

Cultural Dimension in Nagapattinam District

Mrs.G.Anbarasi, Dr.A.Meenakshi,

Research Scholar, ADM College Nagapattinam.

Research Advisor, Kunthavai Natchiyar Government Arts College, Thanjavur.

Corresponding Author: Mrs.G.Anbarasi

Abstract: Tourism is travel recreational leisure or business purposes. Tourism is vital for many countries including India due to the large intake of money for businesses with their goods and services and the opportunity for employment in the services industries associated with tourism. These services industries include transportation services, such as airlines, and taxi cubs, hospitality services, such as accommodation including hotels and resorts, and entertainment venues, such as amusement park, casinos, shopping malls, music venues and theatres.

Key Words: Thaikkal Mat, Cane works, Musical Instruments, Import and Export, Vedaranyam Salt, Fishing.

Date of Submission: 14-06-2019

Date of acceptance: 29-06-2019

I. INTRODUCTION

Cultural Tourism is relatively a new concept, and therefore, it is important to first understand the vital link between culture and tourism. In earlier times because of limited communication and slow modes of travel, people lived relatively in isolation. Today, the cultural heritage, regional diversities, natural and living cultures have become major tourism attractions. In the seminar on Tourism and Culture held in the year 1999 in Uzbekistan under the aegis of WTO and UNESCO, it was concluded that tourism is based on authentic cultural resources and cultural heritage is one of the main motivating factors for tourists the world over. The best example of popular cultural heritage is Nagapattinam District.

Cultural tourism, according to Simith (1984,4) involves a visit to vanishing life style that lies within human memory with its old style houses, homespun, fabrics, Ox drawn crafts and ploughs, handicrafts etc.

Cultural heritage is transmitted from one generation to another. Heritage tourism has been viewed as 'tourism entered on what we have inherited, which can mean anything from historic buildings, to art works, to beautiful scenery'. The increasing desire to preserve culture and present it for local and visitors to learn and enjoy has led to increased provision of cultural heritage attractions.

Handicrafts industry is specially known as tourist product. It is accepted that the expansion and growth of handicraft items very much depend on the arrival of both domestic and international tourists. Nagapattinam District is credited with many handicrafts practiced in many places which have attracted the attention of the State and the nation.

Thaikkal Mat:

The mat weaving craft carried down by generation to generation traditionally at Thaikkal near Sirkazhi is one of the foremost centers of such manufacturing in the State.

A large number of varieties in mat weaving are made and exported to other states. Being conducive towards health, the mats and other related items prepared at this area are preferred by the people in general. Even the very name 'Thaikkal mat' has become a well known axiom. The handicraft brings considerable revenue besides exploring the indigenous skill and artistic grandeur of Tamilnadu. One is naturally prompted by the very desire of frequenting Thaikkal to have a firsthand look at the village industry, and experience the newness, thrill, variety, workmanship and the underlying concept of well being by adhering to indigenous means, methods and modes, besides understanding the traditional follow ups.

The raw materials required for the weaving of mat themselves are interesting. A long tender grass called 'Korai pull' grown in the vicinity of the village is purchased and processed. A number of artistic, ritual, climatic, traditional and religious considerations go together within the weaving of mat. As the mats are retaining coolness during summer, they are preferred to other materials meant for sleep and rest. They are also cheaper and convenient for handling and washing.

Cane works:

In addition to the traditional mat weaving, Thaikkal is also noted for cane works. Chairs, small baskets, dining table sets, sofa sets, swings, cradles, small stools, flower vases and other related essential as well as decorative articles are made amazingly at Thaikkal. Around hundred families are involved in the cane works. More than five hundred persons have taken up handicrafts for their livelihood.

Cane belongs to creeper family of vegetation. Its botanical name is *Clamus*. It will grow up to fifteen feet and more in height. A grown up cane would be around 2 inches thick. Such kinds of cane are not found in the State. Hence required quantity of cane is brought from northern states particularly from Assam and also imported from Andaman and Malaysia. Processing involve indigenous methods and means. Not many places in this State fringe to the forefront in this type of handicraft. As such the area deserves more considerable attention. Apart from being usable materials, cane works are capable of kindling the artistic awareness and quenching the thirst of the people in this regard. They are noted for their innate atmospheric adjustments particularly during scorching summer when the household materials like cot, chairs, swings, teapoys, sofa sets, seats etc will be conducive towards retaining coolness averting harmful side effects. It is for this hygienic effects, people prefer to purchase articles made of cane rather than plastics. Tradition is being handed down from generation to generation in the manner of making the cane products manually without resorting to machinery. therefore it is no less important to state that handicrafts have their own significant place in fostering the cultural make up of a state.

Musical Instruments:

Therazhundur a village near Mayiladudurai is the unique place as the domestic manufacturing of Nadaswaram which is the popular musical wind instrument and somewhat a metaphor for the cultural affairs of Tamil people. Nadaswaram is widely played by thousands of persons far and wide. But few only know the making of this musical instrument. The know how of the Nadaswaram manufacturing rests only with certain families in Therazhundur and a near by village, called Narasingampettai.

Nadaswaram performance will be lured towards the making of the instruments itself at Therazhundur. Traditional knowledge has a sway over this indigenous artistic handicrafts. Hence the possibility of attracting the attention of any alien person towards visiting the area can not be undermined.

Literary allurements find due place in the tourist web. In fact Therazhundur has got another glorious feature to its cap. It is the birth place of the unparalleled Tamil poet namely Kamban. A place where this great poet was born is now called Kamar Medu. Some years back archaeological endeavours exposed certain antiques connected with Kamar which have been taken away and exhibited in the government museum in Chennai, a note worthy aspect to watch. Annual symposiums are held at Therazhundur in honour of Kamar.

