CHAPTER- 5

SCENIC AND ENTERTAINMENT ATTRACTIONS

India is a land of scenic beauty with its snow-capped mountains, lush green fields, verdant hills and white-foamy rivers. India boasts of many world heritage sites as well as world-famous palaces and monuments.\(^1\) The temples of southern India are indeed examples of architectural wonder. India is a perfect haven for the tourists. Every year tourists flock in droves to explore the spectacular beauty of this splendid country. The tourism industry is a burgeoning industry in India. The travel and tour operators of India are the key players of the Indian tourism industry.

Good weather, beautiful locations and sceneries are very important factors in tourism. Scenery or landscapes consisting of mountains, lakes, waterfalls, glaciers, forests, deserts, etc. are strong forces attracting people to visit them. Breathtaking mountain scenery and the coast scenery exert a strong fascination of the tourist.

5.1. Kumari Water Falls

A waterfall is a place where flowing water rapidly drops in elevation as it flows over a steep region or a cliff. Waterfalls are commonly formed when a river is young.\(^2\) At these times the channel is often narrow and deep. When the river courses over resistant bedrock, erosion happens slowly, while downstream the erosion occurs more rapidly. As the watercourse increases its velocity at the edge of

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the waterfall, it plucks material from the riverbed. Whirlpools created in the turbulence as well as sand and stones carried by the watercourse increase the erosion capacity. This causes the waterfall to carve deeper into the bed and to recede upstream. Often over time, the waterfall will recede back to form a canyon or gorge downstream as it recedes upstream, and it will carve deeper into the ridge above it.³ The rate of retreat for a waterfall can be as high as one and half meters per year.

Often, the rock stratum just below the more resistant shelf will be of a softer type, meaning that undercutting due to splash back will occur here to form a shallow cave-like formation known as a rock shelter under and behind the waterfall. Eventually, the outcropping, more resistant cap rock will collapse under pressure to add blocks of rock to the base of the waterfall. These blocks of rock are then broken down into smaller boulders by attrition as they collide with each other, and they also erode the base of the waterfall by abrasion, creating a deep plunge pool or gorge.⁴ Kanyakumari District has beautiful waterfalls, which have the power to attract many tourists towards them.

### 5.1.1. Ullakaruvi Water Falls

Ullakaruvi falls is about 35 km from Kanyakumari town and about 17 km from Nagercoil town, near Azhakiyapandiapuram village. The falls is up in the

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⁴ Santhanakumar, G., *Introduction to Environment, (Tamil)* Nagercoil, 1993, p. 34.
middle of forest hills⁵, which can be reached only by foot from the base of the hills. An hour's trek from the base of the hills is through rocky, forested area, which is thrilling in itself. (On a clear day, one can view the waterfalls from the base of the hills through naked eye, or even better through binoculars / zoom lens). It is a beautiful waterfall and it attracts large number of tourists.

In Tamil ‘Ullakarvi’ literally means 'Ullakai + Aruvi' 'universal falls'. Ullakai is a tool which used for removing the skin from the raw rice. The name of the fall is ‘Ullakai’ because the water will fall on our head like ‘Ullakai’.⁶ Also in the top region of the Rock there is a place where the water falls on a wooden rod which is inside a circular rock. It looks like an ‘Ullakai’. Thus the waterfall got its name.⁷

There are two falls.⁸ They are the lower falls and the higher falls. The water is basically spring water, from the hills nearby. The lower portion of the waterfalls and the spot one reaches after the trek. This is a good picnic spot. The view from this spot of the greenery below the hills is exhilarating. A cool bath here can relax soothe our heart. The water here is cool even during the hot months,

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⁵ The hills of the Western Ghats.

⁶ A thick wooden rod with height of 3 to 4 feet, with a diameter of 3 inches. One end will be covered with a semi sphere made metal mostly iron. The metal end will be hitting the raw rice grain in Ural. Ural is a container made of stone.

⁷ www. wikipedea.com/ Kanyakumari district.

⁸ Personal interview with Mr. Ramanathan, Electrician, Thetuvilai, aged 30, dated 22.07.2010.
though the water flow is less during the summer months. To reach the Higher falls, one needs to climb about 200 meters uphill. Healthy people alone are recommended to visit the ‘higher falls’.9

5.1.2. Thirpparappu Water Falls

The Thirparappu waterfall is a beautiful and elegant waterfall on the Kodayar river. It is a very popular tourist destination and is jam packed throughout the year. Thirparappu waterfall is located about 60 km north-west of Kanyakumari and about 10 km north-east of Kuzhithurai. It is known for its waterfalls, and for an ancient Shiva temple, which is one among the twelve temples visited during the annual Shivalaya ottam pilgrimage.10 It is also known as ‘Kumari Kuttalam’.

