

POTENTIALS FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM INDUSTRY - POST WAR AT JAFFNA DISTRICT IN SRILANKA

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Abstract

The tourism industry plays a key role in regional development. Srilanka is a glorious paradise in the world. It has been popular because of its geographical location. Jaffna is one of the district of Northern province of srilanka. Jaffna district has more tourist potentials. Tourism image in Northern province had changed by war during the last three decades. But The war is mostly over, and Sri Lanka is now stable, and increasing helps a lot. So this time is better to develop the districts. Therefore I selected for the research this title. This research analyses the potential for regional development of tourism industry in Jaffna district. Tourist industry develops and contributes to the regional development and sustainable development. Information was gathered through visit to tourist areas, conducting interviews and relevant documents. SWOT analysis and descriptive statistical analysis were used for the result. The finding of research reveals that Jaffna district can benefit much more than present context of tourist industry. The many potentials for tourism were identified. That can improve the regional development. If Jaffna district has concentrate more on tourism, it can benefit from the tourist industry without endangering it's social, cultural and environmental values.

Key words: *Regional development, Tourism industry, sustainable development, potentials, industry development.*

INTRODUCTION OF RESEARCH

Tourism is one of the largest and the fastest growing industries in the world economy. The tourism industry plays a key role in regional and destination development. It has been popular because of its geographical location and nature. Jaffna is one of the district of Northern province of srilanka. Jaffna district has more tourist potentials to develop the region. Tourism image in Northern province had changed by war during the last three decades. But The war is mostly over, and Sri Lanka is now stable, and increasing helps a lot. So this time is better to develop the districts. Therefore I selected for the research this title.

This research analyses the potential for regional development of tourism industry as a means of improving the tourist industry in Jaffna district. This paper deals with the problem of how Jaffna district. Tourist industry develops and contributes to the regional development and sustainable development without endangering the environment of the region.

Information was gathered through visit to tourist areas, conducting interviews and relevant documents for the extensively study. Descriptive research type, SWOT analysis and descriptive statistical analysis were used for the result.

The finding of research reveals that Jaffna district can benefit much more than present context of tourist industry by promoting tourism industry. The Bio diversity, different type of forest, wild life of natural forests, historical places, religious places and beaches enhance the Jaffna district's potential to promote the tourism. That can improve the regional development. If Jaffna district has concentrate more on tourism, it can benefit from the tourist industry without endangering its social, cultural and environmental values.

“Key words:” Regional development, Tourism industry, sustainable development, potentials, industry development.

1. General background of Tourism industry and situation of Jaffna District in Srilanka.

The Island of Sri Lanka is a small universe, it contains as many variations of culture, scenery, and climate as some countries. But Sri Lanka was seen as a low budget tourist attraction during the war period. Tourism Industry collapsed mainly due to the war conditions through out last 3 decades. The war is mostly over, and Sri Lanka is now stable and safe — and as beautiful, tropical, and friendly as ever. The conflict finally ended last May 2009, ushering in a more peaceful era for this teardrop-shaped island off India's coast, rich in natural beauty and cultural splendor. The Government done much in the past four years to fulfill the needs of the tourism industry. Tourists started pouring in to the country after the end of civil war. Now Major infrastructure development projects are undergoing in the country. The Government identified tourism as a fast emerging potential growth sector in the economy in terms of foreign exchange earnings, employment creation, infrastructure development and regional development. Tourism can bring higher living standard in a country if well managed to serve the interest of the nation. The up liftmen of the tourism industry not only benefits the industry, but also supports many other sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, construction, and many more as a multi earning industry. The setting up of hotels and restaurants will increase income and business opportunities for the self-employed, small and medium enterprises and farmers. It is important to enrich the tourism industry will directly and indirectly help many other economic activities to achieve a higher growth rate.

The key potential areas are identified for tourism industry. They are fisheries, agriculture, dairy, salt based industries, construction, Palmyra based industries, education, post harvest technology, sustainable energy, textile and boat building industries are just a few opportunities that need priority attention.

Essential needs such as electricity, telecommunication, drinking water, sanitary facilities, transport, hospitals, roads, supermarkets, postal services and other essential facilities are established. the Sri Lankan Diaspora are now keen on coming back to the motherland, which is a bright indication to the country.

Jaffna has already become a popular destination for tourists. The Old Dutch Fort of Jaffna, Nallur Kovil, Nagadeepa temple, Keerimalai springs and the Jaffna public library are some of the key tourist attractions in the Jaffna peninsula. Thirty years ago most of the Jaffna people left the country due to the uncertainty in the country and now they are returning to the island. Today instead of the brain drain; brain gain rate has increased. With the beginning of a new era with peace and stability it is vital that the business community recognize the possibilities and re-build the country's economy.

