



HISTORICAL SITES AND DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN KERALA: A CASE STUDY OF WAYANAD

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Tourism has become one of the fast growing industries in India in recent decades in terms of generation of revenue, employment, national and regional development. Tourism is generally described as a leisure industry and smokeless industry. Generally the tourists are attracted to other places because of the unique peculiarities of that region chiefly based on the natural and cultural heritage. To a great extent Indian tourism is based upon natural beauty, unique civilization, wild life and ancient monuments. Tourism industry involves a composite of activities namely transportation, accommodation, eating and drinking establishments, shops, entertainment, adventurous activities and other hospitality related activities. In short tourism industry plays a major role in the all round development of a region.

As a unique civilization India is a centre of many religions in the world such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism and so on. Cultural and historical monuments of these religions are a great attraction to tourists to India. The cultural and historical monuments are the part of the heritage of a nation and it is also a part of the heritage of humanity. India is a land of numerous heritage monuments and some of them dates back to Mesolithic or Neolithic period. These cultural and historical monuments have spread all over India. They have been great tourist attractions when the authorities began to market these tourism potentials of India. Apart from Indian Ministry of Tourism, each and every state in India designed and promoted their own tourism potentials to attract foreign

and domestic tourists. Since 1994-95 Kerala government also began to market the immense tourism potentialities of Kerala. The panoramic scenery, enchanting beaches, backwaters, beautiful mountains, wild life sanctuaries, places, religious centres and historical monuments are the main attractions in Kerala. The government of Kerala very successfully marketed the tourism potentials of Kerala by using the catch word “ Kerala : Gods own country” (Vijayakumar, 2009: 5-20). This paper is an attempt to bring out the growth of Wayanad district in Kerala because of the attraction of historical and heritage monuments in the district and role played by the regional tourism promotion councils in the development of tourism.

In the tourism sphere of Kerala, Wayanad is generally considered as a best instance of tourism development in the district (Mehta, 2008: 215-217). Wayanad is situated in an elevated mountainous plateau in Western Ghats. This north eastern hilly forest region of Kerala became a separate district in November 1, 1980. Before the formation of the district, Wayanad region was divided into two taluks i.e., North Wayanad and South Wayanad under Kannur and Kozhikode districts respectively and they were in neglected condition. In the earlier period people used to avoid the visit of Wayanad because of severe cold, malaria and fear of wild animals till the formation of the district. Besides, Wayanad was a land of tribal people including some primitive tribal groups. Paniya, Kuruma, Kurichiya, Uralikuruma, Kattunaika, Adiyas and so on are the main indigenous groups living in the district. This region began to experience social, economic and cultural modernity with the advent of peasant migrants from central Tranvancore to Wayanad in the second half of the twentieth century (Mathew, 2011: 93-147).

As a hilly highland region of Kerala, natural scenic beauty is the main attraction of Wayanad. Along with natural beauty, exotic legends, ancient historical monuments, mysterious mountain caves, tribal culture and heritage, exotic wildlife and tea plantations attract tourists to Wayanad. Statistics show that there is a great increase in the number of foreign and domestic tourists in the last two decades. Wayanad is one of the few districts in Kerala having unique historical and heritage monuments. It is a land of large number of many ancient monuments of great historical importance. The most significant historical and cultural monument of Kerala is Edakkal cave. This cave is situated in a place called Ambalavayal near Sultan Bathery town in Wayanad district. The rare and unique Petroglyphs in the Edakkal cave have put Wayanad in the tourism map of the world. The Jain temples constructed in Hoysala and Vijayanagara styles also attract visitors to Wayanad. Besides, a Heritage Museum in Ambalavayal also display the rich historical and cultural tradition of Wayanad.

Inflow of Domestic and Foreign Tourists in Wayanad 2004-2014

	2004	2013	% of Increase
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Foreign Tourists	749	10844	1347.8%
Domestic Tourists	187701	519306	176 %

Source: *District Level Statistics: Wayanad- 2005*, (2006) Thiruvananthapuram. Department of Economics and Statistics, p.18 and *Information Bulletin Wayanad*, (2014), Kalpetta, District Tourism Promotion Council (DTPC), p. 2

Edakkal Cave

The cave was located on the side of ancient trade route in this high range connecting Mysore to the ports of Malabar. Till the end of nineteenth century it was an unknown cave inside the coffee plantation of Europeans. This cave and Petroglyphs were discovered by Fred Fawcett, the then Malabar Police Superintendent and an Anthropologist in 1894.¹ In his trip to Wayanad in 1890s, he found some Neolithic stone axes in the coffee estate and his later enthusiastic search led to the discovery Edakkal rock shelter. He published a detailed report of the cave in the journal *Indian Antiquary* in October 1901(Fawcett, 2006).¹ For the preparation of this report he took advice from many scholars on Edakkal engravings like R. C. Temple, Dr. Hultzch, Robert B. Foote, J. Alan Brown etc. Fawcett had identifies 97 pictures in the stone.