Thirupparappu waterfalls come under Thirupparappu Panchayat and in the Kulasekharam road. The water from the leaf bank canal falls from a rocky prepuce of 30 feet height. It is a very good place to take bath during the rainy seasons. There is separate bathing facility for men and women.11

The Kodayar River makes its descent at Thiruparappu. The river bed is rocky and about 300 feet (91 m) in length.12 The water falls from a height of nearly

9 Personal interview with Mr. S. Kumar, B.A. Student, Thetuvilai, aged 20, dated 22.07.2010.
10 Kanyakumari Tourism Booklet, Dept. of Tamil Nadu Tourism, 2006, p.5.
50 feet (15 m) and the water flows for about seven months per year.\textsuperscript{13} The whole bed above the falls is one rocky mass which extends 250 meters (820 ft) upstream where the Thirparappu weir has been constructed for supplying water to the paddy fields.

On either side of the river, on the left bank of the river in between the waterfalls and the weir, there is a temple dedicated to Shiva enclosed by strong fortification. The District Administration has recently constructed a swimming pool for children which is very popular among the children.\textsuperscript{14}

The Thiruparappu dam is built on a rocky bed covering one fourth of a kilometer in the direction against the water current. Further on, water from the dam is diverted to the paddy fields for irrigation. Tourists can enjoy bathing under the gushing water, and later take a stroll around the fall to enjoy the scenery.

5.1.3. Vattaparai Water Falls and Kalikesam

Vattaparai Falls and Kalikesam falls are situated in 25 km north of Nagercoil and 32 km North West of Kanyakumari. These are in the Keeriparai reserve forest near Bhoothapandi village on the Pazhayar River in Kanyakumari district. This 20 km\textsuperscript{2} area is proposed to be a Wildlife Sanctuary.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13} Dhina thanthi, \textit{Thahaval Kalangiyam}, Nagercoil, 5.3.2009, p 45.

\textsuperscript{14} Personal interview with Mr. K. Mathavan, Teacher, Kulasekharam, aged 47, dated 14.05.2010.

There are a few small waterfalls in this area - the prominent ones being Vattaparai Falls and Kalikesam falls. There is a small Kali temple, next to the falls. It attracts many pilgrims.\textsuperscript{16} There is a rocky river with crystal clear water. It is a nice place for people who love peace and nature.

Kalikesam is unique in that it is a conjunction of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem—the shola forest where the trees are evergreen, the main forest and the marshy swamps. Inside the deep and thick area, we can see the abundance of God’s blessings which is breath taking.\textsuperscript{17} The peace and calmness of the forest makes the viewers spell bound. As we drive into the interior of Kalikesam fall, the air is thick. The whole breeze acts as a balm while the bubbling sound of natural springs sounds like music to the ears. The place gets plenty of rainfall and enjoys pleasant weather round the year.

The fall is surrounded by forest on all sides. The long stream is pollution-free and adds to the natural charm of the place. Unlike the Tripparappu fall, which has become a typical tourist spot, here people are allowed to take ‘natural bath’.\textsuperscript{18} This place has spectacular flora and fauna. Apart from assorted flora and fauna, the region has grown into a bird watcher’s heaven. The surrounding rocks,

\textsuperscript{16} Personal interview with Mr. M. Suresh, coolly, Keriparai, aged 38, dated 22.07.2010.
\textsuperscript{17} Sumith, M, \textit{The Inscrutable Kalikesam}, retrieved 31.03.2007.
\textsuperscript{18} It means ‘to bath with natural water’.
the pebbles inside the stream and the sunlight penetrating through the cleaves of
dark green trees give everyone the feeling that “we have reached eternity.”

It is believed that the water from the fall has some medicinal effects. The
tourists who visit here have a variety of choices from the virtue of natural untouched
places. Kalikesam has a serpentine beauty which never lost the people’s attention.
The water from Kalikesam continuously flows through Vattaparai and makes the
viewers happy. With strict “no littering and noise” instructions, a trip to Kalikesam
is like paying homage to nature nature. One can never see this place as empty. The
visitors comment Kalikesam is a ‘gift of God’.