Jaffna has enormous potential for development in the North. Jaffna is a resource land, which was untouched for the past three decades and it is vital to adopt the concept of being green since it is timely to have a sustained tourism in the country. There is immense potential for tourism and hotel industry in the Northern province. Over 500 people visit Jaffna daily from various parts of the country with the dawn of peace. With the opening of the A-9 road for the public, the number of tourists visiting Jaffna has increased rapidly.

The Jaffna peninsula, known as a war zone for over three decades due to the war will soon be Sri Lanka's tourist hub in the North. The entire North is blessed with natural beauty, a source for tourist attraction. Sri Lanka Tourism plans to develop tourist locations in the peninsula on a massive tourist project designed to the North.

The climate of Jaffna is very good for the tourism industry. Climate of Jaffna is dry and tropical as it lies within ten degrees of the equator. Humidity in the air and land-sea breezes makes the temperature conditions more equable on the sea board. The weather conditions in Jaffna are marked by extremes temperatures as it falls in the Dry Zone. The highest temperatures are recorded during the months of April - May and August - September, when the sun is directly overhead. December - January are the coolest period. Many tourists are coming in this periods.

Jaffna is home to beautiful Hindu temples. There are Buddhist temples in Jaffna but most were destroyed by the civil war. The Old Dutch Fort still stands well preserved within is an old Church. Another illustration of Dutch architecture is the King's House. No visit to Jaffna is complete without tasting the delicious Jaffna mango, reputed for its sweetness. About 3 kms away is the majestic Nallur Kandaswamy Temple, home to the largest religious Festival in Jaffna.

The Kayts is an ancient ship docking harbor in the Jaffna peninsula. The Delft, the largest Island houses a castle built by the Portuguese. Jaffna would be an Island if not for its southern reaches wherein stands Elephant's Pass, a spot where elephants once crossed the waters, which is attached to the mainland. The shallow lagoon around Jaffna is home to a variety of flora and fauna.

The peninsula and sunny areas around Chavakachcheri and other parts were sure attracting tourists from the West who aspire sun bathing. Under the northern tourist development project a number of new hotels are likely to be constructed with the work scheduled to kick off before the end of this year. In years to come tourists will not only arrive by road and air, but the ferries will also increase.

several investors, who are very keen to invest in the hotel and tourism industry in Jaffna peninsula. Most said there are no Star Class hotels in Jaffna and considering the opportunity the investors are ready to set up Star Class hotels. It is a niche market for and since it is in the pre-mature stage, it is the ideal time to enter into the market, It is essential to highlight novel concepts, activities and diversifications such as eco-tourism, adventure tourism, beaches, surfing, snorkeling, wildlife, ancient city exploring, food, shopping, religious backgrounds, cultural events and ayurvedic medicaments.

2. Objectives of research

The main objective of the study is to identify the recent salient features of the tourism sector or potential generations of tourism industry for the regional development. The five primary types of potentials attractions are in Jaffna district. they are Historic Places and Buildings, Parks, Natural Areas or features & beaches, places for Seasonal Festivals/ Activities and religious centres. Based on an agricultural, business or seasonal theme, events are often highly appealing products that farm operators can organize. They differ from attractions because of their limited period of operation. Different types of events include conferences/ conventions, agricultural fairs, historic events, and festivals.

Tourist services can improve by develop these tourism places. Such as Accommodations with watching environment, picking and cooking of farm products, Tours associated with production or processing facilities, Retailing services selling local produce and farm-processed products, Leisure/recreation activities centred on events or attractions such as indigenous cuisine, wellness pursuits, biking, hiking. Second one is reveal the strategies plans for increasing regional development in future. Those are increasing the long term sustainability for regional development.