For almost 80 years nobody noticed the report and the cave remained as an unknown place till 1980's. During that period the visit of Edakkal required an adventurous and dangerous journey as there was no transportation and other infrastructure facilities in the cave. When the UNESCO project fellow from Switzerland E. O. Tilner visited the cave and stayed many days in Edakkal in 1984 to study the features of the Petro glyphs, the cave began to receive attention from other scholars. His findings regarding the unique characters of Edakkal Petro glyphs were turning point in the history of Edakkal cave (Johny, 2006: 48).¹ He was assisted by scientists from Germany and Austria. After his study this cave became famous not only in India but in foreign countries also.

Features of Edakkal Petroglyphs

This cave is situated in Ambukutty hills in Ambalavayal, ten kilometers from Sultan Bathery town. Originally it is a prehistoric rock shelter formed naturally out of strange disposition of three huge boulders. One huge boulder is resting over the other two boulders and it became the shape of a cave. Thus the word Edakkal literally means 'the stone in between' in Malayalam. The rare engravings are made on the sides of each rock which support the huge boulder. The origins of the engravings in cave are still unknown. Some believe they date to the Neolithic Age and some of the engravings are also said to be from the Mesolithic Age. Archaeologists and historians generally agree more than 3000 years of age to

the engravings of the Edakkal cave. These engravings were made by prehistoric stone or metal implements.

The rock or stone carvings are generally called Petroglyphs.¹ These rock art images are made by physically modifying the rock surface by abrading, scratching, pecking or carving. These carving may be made by primitive tribal sections of Wayanad and it took even months to etch out carvings in the rock sitting or standing on the floor. The engravings in Edakkal can be divided into figures and letters. Human figures with head gears, male and female figures are the most common in engravings in the rock wall. An elephant, wild dog, peacock, various planters, flowers, a big wheeled cart, geometrical signs are the other figures in the wall. The morphological study of Edakkal engravings reveals that it is a straight line geometric scheme which does not require any particular skill rather than patience to carry on continuous grinding with the celt (Gurukkal, 1995: 29).

Inside the carvings of the figures many inscriptions covering a period of thousands of years were discovered by archeologists and epigraphists. Famous scholars like Dr. Hultzch (1897), H. D. Sanghalia, M. R. Raghavavarier and Rajan Gurukkal (1792), Iravatham Mahadevan tried to read the inscriptions in the cave. They have identified 10 inscriptions in various scripts starting from first or second century BC to fifth century AD. These inscription are written in Sanskrit, Brahmi and Tamil Vattezhuthu scripts of ancient period. This cave has become a great tourist attraction of both domestic and foreign tourists in India.

Edakkal: A Heaven of Tourist

This historical heritage site has become a hot tourist destination of the visitors of Wayanad when District Tourism Promotion Council(DTPC) took over this site. DTPC set up a separate Destination Management Council (DMC) to promote new infrastructure facilities in and around the cave. The one kilometer road from Ayiramkolli (nearest main road junction) to cave was in a very bad condition till 2009 and it was repaired and journey to the cave became more easy. Besides, new stairs were made to enter into the cave and new fences were also erected for the protection of the engravings inside the cave. Also, Information Assistants were appointed inside and outside the cave to give necessary information and to provide historical information to the visitors. Security staffs were posted in Edakkal for the protection of the cave and its Petroglyphs. The number of visitors to the Edakkal Cave increased in high proportion and the revenue collection from the cave increased significantly.

Income Details from Edakkal Cave

1.	Years	Amount
2	2007-08	1900201
3	2008-09	2532539
4	2009-10	1630985

5	2010-11	1839635
6	2011-12	4997505
7	2012-13	5417915
8	2013-14	6885240
9	2014-15	7015160

Source: Record of *Visitors and Collection Details as on 31/03/2015*. (2015) Kalpetta, District Tourism Promotion Council, p. 3 & 4.