5.2. Kumari Dams and Bridges

A dam is a barrier that impounds water or underground streams. Dams
generally serve the primary purpose of retaining water, while other structures such
as floodgates or levees are used to manage or prevent water flow into specific land
regions. Hydropower and pumped-storage hydroelectricity are often used in
conjunction with dams to generate electricity. A dam can also be used to collect
water or for storage of water, which can be evenly distributed to different places.

19 Personal interview with Mr. A. Suyampu, carpenter, Keriparai, aged 33, dated 22.07.2010.
21 It is also known as dikes.
23 Ibid.
Dams in Tamil Nadu are erected mainly with the aim of providing sufficient water for the agricultural lands and also for the generation of hydroelectric power. Most of the rivers flowing in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu have dams that no district of the state runs short of the basic water requirements.24

There are several dams in Tamil Nadu which contribute immensely in boosting the agricultural economy of the state. The sites of the dams also serve as major tourist attractions with several reservoirs acting as fish breeding centers of the state.25 Kanyakumari District has beautiful dams, which have the power to attract many tourists towards them.

5.2.1. Pechipparai Dam

In Kanyakumari District Pechipparai is an important place for irrigation works. It is a tourist centre. The Pechipparai dam was constructed in 1906 during the period of British Government.26 It is a very beautiful dam in Kanyakumari district. The dam water is mainly used for irrigation purpose.27

The Pechipparai dam is constructed across the river Thamiraparani.28 The Thamiraparani river rises at Agastiar Hills of Western Ghats. The farmers cultivate

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24 Kumareson, S., *Tamil Nadu and Agriculture Reforms*, Madras, 2000, p.44.
the food crops and commercial crops with the help of this dam when the rainfall at the dam site ranges between 1800-2000mm. The rainfall dips down to 900 – 800 mm at the trial end in Kanyakumari District. In both the seasons of north – east and south – west monsoons Pechipparai receives good rainfall. The only major river in this region is Thamiraparani. It has two major tributaries. Kodayar River and Paraliyar River.

The Pechipparai dam helps to save the shortage of water in many parts of Kanyakumari district. It is utilized for power system also. The Engineer Alexander constructed the dam. It took 9 years to complete the construction work. Many people come to Pechipparai to see the beauty of the dam. The Pechipparai water is sent through Thirparappu falls 8 kms from Kulasekharam. It is an important tourist place in Kanyakumari District. More than thousands of people visited this dam.

The Pechipparai water sent through Mathur Hanging Bridge also. The bridge was constructed during the period of former Chief Minister Sri. K. Kamaraj. The Pechipparai dam was constructed across Kodayar River first in the year 1906.

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31 Record of Pechipparai Panchayat, 2006.
32 Agriculture Statistic, Kanyakumari District Report, 2005.
35 Report of the Chief Engineer, Irrigation, Public Works Department, Chennai.
Table- 5:1. Profile of Pechipparai dam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year of construction</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of dam</td>
<td>524.51 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of dam</td>
<td>Masonry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top of dam mean sea level</td>
<td>94.5 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum water level</td>
<td>82.0 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full reservoir level</td>
<td>92.0 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuice still level</td>
<td>77.4 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water spread area</td>
<td>15 sq.km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity gross</td>
<td>150.25 m. cum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Capacity</td>
<td>123.18 m.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catchment area</td>
<td>204.8 sq km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average rainfall</td>
<td>2180 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design flood</td>
<td>1104 cum’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average manual yield</td>
<td>402 m.cum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus regulator</td>
<td>6 nos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vents</td>
<td>12.2m x 4.6 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canal length</td>
<td>17km</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This was built across Kodayar River about 1.61 km below the confluence of three tributaries, Kallar, Chittar and Kuniyar at Pechipparai a place 11.27 kms north of Kulasekharam and is 45.08 km from Nageroil.  

A link canal was excavated from left bank of this dam for a length of 17 kms

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36 Agriculture Statistic, Kanyakumari District Report, 2005.
37 Personal interview with Manuvel Appathurai, I., Engineer, P.W.D. office, Irrigation section, Nagercoil, aged 51, dated 03.04.2009.
for diverting Pechipparai water to Puthen dam. Pandiankal of Chellamththuruthi was constructed during this period to feed a new command on the left side of Pazhayar basin.\textsuperscript{38} The combined flow of Pechipparai dam through left bank canal to Puthen dam was designed to irrigate the ayacut of about 20,000 hectare through five sub-system\textsuperscript{39} P.P. Channel, N.P. Channel, Anandhanar Channel, Thovalai Channel and Pazhayar river. This is known as the Old Kodayar System. The government should take steps to build storage across river Kodayar. In 19\textsuperscript{th} century Pechipparai dam was commissioned and it was built in the year 1906.\textsuperscript{40}