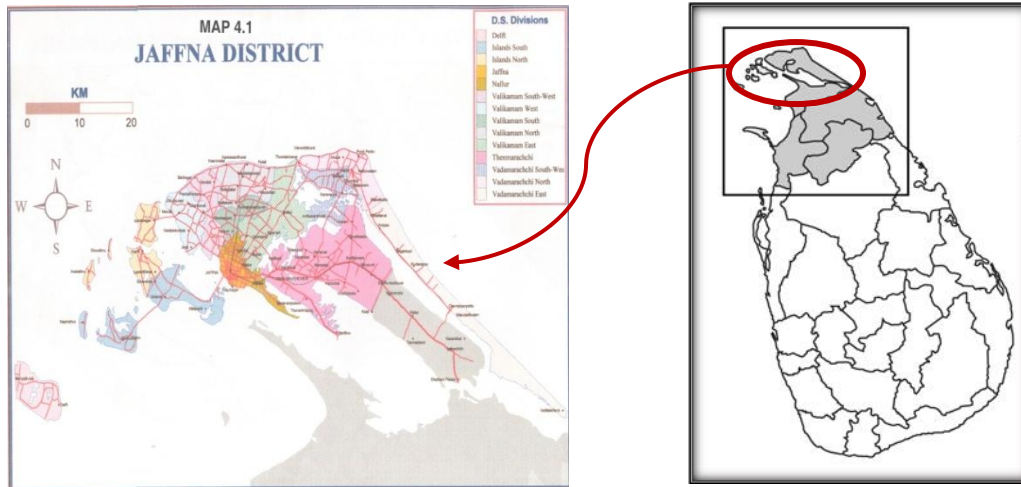
3. Research Area

Jaffna District is one of the 25 administrative districts of Sri Lanka. The headquarters is located in Jaffna city. Jaffna District is located in the far north of Sri Lanka in the Northern Province and occupies most of the Jaffna Peninsula. It has an area of 1,025 square kilometers (396 sq mi). It is divided into four areas geographically, Thenmarachchi, Vadamarachchi, Valikamam and Jaffna Islands.

Jaffna District is divided into 15 Divisional Secretary's Division. The DS Divisions are further sub-divided into 435 Grama Niladhari Divisions. The census conducted by the Department of Census and

Statistics shows the Jaffna District as having a 583,071 population in 2012. Jaffna has enormous potential for development, tourism and hotel industry in the Northern province of Srilanka. There are several Tourist Attraction. The following map is show the research area.

Map 01: Research Area



4. Methodology of Research

This research analyses the potential for regional development of tourism as a means of improving the tourist industry in Jaffna district. Tourist industry develops and contributes to the regional development without endangering the environment of the region.

Information was gathered through visit to tourist areas, conducting interviews and relevant documents for the extensively study. Descriptive research type and descriptive statistical analysis and SWOT analysis were used for the result. Non probability sampling was used and 150 samples were selected for the data processing. The following figure show about the SWOT for tourism industry of Jaffna.

Table - 01: SWOT for tourism industry of Jaffna.

| Strength | Weakness |
|--|---|
| Climate Nature – Sea/Bio diversity/wildlife Historical places Rehabilitate the A9 road High inflow of foreign remittances District less natural disasters Government intentions to support industry The good relationship among western country Resources for large and small industry | Weak public sector management High local and foreign debts Tarnished image of SL during last three decades Seasonal business poor infrastructure facilities(transport, tele communication, quality of Hotels) Not plans and guidelines for tourism places Not awareness for people |
| Threats | Opportunities |
| Inappropriate usage of funding on development World economic down turn Diluted spending power of travelers High security zones Registry, checking by military Bad images about the affected areas International policies about Srilanka | Financial times Employment generation in the tourism sector Improve large and small industry Increasing of inter regional development Establishing the provincial head offices |

Source: Information Gathered by the Authors from Field Work.

5. Result of research

Tourism has become one of the major sectors of the economy in Jaffna district. contributing to a small proportion of the National Income and generating significant employment opportunities. The tourism industry has become the fastest growing service industry in the district with great potentials for its further expansion and diversification. Few proposals to develop nature and tourism in Jaffna. Some tourism places are identified as the most attraction places in Jaffna. They are categorized under four themes namely, places. Events, recreational services and other services. Historic Places and Buildings, Parks, Natural Areas or features & beaches, and religious centres are identified as places.

Table 02: Tourism development themes in Jaffna District.