Wayanad Heritage Museum

Another important historical centre in Wayanad that attracts tourists was Wayanad Heritage Museum. The ancient history of Wayanad can be traced to Pre-historic and Proto-historic periods. Though tribal people were the original inhabitants of Wayanad, their number became less when other sections of the people migrated to Wayanad. The Nairs, Jains, Muslims, Chetties, Christians and so on entered into Wayanad since ninth century. Large number of tools and implements of ancient historical periods were scattered in different parts of Wayanad. Neolithic hand axes, hero stones, burial urns, terracotta figurines, pottery, ornaments, granite statues of gods and goddess and Tamil and Vattezhuttu stone inscriptions were discovered from various parts of the district. For the preservation of these historical monuments Wayanad Heritage Museum was established at Ambalavayal under DTPC in 1996. This Museum is a showcase of tribal heritage of Wayanad.

The artifacts sections inside the museum were divided into four categories i.e., *Gothrasmrithi*, *Devasmrithi*, *Veerasmrithi* and *Jeevanasmrithi*.¹ These divisions were made on the basis of the nature of the materials collected from different parts of the district. In *Gothrasmrithi* section ancient and unique tools and implements of different tribal sections are displayed for the visitors. Tribal weapons, pottery, utensils, tools, ornaments and other items were displayed. Artistic granite statues of god and goddess since 13th century are included in the *Devasmrithi* section of the museum. Most of these statues were made of Hoysala and Vijayanagara styles of art. The *Veerasmrithi* part of the exhibition depicts the heroic acts of the rulers and the army. A hero stone showing tiger hunt is a unique item displayed in this section. The last section *Jeevnasmrithi* shows the rich tradition and cultural heritage of tribal people of Wayanad especially Kurichiyas, Kurumas, Paniyas, Kattunaikkas and Uralikurumas. Their hunting weapons, agricultural tools, utensils and so on are the main items of this section.

All the historical and cultural materials kept in the museum were discovered from various parts of Wayanad especially from early market centres of Jain traders and temple centres of Hindus. A lot of stone monuments were collected from Pulpally, Muthanga, Kuppakolly, Ambalavayal and Baveli area of Wayanad since

the beginning of the last century. The figures of Nandi, Ganapathi, Bhairavamurthi, Rama, woman with lotus, Kuruthiveeran, writer and many other figures are displayed in the museum. In short, the historical materials kept in the revenue offices, schools, libraries and in other places got a separate centre when a Heritage Museum was established in Wayanad. It became a major tourist attraction in Wayanad since its inception. Moreover, DTPC has established a small multimedia theatre adjoining the museum for a multimedia presentation on Wayanad which shows the rich culture and heritage of this district. When the number of visitors increased the revenue from the Museum also increased in big way.

Income Details from Wayanad Heritage Museum

1.	Years	Amount
2	2007-08	194815
3	2008-09	283700
4	2009-10	416814
5	2010-11	444583
6	2011-12	657855
7	2012-13	669315
8	2013-14	778945
9	2014-15	854250

Source: *Visitors and Collection Details as on 31/03/2015*. (2015) Kalpetta, District Tourism Promotion Council (DTPC), p. 3 & 4.

Jain Temples in Wayanad

Wayanad was one of the main centres of Jainism in the medieval period. The close proximity of this region with Karnataka especially with Sravanabelagola facilitated the spread of Jainism in Wayanad. The exact period of the settlement of Jains in Wayand is not available but it is believed that migration of Jains to Wayanad started by fourth or fifth century AD and it reached its zenith by fourteenth century AD (Monuments, 1978: 19). The beautiful Jain temples scattered in different parts of Wayanad are the evidence of dynamic Jain community in Wayanad. Though most of them are in a dilapidated condition, it has also become a tourist attraction in Wayanad.

The most attractive Jain temple in Wayanad is a Jain Basti situated in Sultan Bathery. The original name of Sultan Bathery was Hanniruthubeedi meaning twelve streets. It was main centre of Jainism in Wayanad.¹ As an example of cloistered temple, this granite monument was build in 14th century AD. The features of Kerala and Vijayanagara style can be seen in the construction of this Basti (Jain Monuments, 2004: 5). It consist of square Garbhagraha, Ardhamandapa, closed Mahamandapa and detached portico simulating the

Namaskaramandapa of Kerala tradition. The pillars of Mahamandapam in Vijayanagara style and the roof of the temple is made of stone. This centuries old temple was in a dilapidated condition when it was handed over to ASI. Under ASI this temple was renovated and it became only Jain temple of this kind in Kerala. Hundreds of tourists are visiting this temple daily.