### 5.2.2. Perunchani Dam

Perunchani Dam is an irrigation dam at Perunchani, of Kanyakumari District, in the state of Tamilnadu. The Dam area is about 42 km from Nagercoil, the administrative headquarters-town of Kanyakumari District, and about 10 km from the town of Kulasekham.\textsuperscript{41}

The dam is built between two hillocks across the River Paralayar. It is a straight gravity masonry dam of 373.10 meters long consisting of 275.28 meters of bulk head section. A drainage gallery of 1.52 \times 2.29 meters has been provided in the middle river section for a length of 45.70 metres which serves a longitudinal

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{38} Director of Horticulture and Plantation Crop, Dharmapuri Reprt, 2006.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Daily Thanthi, Nagercoil, dated 28.02.2006.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Velupillai, I.K., \textit{op.cit.}, 1966, p.663.
\item \textsuperscript{41} Personal interview with Mr. S. Prasad, Rtd. Teacher, Kulasekeram, aged 66, dated 23.05.2009.
\end{itemize}
inspection chamber as well as an outlet for the seepages from the foundation. The dam is set amidst the hills of the Western Ghats and commands a picturesque view of the hills and lush greenery around.

Table- 5:2. **Profile of Perunchani Dam**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year of construction</td>
<td>1948-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of dam</td>
<td>373 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of dam</td>
<td>Masonry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top of dam mean sea level</td>
<td>94.2 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum water level</td>
<td>93.3 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full reservoir level</td>
<td>93.3 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuice still level</td>
<td>69.3 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water spread area</td>
<td>9.50 sq.km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity gross</td>
<td>81.80 m. cum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Capacity</td>
<td>81.80 m.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catchment area</td>
<td>154.4 sq km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average rainfall</td>
<td>2240 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design flood</td>
<td>878 cum’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average manual yield</td>
<td>218 m.cum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus regulator</td>
<td>4 nos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vents</td>
<td>12.2m x 4.6 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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42 Personal interview with Manuvel Appathurai I., Engineer, P.W.D. office, Irrigation section, Nagercoil, aged 51, dated 03.04.2009.


44 Agriculture Statistic, Kanyakumari District Report, 2005.
5.2.3. Chittar Dam-I

The Chittar Dam I is constructed across River Chittar I which has its source in the mountains in Klamala Reserve Forest, near Ettukani and Vandiplavukani at an elevation of over 2000 ft. above sea level and is about 1.61 km upstream of the confluence of the River with Kodayar. The gross capacity of the dam is 610 m cft.\(^{45}\)

Table- 5:3 **Profile of Chittar Dam I** \(^{46}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of construction</th>
<th>1964-70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of dam</td>
<td>818.40 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of dam</td>
<td>Earthen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top of dam mean sea level</td>
<td>85.0 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum water level</td>
<td>82.0 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full reservoir level</td>
<td>82.0 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuice still level</td>
<td>76.5 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water spread area</td>
<td>2.90 sq.km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity gross</td>
<td>17.27 m. cum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Capacity</td>
<td>11.13 m.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catchment area</td>
<td>22.0 sq km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average rainfall</td>
<td>2280 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design flood</td>
<td>235 cum’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average manual yield</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus regulator</td>
<td>2 nos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vents</td>
<td>12.2m x 4.6 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{45}\) www.wikipedia.com/Kanyakumari district.

\(^{46}\) Agriculture Statistic, Kanyakumari District Report, 2005.
5.2.4. Chittar Dam-II

Chittar II has its source in kilamads reserve forest at an elevation of 701 meters above and is at about 1.6 km up stream on the southern and eastern slopes of Kurinchimalai. After running for 5.8 kms, it merges at Sivalogam estate to form Chittar II and then flows for 4.4 kms and thereafter joins Kodayar. The gross capacity of the dam is 1009m. cft.\textsuperscript{47}

With this entire department, Kodayar and Palayar river are still potential. Therefore, additional extents in Pattanamkal are (on the left bank Thambaraparani. River) and Radhapuram Taluk of the neighboring Tirunelveli District was proposed for irrigation.\textsuperscript{48}

