

STRATEGIES FOR THE PROMOTION OF HERITAGE TOURISM

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Abstract: Tourism is an important means of promoting cultural exchanges and international cooperation. Cultural Tourism is a wing of tourism which is not physical in character, but it is associated with social and cultural geography. The coast of Kerala had a great significance in its culture. The port Muziris was one of the oldest and busiest ports on the west coast of India. The Jews and Europeans had come through this port. It results the arrival of foreign traders and their settlements in central part of Kerala. It helped to have cultural relations with the outside world in early days. Still the contributions of foreigners can be seen in the form of palaces, religious centers, museums, forts or other ancient buildings. The main aim of the study is to identify different types of heritage sites and the promotion strategies of heritage tourist centers. The data collection methods like Field observation, GPS survey, and interviews have helped to complete the study. The geospatial techniques using Arc GIS has been used for the fulfillment of maps.

Key Words: Heritage Tourism, Foreign Traders, Cultural Relations

Introduction: Tourism geography is the study of travel and tourism, as an industry and as a social and cultural activity. The word Heritage is associated in the context of cultural tourism. People preserve their valuable objects as their heritage. According to Melville (1974) is: “culture is the man-made part of the environment. “Cultural tourism satisfies the visitors to make understand among the old properties, in terms of art, culture, history and architecture. The areas of present Kodungalloor and North Paravur belong to the districts of Ernakulam and Thrissur in central Kerala is an apt destination for heritage tourism. The famous port Muziris was situated somewhere in present Kodungalloor determined the trade in middle Kerala. Kerala had a great connection with the Jews where they vanished from their hometown. In associated with the trade they had settled at Kodungalloor, North Paravur and the adjoining areas. They have contributed many remnants. Churches established when St.Thomas landed in Kerala and flourished markets

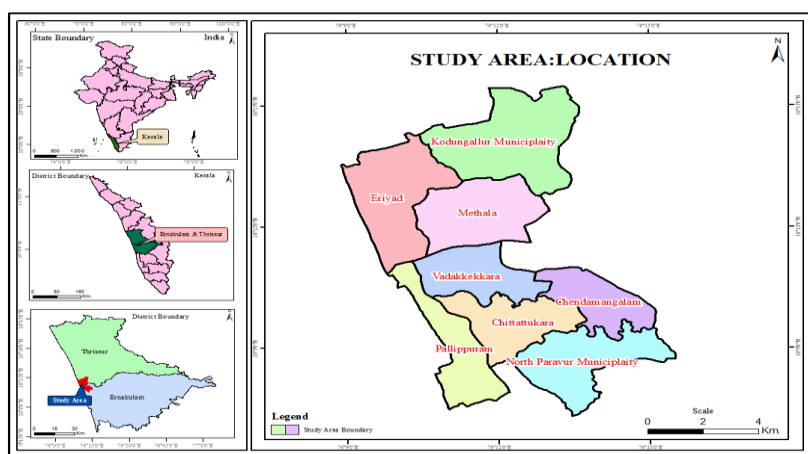
of spices began to expand and attracted many countries to reach Kerala. The history of Kerala is well reflected in the monuments like forts, palaces, museums, temples etc. The combination of all these structures led significant role in heritage tourism in Kerala. The evidences to believe that Kerala had attracted traders for over 2000 years.

Objectives: - The objectives of the study are following:

- To understand the distribution of different types of heritage sites in the study area
- To identify the promotion strategies of heritage tourist sites in the study area

Methodology: The present study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data collection is based on GPS Survey, Field observation, Interviews etc. Cartographic analysis was done with the help of geospatial techniques using Arc GIS software. The secondary data have been collected from books, reports, articles, and newspapers.

Location Aspect of the study area : The study area lies between the lat long extensions of $10^{\circ}6'0''$ N and $76^{\circ}14'0''$ E. The study area comes under two municipalities namely North Paravur in Ernakulam district and Kodungalloor in Thrissur district. Panchayaths are Chendamangalam, Vadakkekara, Pallippuram, Chittattukara, Methala and Eriyad. The study area is low land has an average elevation of 13 mtrs from msl.



Map No: 1

Source: On the basis of M.Phil dissertation, December 2019

Previous Empirical Reviews:-The book entitled “*Heritage Conservation Preservation and Restoration of Monuments*” by N.L. Batra (1997) describes in his book is about various conservation measures as well as the challenges still confronting to preserve and Conservation measures, remedies, Preservatives and consolidates (Page 137- 160). Another book “*Cultural History of Kerala*” (Vol.1) by Rajan Gurukkal and M.R. RaghavaVarior, Dept. Of Cultural Publications Govt. of Kerala TVM, (Year 1999) reveals in chapter 2, the Environment, climate, & rainfall, Formation of Kodungalloor coast and Development of Coast Page (31-50). The book “*Monuments of Kerala*” (Published by The Director General ASI New Delhi 1992) by H. Sarkar reveals in his book that the origin of Christianity, synagogues and also the monuments. The book “*Religious Tourism in India*” written by Lavkush Mishra had explained that, In India pilgrim tourism has an important role in domestic tourism. In this book he emphasized on different religions and major religious centers and its origin. Museum Guide “*Kerala Lifestyle Museum Paliyam Nalukettu*” described about the famous Paliyam museum at Chendamangalam. This book says the peculiarities of the Nalukettu and Dutch palace constructed by the Dutch.