| Places | Events | Recreational Services | Other Services |
|---|---|---|---|
| <u>Historic Places and Buildings</u> Jaffna Fort, Delft Harbor Thuraiyappah Stadium Jaffna Library, Kayts Town Paruthitivu Natural Harbor Sankiliyan Curve Sankiliyan Manthirimanai University of Jaffna | <u>Conferences</u> Corporate Family Reunions Weddings Get-togethers | <u>Water-based Activity</u> Boating Swimming Fishing with the hook | <u>Accommodation</u> Bed & Breakfast Camping Youth Hostels Elder Hostels |
| <u>Parks and forests</u> Subramaniyam park. Poonganichcholai. The old park Manatkadu Mirusuvil mangroves | <u>Agricultural Fairs</u> Food and Craft Shows Food Cooking- Demonstrations Flower Shows | <u>Trail Based Activities</u> Hiking Off- Road Motor Cycling, Cycling Horse Racing Motor Racing | <u>Tour Operations</u> School Tours Picnicking Organic Farm visits |
| <u>Religious Places</u> Nallur Temple Selva Sannithi Temple Nagapoosani Temple Nagaviharai O.L.R. Church St. Mary's Church Durkaiamman Temple Naguleswaram Temple Maviddampuram | <u>Seasonal Festivals/ Activities</u> Sinhala& Hindu New Year Festival Christmas Trees Easter Eggs Annual Festivals of temple | <u>Nature Appreciation Activities</u> Photography/Painting Bird watching Wild Life Viewing | <u>Retailing of Various Items</u> Gift/ Craft/ Antique Floral Arrangements Gardens/ Nurseries(Flowers, Greenery, Herbs, Dried Flowers) Roadside Stands/ Markets Specialty Food and Craft Products Palmyra product Centers Products of fruits, jams, Honey |
| <u>Natural areas and beaches</u> Casurina Beach Kilali - Allipalai Beach Chaatty Beach | | <u>Hunting and Fishing</u> Trapping fish with nets Hunting Dog Training Habitat Improvement | |

Source: Information Gathered by the Authors from Field Work and Literature Search

Also, given below are some other tourism potentials which are prevailing at present in the Jaffna and which have the potential to develop further. Geographical features and resources are any other potentials to develop. Such as Sand, mineral resources, old valuable buildings, wells, places, and thinks, trees,

mangroves, long beaches, seas, and harbours. Jaffna become a popular destination for tourists. The following centers are some of the key tourist attractions in the Jaffna peninsula. The small history is following:



Jaffna Fort Situated on the south side of the Jaffna peninsula at the water's edge of the lagoon, the ancient fort in Jaffna is the second largest existing fort in the Island. Originally built by the Portuguese in 1619.



Nagadipa Purana Vihara, This temple, located in the village of Nagadipa on (close to Jaffna) Nainativu Island, is one of 16 hallowed by visits of the Buddha places of veneration in Sri Lanka. Purana Vihara were constructed by the two warring Naga kings, Mahodara and his nephew Chulodara, at the site where Lord Buddha.



Casuarina Beach is in Karainagar, Jaffna District about 20 kilometres from Jaffna of Northern Province. It used to be a popular tourist destination, but tourist numbers have declined due to Sri Lankan Civil War but now it's perfectly out of danger.



Kadurugoda Temple There is a ancient buddhist historical place called 'Kandarodei' situated in the midst of palmyrah trees beyond Manipai about 10 Kilometres away from Jaffna. There are small dagabas numbering 61 scattered over about 1/2 acre land. Those small structures are constructed with ash-coloured stone.



Naga Pooshani Ambal Kovil, Original temple, supposedly built by a rich foreign trader who received blessing from Goddess Ambal Devi when passing by in the sea, was demolished in the sixteen century by Portuguese.



Nallur Kandasamy Kovil is Jaffna's premier place of Hindu worship. This Kovil characterised by a golden arch and elaborate gopuram attracts

hundreds of pilgrims and worshippers. This temple is a place of the most important religious festival on Jaffna's Peninsula.

University of Jaffna, Public Library of Jaffna and Tilko city Hotel are some of the most tourist' attraction buildings and famous centers. University of Jaffna and Public library are high educational tourist places. The international conferences, meetings, and program are holding in that places. So those are many popular centers.



Tilkcity Hotel



Public library of Jaffna



University of Jaffna

There are a number of hotels, motels, inns, resorts, hostels and B&Bs in Jaffna that cater to all kinds of travelers who come to this enchanting city. Some of the popular choices of accommodation in Jaffna are Tilko city hotel, green grass hotel, BlueHaven, Morgan's, Yarl Beach Inn, The YMCA, Ashok Hotel, Harbour View hotel, Palm Court Hotel, Bastian's Hotel, Anouk Chalet and Anouk's Swiss Chalet. there are the places as the most attractive tourist places in Jaffna were identified. But the facilitates are very poor. We must create the infrastructural structure. Such as road network, railway, telecommunication, high stars hotels, restaurants, data information system, water supply, electricity and popular accommodations with very attraction. Well plans and guidelines should be implemented for the tourism industry and regional development. Small and large tourism industries should be started to the improvement. People should be awareness about the tourism industry. Major components of potentials should be identified. The following figure show the components for the tourism industry.