The Pechipparai and Perunchani dams were also raised, strengthened and improved during 1964-'76 to take additional storage by raising fall reservoir level by 1.83m. The capacity of Kodayar left bank canal was also increased. The new canal, Pattanamkal was excavated from Kodayar left bank canal to serve an extent of 5557 hectare in Kanyakumari District. Another canal to serve 6883 hectare of dry land of Radhapuram area of Tirunelveli District was excavated from the tail end of Thovalai channel at Nilapparai.\textsuperscript{49}

\textsuperscript{47} Record of Public Works Department, 1984 – 1990.
\textsuperscript{48} Report of agricultural chemist,(sod Survey)Department of Agriculture, Tirunelveli, dated 05.05.1987.
The two reservoirs viz, Chittar I and Chittar II the improvement in storage capacity of Pachipparai and Perunchani reservoirs, the improvement in left bank canal and Thovalai channel and new channels Pattanamkal and Rathapuram from part of the scheme Chittar Pattanamkal scheme (1964-70). Also an extent of 513 hectare under Thirparappu weir was included for stabilization by special releases from Chittar II and the Chittar Pattanamkal scheme.\textsuperscript{50}

Table- 5:4. **Profile of Chittar Dam II** \textsuperscript{51}

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year of construction</td>
<td>1964-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of dam</td>
<td>1133.9 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of dam</td>
<td>Earthen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top of dam mean sea level</td>
<td>85.0 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum water level</td>
<td>82.0 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full reservoir level</td>
<td>82.0 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuice still level</td>
<td>76.5 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water spread area</td>
<td>4.10 sq.km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity gross</td>
<td>28.57 m. cum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Capacity</td>
<td>16.99 m.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catchment area</td>
<td>25.9 sq km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average rainfall</td>
<td>2030 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design flood</td>
<td>265 cum’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average manual yield</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus regulator</td>
<td>6 nos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vents</td>
<td>6.1m x 4.6 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\textsuperscript{51} Agriculture Statistic, Kanyakumari District Report, 2005.
In addition to the irrigation reservoirs described above, two reservoirs for electricity were constructed by Tamil Nadu Electricity Board during 1973-'74 in the upper reaches of Kodayar of 85m.cum and 0.8m.cum capacity for producing 100mv. capacity.\footnote{Report of the Engineer about Perunchani Dam, Public work department, Nagercoil,1998, p.6.}

\subsection*{5.2.5. Mukkadal Dam}

Mukkadal dam is built across the Vambaru river in the state of Tamil Nadu in southern India, 10 km from the town of Nagercoil. It is a place scenic beauty, a picnic location frequented by the local residents. It was built by Sree Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma in 1645, the King of Travancore. The dam is constructed of clay and granite stones. The depth of water behind the dam is approximately 50 feet.\footnote{G. O.Ms. No: 61/MAWS/1, Water supply improvement scheme details of administration section, Nagercoil, 08.03.1996.}

The reservoir supplies water for the town of Nagercoil, but ironically, not the people living near the dam.\footnote{Report of the project for providing second improvement to Municipality Water supply scheme, Nagercoil, 2002.} The forest consist of soaring and lofty trees of mesua ferrea, bischofia javanica, vitex altissima to smaller trees of dillini a species of festooning climber, shrubs, valuable herbs, variety of orchids, two types of canes and many indigenous palms and cycads. The important timbers are teak, rosewood, v and this place worth mentioning here for the easy availability and quality of above timbers. Various types of forest products like bamboos, reeds,
canes, soft wood tamarind, lemon grass, rubber, coconut, areca nut, kadukai, cinnamon bark, nelli, cardamom, mango, lemon varieties, supari, jack fruit, and many medicinal plants of high value which are harvested here. From tourism angle, the forest are highly enhancing with pleasant shoals, hill top forests, beautiful grasslands, panoramic valleys, top hillocks, singing streams, vast stretches of rubber plantations, valuable tea plantations and excellent climate. Nobody should miss seeing the enchanted view of this place.  

The dam and reservoir are surrounded by hills on three sides. The people from the nearby villages mainly depend on this beginning point of the Western Ghats. They do mountain agriculture. It is nearby the Shanti Ashram and an old age home operated by the Malankarai Syrian Mission.

5.2.6. Poikai dam

Poikai dam is an irrigation dam at Aralvoizhomi, Kanyakumari District. The Dam area is about 16 km from Nagercoil. This dam is constructed acrosse with the hilly area. This dam was constructed in the year 1997. It is very beautiful dam in Kanyakumari District. The dam water is mainly used for irrigation purpose.

