temple, Bettiah is not just the place for sightseeing, but it also enables you to steal a self-indulgent moment for yourself as well. So, check out the st Ghat temple tourist spot for all the attractions that is on offer and visit this spot on weekends for a rejuvenating time. World standards, extraordinary architecture, innovative layouts, and well-thought execution make place a highly coveted point of tourist interest. Do not forget to carry your camera and capture special moments. St Ghat temple, Bettiah is the sure way to refresh and relax after a busy weekday. Explore interesting themes, fabulous designs, colourful landscapes, amusing characters, ambient music, props and merchandise available in nearby stores- all at one place. St Ghat temple, Bettiah is the best way to have a memorable time with kids and family.



Teen lalten-This chowk has three lanterns which were lighted by Kerosine oil in the British Period.

Sagar pokhra Sagar Pokhra is oldest Pond of the town (Bettiah) and was made by Maharani Janki kunwar. A scenic pond with a marvellous temple around it. It is the centre of attraction.

Accommodation and Safari- There are ten (10) eco-huts of double bed occupancy located at Valmikinagar (two), Naurangia done (two), Manguraha (2) and Gobardhana (four). Besides, one tree-hut is located at kotraha for altitude lovers. Forest Rest Houses (two double-bed rooms in each) are located at Kotraha, Madanpur, Naurangia Done, Gobardhana, Manguraha and Manpur. Four double-bed rooms at



Ganauli is a wooden forest rest house. This building has potential to get heritage status.

Geography of west Champaran- West Champaran -Bettiah is located at 26°48'05"N, 84°30'10"E. It has an average elevation of 65 metres (213 feet). Bettiah has hot summer season and chilling winter season. In summer season the temperature goes up to 40-42 degrees Celsius while in winter season the temperature goes as low as 07–10 degrees Celsius. It has heavy annual rainfall of about 200–240 cm which often causes floods. Bettiah lies in the alluvial plains of Gandak basin. It is located near the River Gandak (Narayani) and Chhoti Gandak (Sikranha). Due to several small rain fed rivers this land is fertile. The region faces mild thunderstorms during Rainy season. It is an agricultural area where sugarcane, rice and wheat are mainly cultivated.

Location -225 Kilometres north-west of Patna. It is located at 26.81 N Latitude and 84.50 E Longitude, 65 metres above Mean Sea Level

Best time to visit - Visit October to March. How To Get There By air
how to Get There By air

nearest air-port is Patna, about 225 Kilometres from Bettiah.

By Rail - from Delhi: Saptakranti Express, Satyagrah Express

from Mumbai: Avadh Express

from Kolkata: Howrah-Gorakhpur Express

from Jammu: Amaranth Express

By road- Luxurious bus services between Bettiah and Patna and other places. Getting Around Auto Rickshaw, Cycle Rickshaw, Tonga, Bus and Unmetered Taxi. Places to Stay Large number of good quality hotels are present at Bettiah.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS:

West Champaran, A land of heritage and eco-tourism. The potential lying with this segment of tourism cannot be ignored. In west Champaran near Nepal tourism is practiced in a various manner like pilgrimage tourism, natural tourism adventurer tourism (mountaineering, river-rafting, boating) and wildlife tourism are prominent. Explore interesting themes, fabulous designs, colourful landscapes, amusing characters, ambient music, props and merchandise available in nearby. This is not just the place for sightseeing, but it also enables you to steal a self-indulgent moment for yourself as well .As we know tourism sector is becoming a prominent sector in Indian economy so Government need to develop supporting infrastructure such as transport, accommodation, communication and information channels in west Champaran.

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