Nagapattinam District is the birth place of many musical exponents who were experts in Nadaswaram and Thavil. Many arts have grown, along with the growth of temples. Nadaswaram and Thavil found a prominent place in many auspicious occasions in the functions of temples, other house hold ceremonies and marriages. The vidvans are patronized by royal, religious institutions and by the public.

Import and Export:

Poompuhar

Poompuhar is situated in the Sirkazhi taluk and is distanced at 21 and 24 kms from Sirkazhi and Mayiladuthurai respectively. Poompuhar otherwise called Kaveripoompattinam has been the most ancient coastal town in the Tamil country. It has had close trade links with Greece, Romen, China, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Egypt, Palastine etc., Sangam classic contains copious references to the trade activities carried on at Poompuhar. It refers to various commodities to be exported and imported and to be sold. They are precious stones, gold, harams, ahil, pearls, food items of Elam etc. The commercial guild called Nangoor Manigramattar had trade contacts with Thailand. The products imported were pots or jars made up of roulette, arritine and amphoera wares from Rome, porcelain jars from China. The exported things from Poompuhar were colourful beads, precious stones, pearls etc. the vestiges of ancient commercial and cultural glory has been revealed through the excavations conducted by the Archaeological Survey of India in 1963 – 64.

Nagapattinam port is an anchored port where ships are anchored at midstream and cargo and passenger ships are transported through lighters/ barges from ship to shore and vice versa. In the past the main port was under the control of the Portuguese. It was first opened by the Portuguese and then captures by the Dutch in 1660 and remained in their hands till 1781. Afterwards the port came under the administration of the British in 1782. It has container facilities.

In the past onions were exported and wheat, fertilizer and timbers were imported. But due to the policy of the government, import of wheat and fertilizer were stopped for several years. Apart from this the only cargo

cum passenger service between Chennai and Singapore via, Nagapattinam was also discontinued since October 1984 due to the fire accident of the vessel called M.V.Chidambaram.

Vailankani:

Vailankanni the international tourist spot is also a commercial centre where various kinds of sea by products are sold. The artistic articles are made up of conches, cowries, oyster shells and shell fish and so on. Entrance garlands, frames of mirrors, Key bunches, bangles, different kinds of garlands and other decorative and ornamental things are sold at large in the open markets, an added attraction to tourists. Raw materials are brought from Rameswaram, Tuticorin, Mahabalipuram and Kanyakumari. These raw materials are cleaned and designed into different products by handiworks by certain families in Kanyakumari, Tuticorin, Ramaswaram and Poompuhar. The private companies are at Pondicherry, tuticorin, Chennai and Kanyakumari. The retail shop – keepers buy these sea by – products from those companies.

Vedaranyam Salt:

Vedaranyam is a notable place from the religious as well as the historical point of view. Besides it is a Commercial centre also by having numerous salt pans which generate income for the local people and also serve as an attraction for tourists. Alterations in ground conditions made by men for the manufacture of salt near Vedaranyam.

Fishing:

Nagapattinam has a coastal area spreading upto 165 kms and marine fishing is practiced in almost 60 villages along the coast line.

Nagapattinam is well known for the unique of fish namely the ‘Kola’ otherwise called flying fish. By virtue of its taste and abundant availability it has attracted the attention of the local people and elsewhere. consequently the quantum of export gets multiplied.

Details of fishermen engaged in fishing before Tsunami and after Tsunami are given as under:

Details of fishermen going for fishing:

- 1 Total number of fishing hamlets 51
- 2 Total number of active fishermen in the district 27000
- 3 Total number of fishermen carrying on their vocation after Tsunami in the Nagapattinam District 18000
- 4 Number of Fishing crafts going to sea:

	Before Tsunami	After Tsunami	Percentage
a) Catamaran	6350	1838	29%
b) FRP	1672	1450	87%
c) Mechanised Boats	1241	375	30%

The main occupation of Nagapattinam is fishing in the waters of Bay of Bengal. The fish one sold in the daily and weekly fish markets in the town. There is a large number of ice factories for preserving the fish. The Industry suffered a setback after the Tsunami that strength the coast on 26 December 2004.

Agriculture:

Agriculture is the principal occupation in the District. Nearly 65.42% of the total work force is dependent upon agriculture. Nearly 12% are cultivators and the rest 54% agricultural labourers. 55% of the geographical area and constitutes net sown area in the district. Paddy is the principal crop of the district. It accounted for nearly 66% of the gross cropped area.

II. CONCLUSION

The commercial activity though affected by Tsunami, has returned to normalcy by now. These products are marketed to other states like Kerala, Karnataka, Andra and Orissa. By this source they derive around 55 to 60% of the income. These and other commercio cultural elements naturally act as fascinating aspects for tourists including foreigners.

REFERENCES

[1]. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sikkal_Singaravelan_Temple
 [2]. "Velankanni Beach - Famous for Its Pristine Locations". *www.discoveredindia.com*.
 [3]. Retrieved 2016-01-20.

- [4]. Bergunder, Michael; Frese, Heiko; Schröder, Ulrich E. (2010). *Ritual, caste, and religion in colonial South India*. Otto Harrassowitz Verlag. p. 195. ISBN 9783447063777. Retrieved 2013-04-22.
- [5]. "Nagore Dargah trustee dies". *The Hindu*. 2012-04-06. Retrieved 2013-02-15.

Mrs.G.Anbarasi. "Cultural Dimension in Nagapattinam District" *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*. vol. 24 no. 06, 2019, pp. 53-56.