5.2.7. Mambazhathuraiyar Dam

The Mambazhathuraiyar dam is located at about 3 km from Villukuri, which is in the Nagercoil – Thiruvananthapuram main road and is situated at east longitude

55 Personal Interview with S. Arumugam, Police, Katuputhoor, aged 39, dated 20.06.2010.
56 Personal Interview with A. Raj mohan, local resident, Aralvoizhomi, aged 44, dated 21.06.2010.
77°23 '0 and at north latitude 8°14’0’ near Anaikidangu in Villukuri village. The dam was constructed with the effective of 44.45 feet across Mambazhathuraiyar river in Kalkulam taluk of Kanyakumari District.\(^{57}\)

Villukuri is surrounded by landscape with green paddy field and banana fields. The main water resource for Villukuri is Mampalaithuraiaru dam and river. The River runs above the National Highway.

The river Mambazhathuraiyar originates from Maruthathoor mala an altitude of 2750ft MSL and reaches the plains at an elevation of 250ft and flows for about 4km in the same name after which is known as Thrivalar. Thrivalar flows for about 2.40Km and then it joins with Valliyar river near Thuckalay which originates from Vellimalai Hills and then flows toward south and falls into Arabian Sea, Kadiyapattanam with a total length of 19.20km from its origin.\(^{58}\)

The hilly catchment area spread over an extent of 2.80sq meters. The catchment areas are influenced by both southwest and north-east monsoon. The dam is constructed as earth dam for a length of 330m excluding the length of uncontrolled spill way. An uncontrolled spill way is constructed with R.R. Masonry and concrete to a length of 3000m at the left flank and to discharge

\(^{57}\) Inscription on Mambazhathuraiyar dam.

maximum flood work 5788 concert. The surplus course for this dam is constructed with guide walls and cross baffle walls for a length of 13 m to discharge maximum flood water of 5788.\textsuperscript{59}

Necessary canal is constructed for giving water supply to the existing aspects under this river and to rain fed tanks and also to divert the excess water in Eratlaikarai branch channels P.P. Channel under Kodayar system.\textsuperscript{60}

\textbf{5.2.8. Mathoor Aquaduct}

Mathoor aqueduct is Asia’s longest hanging bridge. It is the tallest as well as the longest bridge in Asia having height of 115 feet and a length of one kilometer. The hanging bridge was constructed in 1966.\textsuperscript{61} This bridge has a place of tourist importance. Thousands of people visit this place from India. This situated in Mathoor, hamlet of Aruvikkarai revenue village in Thiruvattar Panchayat Union.\textsuperscript{62}

The bridge has been constructed at Mathoor across the River Pazhayar at a cost of Rs. 12.90 lakhs and the trough canal on the bridge carries water for irrigation one side hill to the other side of a hill.\textsuperscript{63} The through has a height of seven feet with

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{61} Gopala Krishnan, M., \textit{op.cit.}, p. 184.
a width of six inches.\(^{64}\) The canal is being shouldered by 28 huge pillars.

Mathoor aqueduct was constructed during the reign of Sri. K. Kamaraj the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. This canal is constructed as a drought relief measure and for the development of agriculture in Vilavancode and Kalkulam.

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\(^{65}\) Agriculture Statistic, Kanyakumari District Report, 2005.
In Kalkulam taluk the uncultivable land charges into contivate land. To develop this place the Kanyakumari District Collour sanctioned 19 lakhs.

5.3. Beaches of Kanyakumari

A beach is a geological landform along the shoreline of an ocean or sea. It usually consists of loose particles which are often composed of rock, such as sand, gravel, shingle, pebbles or cobblestones. The particles a beach constitute are primarily be of biological origin, such as whole or fragmentary mollusc shells or fragments of coralline algae.

The coastal line of Kanyakumari District comprises 68 km in length and is studded with many beaches. Since this District is situated at the extreme south of the Indian subcontinent, the coastline is formed nearly by three seas, namely, Arabian Sea, Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal. But the main part of the coast faces the Arabian Sea.

Kanyakumari District has breathtaking beautiful beaches. The blue colour of the sky and the blue water of the beaches are a feast to the eyes. The swaying coconut and palm tree and the sand add to the holiday mood.

