

Beach Tourism in Tamilnadu –Conceptual Study.



Commerce

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ABSTRACT

Tamil Nadu is a State with several distinguished tourism genre. It has cerulean mountains, verdant vegetations, sandy beaches, mammoth monuments, timeless temples, fabulous wildlife, scintillating sculptures and reverberating rural life. It has picturesque spots, continuing heritage, cultural confluence and aesthetic magnificence. The vast coastline of Tamil Nadu has many silvery beaches like the, Elliot, Thiruvanniyur, Tiruchendur, Rameswaram and Kanyakumari. The temples of Tamil Nadu reverberate with spirituality and music. Madurai, Rameswaram, Kumbakonam, Chidambaram, Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli have innumerable temples with different deities¹⁴. The finely hewn grandeur sculptures reflect artistic excellence and cultural splendor. In this study we are going to learn about the importance and implications of beach tourism in Tamilnadu.

INTRODUCTION:

Coastal zone is a dynamic area with many cyclic processes owing to a variety of resources and habitats. Coastal plains and seas include the most taxonomically rich and productive ecosystems on the earth. Mangroves forests are over 20 times more productive than the average open ocean. Estuaries, salt marshes and coral reefs are 5 to 15 times higher and shelf seas and upwelling zones 2 to 5 times higher. These enhanced rates of primary production result in an abundance of other life forms including species of commercial importance. Although occupying only 8% of the total surface, ecologically important areas account for 20-25% of global plant growth.

Tamilnadu is the southern most state in India, flanked by Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka on the north / north west; Indian Ocean on the south; Kerala on the west and Bay of Bengal on the east. The coastline of Tamilnadu has a length of about 1076kms (Table 1.1), constitutes about a 15% of the total coastal length of India and stretches along Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean.

Table 1.1. Coastal length of Tamilnadu

No.	Coastal district	Coastal length (Km)
1.	Chennai	19.0
2.	Thiruvallur	27.9
3.	Villupuram	40.7
4.	Pudukottai	42.8
5.	Thanjavur	45.1
6.	Thiruvavur	47.2
7.	Tirunelveli	48.9
8.	Cuddalore	57.5
9.	Kanyakumari	71.5
10.	Kanchipuram	87.2
11.	Tuticorin	163.5
12.	Nagapattinam	187.9
13.	Ramanthapuram	236.8
	Total	1076.0

Oceanography of the Indian coastal region is dominated by three seasons, viz. southwest monsoon (June to September), northeast monsoon (October to January) and fair weather period (February to May). The continental shelf along the east coast is narrow, whereas along the west coast, the width of the shelf varies from about 340 km in the north to less than about 60 km in the south.

Beach erosion is a universal problem and it has been estimated that 70% of all the beaches in the world are eroding. Any attempt to handle the coastal problems either to arrest erosion or prevent deposition requires a thorough understanding of the factors and processes involved in the coastal geomorphological system. Information on winds, waves, tides, currents, geomorphology and rate of sediment transport along a coast is required for planning and design of coastal facilities.

The east coast is emerging and only selected parts are undergoing erosion which is mainly due to coastal developmental activities like construction of ports and harbours etc. In coastal erosion, there is a loss of invaluable land areas, habitat displacement / relocation, loss of beaches, loss of transport network, infrastructure and other installations.

Most of the river and estuarine mouths are partly or almost closed during summer season which is mainly due to the formation of sand spit. Most harbours have the problem of sand deposition due to littoral drift.

The coast along Tamilnadu is most vulnerable to cyclones and storm surges that cause inundation of low lying coastal areas resulting in damages to crops and property. The greater danger is that the erosion could eat away the sand bar separating Pulicat lake from the Bay of Bengal. This lake owes its high biological productivity to the mixing of riverine freshwater with the tidal overflow from the sea. This delicate balance between fresh and saltwater is liable to be disturbed if the sea stretches itself into the lake.

CHANGES IN ISLANDS OF GULF OF MANNAR

Island erosion and accretion are caused mainly by the action of waves and wave-induced current and long shore currents along the shores of islands. The 21 islands in Gulf of Mannar are made up of a calcareous framework of dead reef and sand. They have a low and narrow sandy coast and some of them have rocky coast. Fringing reef along the windward side of the islands protects the islands from direct wave action. Morphology of sandy islands is very dynamic. The morphological variations of islands occur due to natural and anthropogenic stress. The natural agents include erosion, accretion, wave, current, sea level variation, neo-tectonic activity etc. Anthropogenic impacts are construction of breakwaters, discharging of effluents, mining of coral reef, etc. The comparison of 1969 and 1998 maps of islands of Gulf of Mannar showed changes in their shape, size and location and these have been caused by erosion and accretion of shore. The total area of erosion and accretion were calculated as 4.16 km² and 3.31km² respectively during the 30-years period.

All islands in Tuticorin group have been migrating towards mainland. It is estimated that 528.74m of Van island, (2) 118m of

Kasuar island and 137m of Karaichalli migrated towards mainland between 1969 to 1998. The landward migration of islands in Tuticorin region are caused by sea level variation and mining of reef material. Vilanguchalli island is one of the islands in Tuticorin group, situated at 6.25 km from Sippikkulam. The entire part of this island was eroded due to the direct action of waves and may also be caused by coral reef mining. The direct wave attack on this island eroded the whole area below the sea level. The area of erosion was estimated as 0.06km².

