

# “Bisoi Village”- make over for Reverse Migration, need of an Hour

Ar. Dhenesh Raj<sup>1</sup> and Ar. Itishree Rana<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, School of Architecture and Planning,  
Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, School of Architecture and Planning,  
Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun

E-mail: [ardhenesh2007@rediffmail.com](mailto:ardhenesh2007@rediffmail.com), [itishree.rana@gmail.com](mailto:itishree.rana@gmail.com)

**Abstract**—The village of Bisoi is situated at an altitude of 5500 ft and is about 85 kms from Dehradun. Inhabited by the Jaunsari tribe, which traces its origin from the Pandavas of Mahabharata, the village provides a unique window to experiencing tribal culture.

‘Mahasu Devta’ is the principal deity of Jaunsari tribes. The village has a very impressive temple of ‘Mahasu Devta’ recently renovated in traditional style by the collective monetary contribution from the villagers. However, what is refreshingly different is that unlike the popular temples on the Char Dham circuit which are under the dominance of the priest community, at Bisoi, all functions (both religious and social) are conducted under the tutelage of the village committee.

A survey has been done of Bisoi village, which guided us that if we want the reverse migration, then we have to suggest/search some occupation for the villagers as, it is the demand of an hour that we should reverse migration in the village.

Today, Rural Tourism is strongly pitched in by the concept of Home stay at villages. It not only offers the genuine traditional insight about the area but also plays an important role in heritage conservation and income generation activities of the host community. Here, the village itself is gifted with unique specimens of vernacular Jaunsari architecture, which might disappear due to absence of proper patronization. Already, a few houses have been rebuilt using modern materials and techniques (RCC, cement and brick) which is fast eroding the unique visual identity of the village.

**Keywords:** Traditional Style, Reverse Migration, Home Stays, Heritage Conservation, Income Generation

## INTRODUCTION

The village of Bisoi situated at an altitude of 5500 ft is about 85 kms from Dehradun. Inhabited by the Jaunsari tribe, which traces its origin from the Pandavas of Mahabharata, the village provides a unique window to experiencing tribal culture.

‘Mahasu Devta’ temple which is 300-year-old is the principal deity of Jaunsari tribes. It is very impressive and recently renovated in traditional style by the collective monetary

contribution from the villagers. However, what is refreshingly different is that unlike the popular temples on the Char Dham circuit which are under the dominance of the priest community, at Bisoi, all functions (both religious and social) are conducted under the tutelage of the village committee.

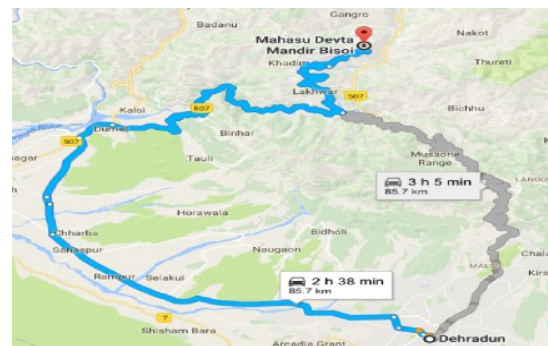


Fig.1 Location Map



Fig.2. Ariel View



**Fig. 3: Mahasu Devta Temple**

With evergreen forests of pine, spruce, oak and cedar in the immediate vicinity, the village of Bisoi offers magnificent snow views and experiences snowfall 2-3 times a year.



**Fig.4: Bisoi- View of Snow peaks**



**Fig.5: Bisoi in Winter**

The village of 44 households has a fair number of traditional homes of ancient vernacular architecture. These well-crafted houses are made of Cedar woods with wonderful intricate designs.



**Fig. 6 Temple made of Wood**



**Fig. 7: Beautiful motifs and wood carving**



**Fig. 8**



**Fig. 9: Simple style of living**

People here are simple, warm and peace loving. The village adheres to a unique local governance system in which the Gram Pradhan and other members of the Gram Panchayat are elected by collective consent without any form of elections. The village has been declared total defecation free and was recipient of the Nirmal Gram (clean village) award in 2008-09 by the President under the Swachh Bharat Mission.



Fig. 10: Pandav Dance at Bisoi



Fig. 13: Vernacular houses at Bisoi



Fig. 11: Close up of Village houses



Fig. 14: Fascinating façade of Dwelling



Fig. 12: Kitchen in a traditional house



Fig. 15: Patal used as a Roof Covering



Fig. 16: Wooden Stairs



Fig. 17: Wooden Beams



Fig. 18: Wooden Lintel over the Door

Bisoi is easily accessible around the year by an all-weather road. This village is also important as it connects further to the Chota Char Dham pilgrimage of Northern Himalayas.

The villagers are migrating as they have no mode of survival left, they are jobless. We had a survey of that village which had made us understand that the village has Rural Tourism potential as the village connects the ChotaChar Dham yatra road. It is less populated, located not more than 1 km from nearest road and offers views of Himalayan ranges. Which can attract the tourists and may create different categories of jobs for the villagers.

### PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS

During the recent visit, the immediate intervention areas were identified after discussions with the Gram Pradhan and other members of the village.

1. **Guest house adjoining the temple-** Due to the recently renovated temple, pristine surroundings and fabulous snow views, the village gets many visitors and dignitaries. However, the absence of proper accommodation facilities acts as a serious deterrent for development of the place's tourism potential. A 10-12 room guesthouse built with an amalgamation of modern and traditional materials and equipped with modern facilities is the need of the hour.

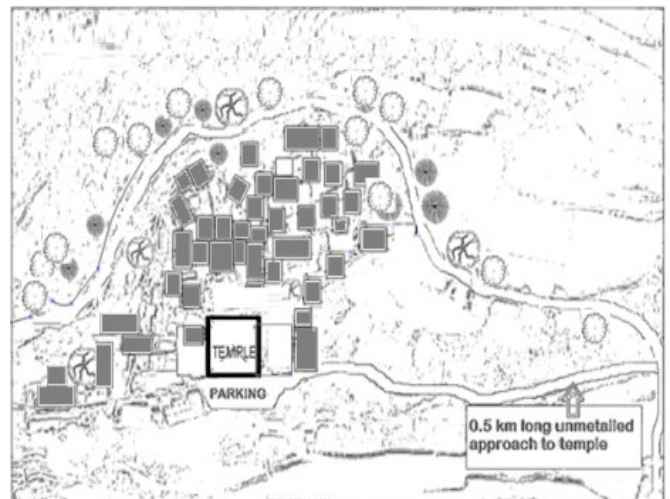


Fig. 19: Map of village (not to scale)

2. **Creating a stable supply chain for the village's organic produce-** The village grows a wide variety of pulses and vegetables such as tomato, beans, peas, rajma, etc. About 4-5 years ago, the village was one of the main suppliers of organic vegetables to Delhi based Mother Dairy who used to collect the produce from the doorstep. However, after Mother Dairy withdrew from the village mainly due to manipulation by middlemen at the Vikas agarmandi, the lack of livelihood has forced many young men to move out of Bisoi. Fragmented fields make farming very labor intensive and furthermore the prices farmers receive for

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their produce is at the mercy of the middlemen at the *mandi*.

If a mechanism could be worked out to revive the earlier supply chain, it would lead to reverse migration as those who have left their homes and abandoned their fields, would be happy to return to the village.

- 3. Providing a boost to existing education facilities-**The village currently only has a Govt Primary School. There is no proper English Medium high school in the village which is also one of the main reasons for migration.

Setting up of appropriate education facilities could be considered. Provisions could be made to considerand depute volunteers to impart relevant skills to the villager’s youth which would improve their employability.