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The sun bath is also another attraction for the sun starved tourists. The beaches here are just the right place for fun and frolic - either on a family holiday or a lone excursion. Amongst the popular beaches of Kanyakumari district are Kanyakumari beach, Vattakottai beach, Chotthavilai beach, Muttom beach, Thittuvilai beach and Thengapattinam beach.\(^70\)

5.3.1. Kanyakumari Beach

Kanyakumari Beach is situated at Kanyakumari. It attracts domestic and foreign tourists. It is located at a point where the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea meet. It is situated near the Kumari Amman Temple. This sandy beach does not provide opportunities for sun bathing or swimming. The seashore is rocky and dangerous and therefore there is a man made wall. From the beach one can also view the glittering sunrises and the dazzling sunsets. The Vivekananada Rock Memorial and the Thiruvallur statue are attractions on the sea beach. This beach is described as the `Land`s end`.\(^71\)

Kumari kovalam beach is another important beach at Kanyakumari. It is situated 2 km west of Kanyakumari bus stand. Every evening a lot of tourists assemble here. They enjoy the sunset and natural beauty. It is recently developed with good road. It is very clean and free from pollution.\(^72\)

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\(^70\) Kanyakumari Tourism Booklet, Department of Tamil Nadu Tourism, 2004, p.7.


\(^72\) Personal Interview with A. Vargees, Fisherman, Kanyakumari kovalam, aged 35, dated 02.02.2011.
5.3.2. Vattakottai Beach

Adjacent to the Vattakottai fort, there is a beautiful beach. From the fort, it gives a very good view of the sea. The beach is a very good place to spend the evening with family and friends.73

5.3.3. Chotthavilai Beach

This beach is about 10 kms from Kanyakumari and one of the best natural beaches of the district. The beach has shallow water and high sand dunes. There are rest shelters, huts and a view tower for the benefit of tourists. The tourists can reach the beach through the newly laid coastal road which gives a fine feeling driving along the sea-coast.74

Chothavilai is 4 km stretch of fine sand and one among the longest beaches in Tamil Nadu. After the 2004 Tsunami, the beach was reconstructed and refurbished to attract visitors again. So when you arrive at the beach, you will pass through a recently erected entrance frame with motifs of seahorse and starfish among other fish and a white conch on the top of the frame.75

Ahead of which is a flight of stairs leading you down to the white sandy beach. The vista of the sparkling blue sea from the stair-end is mesmerizing. On

73 Personal Interview with J. Prince Daniel, Local Resident, Vattakottai, aged 32, dated 06.02.2011.
74 Personal Interview with M. Jeya Pon Malar, Teacher, Puttalam, aged 39, dated 07.02.2011.
75 An Article published in K-Tek College Magazine, Finest beaches of Kanyakumari District, Nagercoil, 2008, p.44.
either side the beach stretches as far as the eye can see, speckled with gazebo-style sitting area, a few rustic shanties and a watchtower. It is engrossing to watch the small white waves tirelessly crash against the shore and ebb away. Shallow water makes Chothavilai ideal for swimming.76

5.3.4 Sanguthurai Beach

Sanguthurai is a beautiful beach resort in Kanyakumari District. It is only about 10 kms from Nagercoil. The district administration has now sanctioned a project for putting up a children’s park, seating facility, open huts or ‘Kudils’ with Terracotta roofs and lighting facility at the beach. These facilities will bring development to the beach site.77

From this beach you can see the far of Vivekananda Rock Memorial sharing space with the stone sculpture of the Tamil poet, Thiruvalluvar. Away from the clamor of main Kanyakumari town, Sanguthurai is a quieter place to spend an evening strolling on the yellow sand and simply gazing at the sea. The beach looks particularly serene with a warm orange glow. Abandoned until a few years ago, today the beach looks fully urbanized with snack stalls, a children’s park, gazebo-style sitting area with terracotta roofs and better lighting arrangement.78

The present infrastructure attracts more number of tourists towards

76 Kanyakumari Tourism Booklet, Department of Tamil Nadu Tourism,2004, p.8.
77 Personal Interview with A. Chandran, Ex. councilor, Muttom, aged 49, dated 12.03.2011.
78 An Article published in K-Tek College Magazine, op.cit., p.44.
Sanguthurai, Despite the ramp up, fortunately, the beach doesn’t receive a surge of visitors which makes it ideal to enjoy time in solitude, collect seashells, examine the crabs that swim ashore, watch the sunset or simply lounge on the sand and contemplate.

5.3.5. Muttom Beach

The famous beach Muttom is located about 16 kms south-west from Nagercoil. Muttom is famous for its beautiful landscape and high rocks near into the seashore at the beachside. The sunset viewpoint at Muttom is very famous and one of the most panoramic viewpoints in the district. Another attraction of Muttom is the century old lighthouse built by the British. People come and see all these with full interest.  