TAMILNADU BLUE BEACHES

Tamil Nadu is known especially for its blue beaches and sunny skies. Some of south India's nicest beaches dot Chennai's long seafloor. The Marina beach is a 12-km long stretch of fine sandy shore and is known as the **Pride of Chennai**, the Kovalam beach is quiet and far away from the distractions of the city and the Elliot's beach is the preferred destination for those with a clean Atmosphere in mind.

A short 20-minute drive from Chennai City, VGP Golden Beach Resort offers a serene and relaxing atmosphere in today's stress-driven world. 58-km south of Chennai is the Mahabalipuram beach, famous for its unique 7th century Shore Temple.

MARINA BEACH

Marina beach is situated to the east of Chennai (Madras) at Kamaraj Road. It is said to be the longest beach in India and one of the longest in Asia, extends to a length of 13 Km, from Fort St. George all the way to Mahabalipuram. It's 12 km-long stretch is the second longest in the world. It is located on the eastern side of the city adjoining the Bay of Bengal. There are beautiful statues of Tamil scholars, patriots, and noted personalities. Of these, the Statue of Labour is a splendid sculpture, an evidence of the industrious team of labourers who are at strenuous, manual work.

COVELONG BEACH

Merely, 40 kms away from the hustle and bustle of Chennai, Covelong is a dreamy village. The charming spot of Covelong is at a distance of forty kilometers from the capital city of Chennai. The environs, ambience, peace, tranquility and the infrastructure at the Covelong beach come together to make it one of the most popular beach resorts on the Coromandel Coast. In the yester years Covelong was the renowned port of the Nawabs of the Carnatic. On digging the past it is revealed that Saadat Ali, Nawab of Carnatic, built the ancient port of Covelong. In the year 1746, Covelong was taken over by the troops of the French General La-bouonnais and in 1752 destroyed by Clive.

MAHABALIPURAM BEACH

Mahabalipuram, also known, as "Mamallapuram" is located 58-km, south of Chennai, nestling on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, offers many breath-taking monuments with Sculptural Panels, Caves, Monolithic Rathas (chariots) and Temples. The spectacular beach of Mahabalipuram attracts thousands of tourists all through the year. The dreamy rock cut art is an amazing extravaganza. For the more ecclesiastical tourists there are the

temples besides the shores, rathas, a crocodile bank, snake venom extracting centre, schools of art and sculpture and a wide spectrum of resorts along the beach entice holiday-seekers all round the year.

KANYAKUMARI BEACH

Kanyakumari is often referred as the 'Land's End' of India. Here, the Bay of Bengal confluences with the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea and, at Chaitrapurnima (the Tamil name for all full moon day that generally falls in April), it is possible to enjoy the unique experience of seeing the sunset and the moon rise over the ocean simultaneously. Kanyakumari (also spelt as Kanniyakumari) district is contoured by Tirunelveli district in the north and northeast, by Kerala state in the northwest and confluence of Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean in the west and south. Kanyakumari is the district headquarters of the district of the same name. At the southern most land tip of India, where the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal meet, lies Kanyakumari, an important revered pilgrim centre. Kanyakumari is famous for its beach and the magnificent sunrises and emotive sunsets, especially on full moon days. Kanyakumari is also popular for its vast foliar stretches of paddy fields, rich forests, coconut groves and mineral sands. The Kanyakumari beach is an overwhelming sight with the sand which has played with the colours of the sky. There is a lighthouse from where one can get a panoramic view. The sea is fairly rough, so it is entertaining to watch it beat itself against the rocks and then subside, before it gathers itself up for another attack. A spectrum of shells is on sale on the Kanyakumari beach.

RAMESHWARAM BEACH

Rameshwaram is a sacred island positioned off the mainland circumscribed by Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar anchored with the longest ever constructed bridge on sea in India. It is a major Hindu pilgrimage site. The maximum temperature varies between 28-31 degree Celsius, while minimum temperature is around 25 degree. Between January and March is the best time to visit Rameshwaram. The population size of Rameshwaram is 32,700. The serene beach and shallow water here are ideal for swimming and sunbathing.

CONCLUSION.

Tamil Nadu is mostly admired as a wonderful tourist destination. It has natural beauty completed with blue beaches, hills, hill stations, and clear skies. Apart from the natural sites it is home to much beautiful architecture that is specific to the Tamil style of temple architecture. Tourists find much of the peace in these magnificent and beautiful temples. Being built by various dynasties these temples appear almost similar in their appearance. Tamils are one of the powerfully cultural states that bear the tradition of the ancient India and Dravidian magnificence till now. The achievement of the dynasties and the cultural influences can be everywhere felt by the outsiders. Why only the culture, the local food in the local eateries leaves one with the mouthwatering experience that any visitor should not miss. Most of the towns and cities of this state represents the Tamilnadu tourism with their natural beauty and developments.

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