



AN INTRODUCTION TO TOURISM IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT- TAMIL NADU

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Abstract

When Kumari Kandam Submerged, Kanyakumari district became its North mainland of the Indian Ocean. It thus became the land's end of India. The state reorganization Commission headed by H. Fazel Ali recommended the merger of the four Tamil speaking taluks of South Travancore with the state of Madras. The study is descriptive in nature at the micro level. Important tourist spots have been selected for study. Relevant information and data are collected by the investigator by making personal visits and from tourist information and other related centres. Tourist motivators are in plenty but they have not been utilised up to the optimum levels. Despite its rich and varied Fauna and Flora many tourist potentials are yet to be tapped.

Keywords: Kumari Kandam, tourist spots, historical heritage, Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea.

INTRODUCTION

Kanyakumari District has a very ancient historical heritage. It was part of a wide land mass called Gondavana in the earliest geological era. It was recorded in Indian traditional as Jampudeepa and in Tamil tradition it was known as Kumari Kandam. Western writer called it Lumuria. When Kumari Kandam Submerged, Kanyakumari district became its North mainland of the Indian Ocean. It thus became the land's end of India. The state reorganisation Commission headed by H. Fazel Ali recommended the merger of the four Tamil speaking taluks of South Travancore with the state of Madras. Thus on November 1, 1956 Kanyakumari district was formed.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Kanyakumari district land's end of the Indian subcontinent. The Confluence of three seas, viz., the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea is indeed a rare phenomenon. Kanyakumari district is the smallest district next only to Nilgris in the state of Tamil Nadu.

By its very location the district occupies a unique place among the other district of Tamilnadu. It has a coastline of 68 kilometres. Though a tiny district, Unique in the sense that it is famous for its vast green stretches of Paddy fields, rich forests, coconuts groves and mineral sands.

Kanyakumari district is bounded by Tirunelveli District and the palk of Bay of Bengal east, the Arabian Sea in the Southwest, the Kerala state on the west and the southern end of Western Ghats in the northeast.

The location of this district is 83° to $83^{\circ} 35'$ north latitude and $77^{\circ} 05'$ to $77^{\circ} 36'$ eastern longitude. The super oceanic climate is available throughout the year, Pro it is Britain and closer to the equatorial belt.

This district has two revenue divisions, viz., Nagercoil and Padmanabhapuram . The Padmanabhapuram revenue division has four taluks namely Kalkulam, vilavancode, Thiruvattar and Killiyoor. revenue comprise two taluks namely Agastheeswaram and Thovalai.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Kanyakumari district enjoys an important place in terms of tourism potentials. There are several place of religious, social, cultural and historical significance. The presence of ancient temple with architeculture marvels, carvings, paintings and tall towers attracts tourists steadily. The present study is undertaken to know the important tourist places in the study area, to project certain unfamiliar tourist spots, to enquire into the existing problems and the part played by the tourist centres to the general public and the government and make suggestions for improvement. The study is descriptive in nature at the micro level. Important tourist spots have been selected for study. Relevant information and data are collected by the investigator by making personal visits and from tourist information and other related centres.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Kanyakumari district is four natural regions, The mountainous belt and food hill regions, the smiling valleys and low lying fertile plants, The table land and the coastal belt.

NATURAL AND GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF KANYAKUMARI TOURISM

Kanyakumari is famous for its spectacular sunrise and sunset. It can be seen for sixmonths a year. The beach is adorned by multi-coloured sand. The

Government Museum possesses a good collection of sculptural arts and crafts of Tamil Nadu. Besan is available in plenty of the Government of Tamil Nadu and Kerala Run hotels of Indian and western styles. The Baghavathiamman Temple is an important pilgrim centre of Kanyakumari. An impressive memorial of Swami Vivekananda has also been erected with a life size bronze statue of Swamiji in his standing Parivrajak posture. The Gandhi Memorial constructed in Orissa style is the place where the urn is kept. There is a Lighthouse from where one can panoramic view. Adjacent to Kanyakumari there are two noteworthy places. There is Chinnamuttom harbour, Kulachal harbour, Vattukottai fort. The harbour is the sixth one in the east coast of Kanyakumari.

