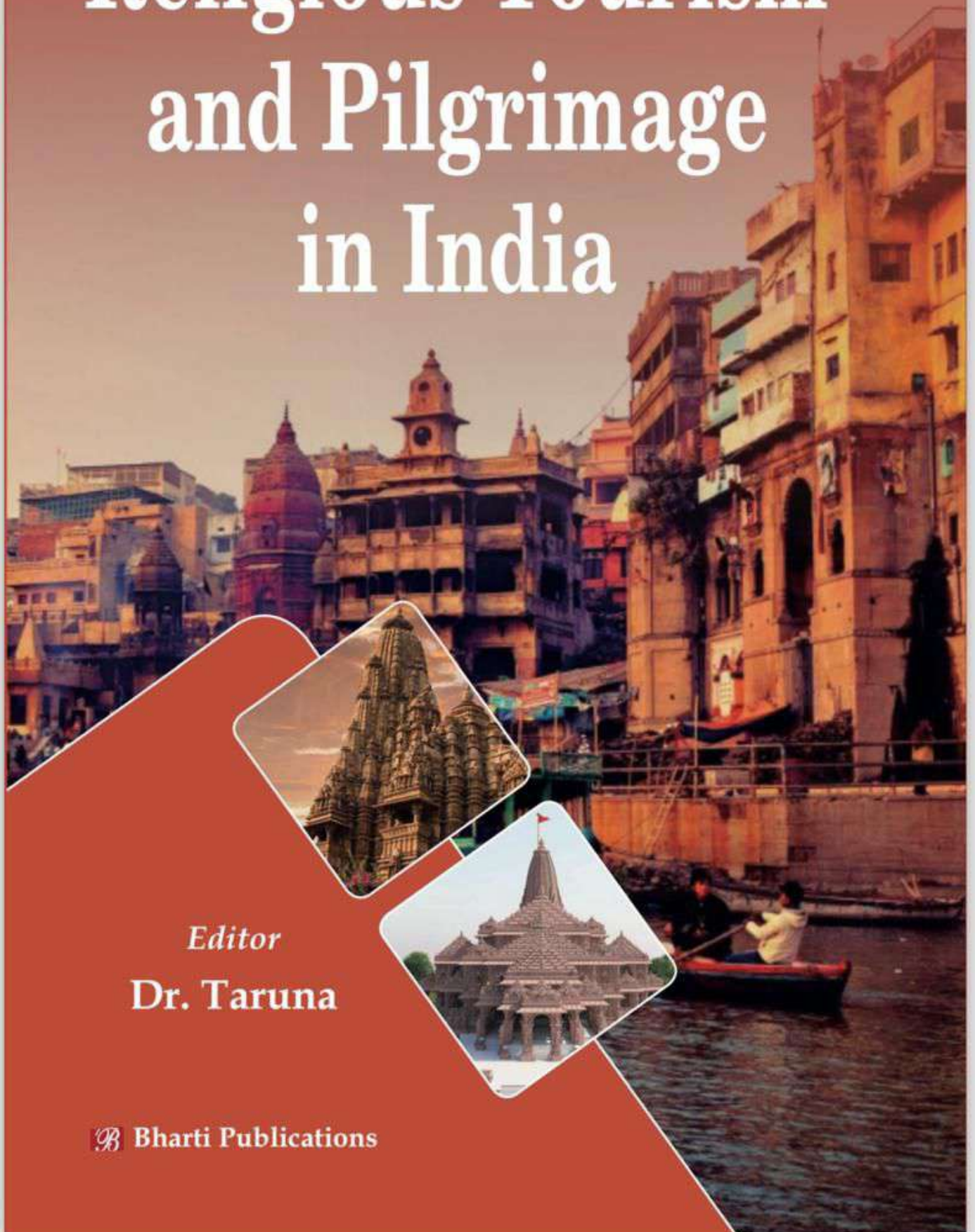


Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage in India

Editor

Dr. Taruna

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Ensuring Environmental Norms through Green Pilgrimage: A Cardinal Principle of Sustainable Living

Dr. Mirza Juned Beg* & Mohd Sufiyan Khan**

INTRODUCTION

"A Green Pilgrimage is a Spiritual Journey that maintains the principles of a regular Pilgrimage, while at the same time respecting Nature and the Environment."

—European Green Pilgrimage Network

People from different religion and ideologies inculcate divine experience through pilgrimage. India is a chief focal point for Pilgrimage tourism on this mother earth. Disciples or devotees from all over the globe come to India to dive deep into the whirlwind of holiness. It has been the birthplace of many religions, gods and saints etc. Its attraction lies in its ancient traditions, myths and culture. In India, devoutness is a part of daily life. India is the greatest nation in terms of pilgrimage tourism. No matter where you live, India will always fascinate devotees with its ancient heritage and amazing pilgrimage destinations.¹

Pilgrimage places in India are often situated in spots of natural beauty. In ancient times, the pilgrimage was considered as a divine journey which was full of odds. In modern India, the infrastructure projects have been improved and enhanced the accessibility of the hard religious locations but it adversely affects the hilly regions and forests covers.² Thus, it is the need to shift from the notion of just a "pilgrimage" to "green pilgrimage."

Green Pilgrimage refers to sustainable practices and reducing the environmental impact of pilgrimages, which are a traditional part of religious practices in

1 Lovelock E James and Rapley G Chris (2007). Ocean Pipes Could Help the Earth to Cure Itself. *Nature*, 449 (7161), 403.

2 Strong Hanne (1995), Ecological and Spiritual Revolution. *Our Planet*, VII (3), 23.

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