Twin Temples in Puthanagadi

The twin Jain temples at Puthanagadi near Panamaram are the most beautiful Jain temples in Wayanad. But these two temples are in ruined condition because of the neglect of the government agencies. These temples are Janardhanagudi on the side of the road to Nirvaram and Vishnugudi on eastern side of the Janardhanagudi temple. Beautiful images of Thirthankaras, Dwarapalakas, Saraswathi, Gajalakshmi, Ananthashayanam etc. are carved in the granite walls and pillars of the Janardhanagudi. Another Jain temple Vishnugudi also has very beautiful carvings. Nearly 300 carving in the stone pillars and walls have survived the passage of time. Sculptures of God and Goddess including Jain deities, war scenes, old Kannada script and many other sculptures similar to Hindu Gods were also carved in the temple.¹ Since both of these temples are situated in the private property of the individual, the ASI of the DTPC did not take any measures for the preservation and protection of the monuments.

District Tourism Promotion Council (DTPC)

DTPC has contributed very significantly to the development of tourism in Wayanad. When the government realized the potential of tourism in Kerala, the government formed autonomous district councils for the promotion of district tourism destinations in the districts. The main objectives of the council are to manage tourist destinations and to implement new schemes or projects in the tourism sector in the districts. Wayanad was one of the early districts in the state to form a District Tourism Promotion Council in the state. The Wayanad DTPC was formed in 1989 and since then the DTPC plays a significant role in the promotion of tourism industry in the district. The Governing Body of the Council is headed by District Collector as Chairman, but the day to day activities of the Council are managed by the Member Secretary. The main responsibilities of Wayanad DTPC are to manage the attractive natural locations and historical sites and to provide amenities to visitors in the sites and give accessibility to the visitors to reach the destinations. Naturally the transportation facilities and amenities provided by the Council led to the increased tourist arrival in the district.

Domestic and Foreign Tourists visited Wayanad and Growth Rate 2009-2013

Tourist Growth Trends				
year	Domestic Tourist	Growth Rates	Foreign Tourist	Growth Rates

2009	368459	24.70%	5362	4.80%
2010	408151	10.80%	6575	22.60%
2011	451184	10.54%	7567	15.09%
2012	480125	6.41%	9541	26.09%
2013	519306	8.16%	10844	13.70%

Source: *Report on Tourist Trends in Wayanad,- Ennuru Section*, (2015)
Kalpetta, Department of Tourism and Tribal Affairs, p.20

The above statistics shows the great growth of tourists visiting Wayanad. Within a short period of time Wayanad became a tourist hub of Kerala. When the number of tourists increased in some particular locations in Wayanad especially in Edakkal Cave and Kuruva Island special arrangements were made for the management of the sites. This is known as Destination Management Council (DMC) with concerned MLA as the Chairman of DMC. The Member Secretary of DTPC will be the Chief Executive Officer of the DMC.

From the above discussion it is very clear that the historical monuments play a very significant role in the growth of tourism of a region. This is very evident in the case of Wayanad district in Kerala. In addition to the natural heritage of region the historical and cultural remains will also boost the tourism industry in the district. Even though it was late, the DTPC of Wayanad could identify the tourist potential of Edakkal cave in the district. The present need of the hour is the protection of the heritage monuments also. The authorities should take strong measures to control the excessive visit of tourists and deal problem of dumping waste materials including plastics around the historical sites. A state can utilize the tourism potential of historical and cultural heritage of a state but it is also their duty to preserve these monuments for the coming generations.

Notes and References

¹ This cave was discovered accidentally when he was in a hunting trip in the Kuppamudi Estate of his friend Colin Mackenzie in Amabalavayal.

The original text of Fawcett, Fred's article *Notes on the Rock Carvings in the Edakkal Cave, Wynaad* was reproduced by the publication division of Shreyas, an NGO in Sultan Bathery in the year 2006 with an introduction by historian Dr.K. K. N. Kurup.

The findings of E. O. Tillner was published in the form of a report entitled 'The Edakkal Caves in Ambukuthy Crack on Bathery Rock'. It was translated by Mrs. R. Mittal and reproduced in O. K. Johny 's book *Edakkal Cave Carvings- A Visitors Companion*, published from Kozhikode in 2006.

² The word Petroglyph is came from the two Greek words 'petros' and 'gluphein' meaning "stone" and "to carve" respectively.

³The word *Smrithi* means memory. *Gothrasmrithi* displays the artifacts of tribal groups, *Devasmrithi* shows the ancient god and goddess worshiped in Wayanad. *Veerasmrithi* exhibits the courageous deeds of bravery of warriors and soldiers in the medieval period and *Jeevanasmrithi* exposes the livelihood strategies of the people in Wayanad.

⁴ According to the Varadur Inscription Wayanad had seven Jain centres. They are Hannerudubeedi, Manikyapuri, Ksheerapuri, Kalpatti, Vennayodu, Palukunnu, Hosangadi.

⁵ Recently Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has declared Vishugudi as National Monument on September 2015.

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