Tourists interested in historical evidence and movements will discover Paradise in Vattukottai and Padmanabhapuram. Vattukottai the circular fort was constructed in the 18th century and is an outstanding historical monument. Padmanabhapuram is another historical place surrounded by square stone fortification which contains specimens of admirable skill in an ancient sculpture and wood carvings. Udhaygiri fort was one of the previous military stations. There is a beautiful traveller's bungalow standing in the corner of the fort.

Suchindram is famous for its Ancient Temple dedicated to Thanumalaya Perumal, profusely carved with mythological figures. Tiruvattar is situated at the bend of Thamaparani river with a Temple dedicated to Shri. Adi Kesava Perumal with historical inspirations. Aralvaimozhi particularly the Kathadi. Malai is a pilgrim centre with the tomb of Devasahayam Pillai. Swamithoppu has got a different type of temple—no gopuram, no image, no idol workshop no deepa arathanai but a mirror is kept in the sanctorum.

Kotter a suburb of Nagercoil is an important business centre. The famous St. Xavier's Church at Kottar was constructed by St. Francis Xavier in the 15th century. Thuckalay is famous for the Muslim Dharga where the body of the Muslim scholar Peer Mohamed Sahib Olivulla is buried.

Thirparappu falls is another picturesque sport and a health resort which is also famous for bathing. The natural beauty of surrounding falls and hills have invested the place with a peculiar charm. It has a big temple nearby. Mathoor hanging bridge is the longest hanging bridge in Asia with a length of 1250 ft and height of 10 m ft. It is known for its rare construction. The Pechiparai and Perunchani dams are excellent picnic spots with bathing facilities. Kalikesam and Ulakkai aruvi are famous waterfalls and ups and downs of hills. The places for really visual feast to the visitors and hence they should be developed.

A good network of transport system is found in the study area with lengthy road ways and Railways. A well co-ordinated and adequately designed modern communication system is also available here. The district enjoys the advanced progressive and modern services of a good banking sector. Apart from government hospitals

a number of private nursing homes and clinics with duly qualified specialists are also available here. The water of Mukkudal is said to be muchless in its taste and it provides drinking water for Nagercoil and surrounding areas. A fully equipped all India Radio station has been functioning at Nagercoil.

Thadikaran Konam famous for siphon irrigation is yet to develop. Ulakkai aruvi, Kalikesam and Mukkudal Dam are all still unfamiliar tourist spots in the study area. There is ample scope for Tourism Development in these areas. Most of the places in the study area do not attract tourists due to lack of transport and communication, lack of Link roads and also the basic amenities. The government as well as the private sector should take sincere efforts to uplift the industry and to improve economy.

Another monument Kamarajar Manimandapam was raised and dedicated to Late. Sri. Kamarajar, The freedom fighter, Former Chief minister of Tamil Nadu, President of Indian National Congress. He was popularly known as Black Gandhi among the masses and king maker during congress regime. He is still called by all as "Perunthalaivar". He played vital roles in the administration of Tamil Nadu, by introducing education for down trodden and also started the Noon Meal scheme for the students to encourage education. Development activities like Dams and Industries in Tamil Nadu took place during his rule. This monument was constructed where his ashes were kept here for public to pay homage before immersion into the sea. Visiting Hours - 7 AM To 7 PM. Entrance Free.

THE THIRUVALLUVAR STATUE

The **Thiruvalluvar Statue**, or the **Valluvar Statue**, is a 133-feet (40.6 m) tall stone sculpture of the Tamil poet and philosopher Valluvar, author of the Tirukkural, an ancient Tamil work on secular ethics and morality. It is located atop a small island near the town of Kanyakumari on the southernmost point of the Indian peninsula on the Coromandel Coast, where two seas (the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea) and an ocean (the Indian Ocean) meet. The statue was sculpted by the Indian sculptor V. Ganapati Sthapati, who also created the Iraivan Temple, and was unveiled on the millennium day of 1 January 2000.

CONCLUSION

An overall appraisal of the study enables one to feel that the direct processes a number of tourist attractions. Tourist motivators are in plenty but they have not been utilised up to the optimum levels. Despite its rich and varied Fauna and Flora many tourist potentials are yet to be tapped. Measures should be undertaken to highlight the socio - cultural and artistic merits and values of the district.

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