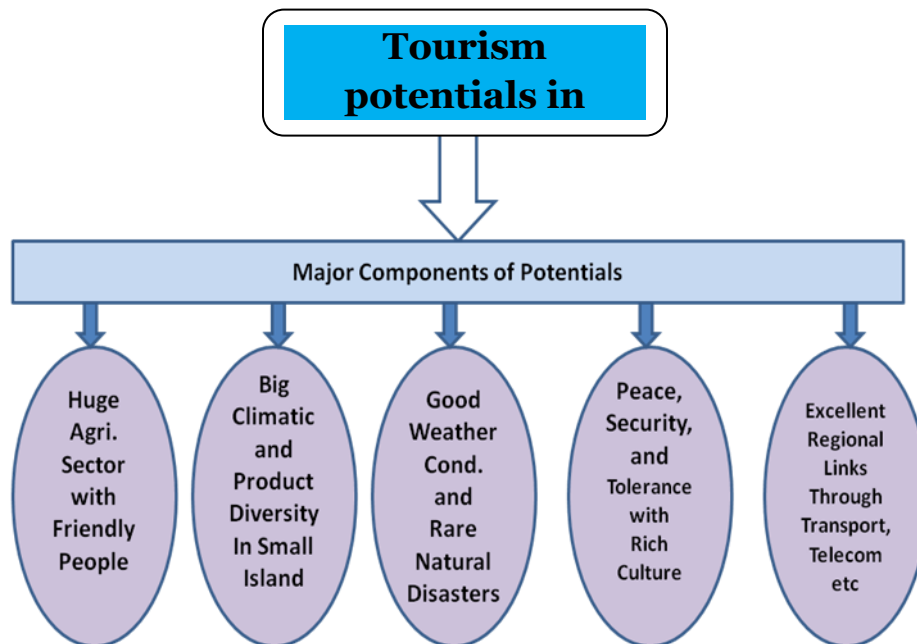


Figure 1: Components for the tourism industry.

Source: Information Gathered by the Authors from Field Work and Literature Search.

Seven principles in identifying tourism services and facilities should be develop. They are;

- Conservation of biological diversity and cultural diversity, through ecosystems protection.
- Sustain the well-being of local people.
- Includes an interpretation/Learning experience – environmental and cultural knowledge.
- Involves responsible action on the part of tourists and the tourism industry.
- Is served primarily by small-scale businesses.



- Minimizes to lowest possible level the consumption of non-renewable resources.
- Stresses local participation, ownership and business opportunities, particularly to rural people.

6. Conclusions

Tourism has become one of the major sector of the economy in Jaffna. Tourism industry has to contribute to a large proportion of the regional development. The tourism industry has become the fastest growing service industry in the district with great potentials for its further expansion and diversification. Basically, tourism should ensure the following three basic necessities.

1. Have something for visitors to see:- Animals, birds, farms and nature are the few things which tourism could offer to the tourist to see. Apart from these, culture, dress, festivals and rural games could create enough interest among foreign tourists in tourism.

2. Have something for visitors to do:- Participating in many types of operations and swimming, bullock cart riding, pony riding, buffalo riding, cooking and participating in the rural games are the few activities in which tourist can take part and enjoy.

3. Have something for visitors to buy:- Rural crafts, dress materials, farm gate fresh agriculture products, processed foods are the few items which tourist can buy as souvenir for remembrance.

However, in Jaffna tourism is at an infant stage and is poorly organized. In most of the farms, hotels, infrastructure facilities are not sufficiently available. This is one of the factors that determined the success of the industry. Therefore, provision of basic infrastructure such as road facilities, clean water, and electricity is very important. Moreover, there is low awareness of tourism and its attractiveness with stakeholders. Making them well aware of tourism and creating a positive attitude towards opportunities of tourism is essential in order to have tourism operations. Although people have basic knowledge and skills in tourism, they are poor in business management skills namely entrepreneurship, management skills, interpersonal and communication skills etc. Therefore, tourism education and training in these areas are very much important for the successful and sustainable tourism operations.

Tourists Guides in Jaffna and travel operators have very little knowledge about the benefits resulting from tourism. Training programmes to cater to the needs of these individuals need to be conducted. Further, another important aspect for the successful tourism operation is to make arrangements to get necessary financial facilities for the people to renovate and arrange tourism destinations in an attractive manner. This activity needs large amounts of money and effort. If people can have access to credit or loan

facilities under concessionary rates, it would be an ideal solution. Thus there is a need to conduct awareness programmes to dispel such doubts from the minds of the concerned people.

Finding proper remedies for the above mentioned problems is an essential prerequisite as the potential entrepreneurs will face difficulties to start a business without external support. After that, introduction of tourism under the themes suggested earlier would be of great significance and would improve the overall economic, social, cultural, and aesthetic level of the areas. If the tourism industry develop in many ways, the many sectors and actions will be improve to the regional development.

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