Findings and discussion:-



Spatial Distribution of Heritage Sites

All the heritage sites under this study are interrelated with its historical background. Due to the arrival of Jews, synagogues had constructed as a worship centre. In association with a street and cemetery called Jews cemetery and Jews Street emerged. St. Thomas established church in the study area and still it is functioning. In North Paravur municipality several heritage spots are located very closely. Cheraman Juma Masjid is located nearby Kodungalloor, and is considered as the first mosque in India. Cheraman Parambu is associated with it. Excavations conducted here in 1944 and 1945 by Govt. of Kerala. Most of the valuable things had discovered during the time of excavation. Paliyam place and Nalukettu is situated very closely. It reveals the history of Paliath Achans. Gothuruth is an island with major natural scenic attraction in the study area. Chavittunadakam is a folk dance and art form by Latin Christians is still performing in Gothuruth. There was a cultural transmission through the dance. Kottayailkovilakam have been promoted many form of art for the cultural harmony of the local people. Except synagogue other three worship centers are functioning. These four worship centers are situated inside a fort and it

SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF HERITAGE SITES

LEGEND

- Cultural Site
- Religious Site
- Educational Site
- Archaeological Site

DISTRICT

- Kollam
- Kottayam

Scale

0 1000 2000

Source: On the basis of M.Phil dissertation, December 2019

All these diversified cultural products are considered as the heritage of our state. We should take care of all these rare pieces for our future generations because past is reflected through these heritage sites. Below table shows different types of heritage sites in the study area.

Religious Sites	Cultural Sites	Commercial/Administrative	Natural Sites
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Mookambika Temple	Jews Synagogue	Paravur Market	Thattukadavu
Kannankulangara Temple	Jews street		Boat Jetty
Kottakkavu Church	Jews Cemetery	Kottappuram Market	
Manjumatha Church	Palam palace		Gothuruth
Kottayilkovalakom	PalamNalukettu	Kacheri Compound (Admin)	
CheramanJumaMazjid	Vypeekotta		Kottappuram
Marthoma Church	seminary		ferry
Kodungalloor Bhagavathi	Pallippuram Fort		
Temple	Kottappuram Fort		
Thiruvanchikulam	CheramanParambu		
Mahadeva Temple	SahodaranAyyappan		
	Museum		
	Pattanam site		

Table No: 1

Source: Computed by the investigators

- All the religious sites are functioning in proper manner except synagogues
- Kottappuram and North Paravur markets are the combination of many lifestyles of different people who did trade with Kerala. Now the market has changed the old form due to latest development in the town.
- Natural sites are conducting ferry services to connect different heritage sites in the study area.

Synagogues: -It is the oldest heritage monuments in Kerala. Jews came in Kerala since 1st BC and their communities were settled around present Kodungalloor region. They had established synagogues as their worship centre. Cochin Jews or Malabari Jews are the oldest group of Jews in India. There are eight known synagogues located in Kochi neighboring Ernakulam, North Paravur, Chendamangalam and Mala in Kerala.

North Paravur synagogue is the oldest and largest in Kerala, and second largest in India. Typical style of Kerala architecture is evident here. Jews came to Kerala for trade and became settled near by the coastal area and they made a place (market) for trade. Paravur market is associated with this synagogue. After the formation of Israel Jews from Kerala migrated to their homeland and left their worship place.

The average number of tourists in Cochin synagogue is around 1500 per day. But in North Paravur and Chendamangalam are visited by low number of tourists due to the lack of road transportation facilities. Due to the demand of tourists Cochin synagogue is more attracted with ancient objects in different styles like lights, lamps, floor etc. There are lack of good guides to explain all the characteristics or importance of the synagogue is the problems associated with this site. In attached with this they have kept the Jews cemetery in proper manner. If it is maintain properly it will be a good site to preserve as the past relic.

Palaces: - Paliyam palace in the study area tells the history of Cochin kingdom and its relation with other countries. Paliyam is actually the name of a family. 'Paliath Achan' is the name given to the eldest male surviving member of Paliyam family. This palace was the reward of Dutch to the Paliath Achans. The architecture includes Kerala style as well as Dutch contributions. The palace is under the power of private trust by the Paliyam with Govt. of Kerala. The palace was affected by recent flood (2018 & 2019). Ancient valuable things like manuscripts, artefacts, were damaged. All these were kept in the ground floor of the palace. This floor was totally under water and about 50 lakh loss happened. The water level was 5ft. in 2018 flood.

Conclusion & Suggestions

A good number of above mentioned cultural sites were destroyed during the conflict between the ancient rulers. Few of them are still remains and still functioning well. Historic buildings were subjected to damage due to many reasons. Recent flood adversely affected on these spots. Therefore primary focus is made of proper planning and cultural preservation of all historical attractions. The following suggestions have put forward for the conservation

- Conservation of heritage monuments through cultural tourism will be generated to the economy of the state
- It is more profitable and efficient to preserve old buildings than new buildings
- It creates job opportunities to the local community and generating income for household
- Flooding would promote the growth of fungi and it will affect the manuscripts, artifacts of organic origin which needs more scientific conservation methods.
- In order to save flood affected materials or painting on the walls and doors need advices from conservators.

- Support water proofing walls and roofs to prevent damage from floods and heavy rainfall especially on palaces.
- Forewarn water level indicators of flood should help to reach the people in a safe place.
- Keep micro film copies of manuscripts and cultural reports in a separate location may be recommended.
- Develop a mitigation plan for repairing and restoring process through major strategies and tactics for immediate evacuation.
- Finally it can be gained by communication of plans to all employees in the associated institutions using model posters and banners.
- Educate the visitors about the importance of heritage properties.

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