The district administration constructed small open huts at the rock tops for the tourists to sit and watch the massive sea waves leisurely with protection from sun and rain. The fencing work and the small huts have already been completed to the delight of the tourists who mob to the beach in hundreds during weekends. Sitting benches have also been constructed in a circle for the elders to sit and chat, relax and enjoy the sun set.

Seeing the response of the tourists, the district administration has sanctioned

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81 Personal Interview with A. Chandran, Ex. councilor, Muttom, aged 49, dated 12.03.2011.
for the construction of a toilet complex, a small shopping complex and a children’s park and there are plans to undertake sculpture – works across the rocks to add to the ambience of the area.\textsuperscript{81}

5.3.6. Thekkurichi Beach

It is located near Rajakkamangalam Thurai. The amazing Arabian Sea, the golden glowing sands and the coconut canopies all come together as a package for a perfect holiday. A swim or bath here is rejuvenating and relaxing for the tourists. You can feel the cool breeze of the wondrous waves on your face.\textsuperscript{82}

5.3.7. Thengapattinam Beach

Thengapattinam beach is one among the beautiful beaches of Kanyakumari District and is situated 35 kms from Nagercoil, 12 km from Kuzhithurai. It is a very good place for water sports and other aqua tourism activities. It is located on the west coast near painkulam village in Vilavancode Taluk. It is a fine beach adorned with coconut groves. It is also a magnificent estuary where the river meets the sea. Riding in a Catumaram in the river can be a pleasant experience which can be arranged through local fishermen.\textsuperscript{83}

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\textsuperscript{82} Kanyakumari Tourism Booklet, \textit{Beaches of kanyakumari district}, 2004, p.5.
\textsuperscript{83} http://en.wikipedia.org/kanyakumari tourism/beaches.
\end{flushright}
5.4. Bird Watching

Kanyakumari District has many tropical fresh water wetlands with a variety of resident and migratory birds. The major tropical fresh water wet lands of Kanyakumari District namely, Suchindrum wetland complex, Putheri, Erachakulam, Godhandaramankulam, Thazhakudi wetland complex, Azhagiapandipuram Kulam, Putheri Kulam and Chengulam are among the finest tropical fresh water wetland systems of India. All these wetlands are situated at the southern tip of peninsular India where the Western Ghats mountain ranges ends in a spectacular zone of hills, lowland plains and seacoast, all within a distance of about 50 Kilometres.

Sixty four species of water birds have been recorded form these wetlands. Birds are found throughout the year, although in varying combinations of species and numbers. These include resident and local migratory species as well as exotic winter migrants. Migratory birds arrive annually as winter visitors from as far North Siberia. This wetland complex offers important ecological facilities for birds namely, food, shelter and to a limited extent, breeding sites.

5.5. Wild life Sanctuaries

Kanyakumari District is blessed with benevolence of nature with forests. The forests have a rich variety of flora and fauna existing in the very scenic Western Ghats. The Forest Department is keen in protecting the wildlife outside the

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85 Gopala Krishnan, M., op.cit., p. 12.
The Kanyakumari forest occupies about 1.5 lakh hectares, which is roughly 30% of the district area and portends vegetation of different types. The wild animals such as elephants, bisons, sambhars, wild dogs, mouse deers, porcupines, giant squirrels, Nilgris langurs, bears, jungle cats, pythons, Travancore tunics are a common sight to the trekkers in the Kanyakumari forests.

The dry deciduous forests of the Panagudy side of the Mahendragiri, the moist deciduous forests of the Asambu Hills and the wet evergreen forests of the Veerapuli and Kilamalai forests are a joy to behold with bamboos, canes, reeds, orchids, endemic palms like Bentinckia and grasslands abound. The peaks of Varayattumottai, Mahendragiri. Muthukuzhivayal Upper Kothaiyar and waterfalls such as Olakaiaaruvi, Kutharapanchanaruvi and Kalikesan enchant the unsuspecting tourists.

5.6. Medical Tourism

Kanyakumari is an important centre of nature medicines like Siddha, Ayurvedha, Varmam, etc. The tourist can be informed of the uniqueness of their medicines. They can be attracted to the centres of these medicines.

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88 Kanyakumari District Scholars, op.cit., p. 201.
90 Personal Interview with S. Shivanand, Child care Centre, Pothayadi, aged 26, dated 27.5.2009.
5.6.1. Maruthuva Malai

Marunthuvazh Malai (Maruthuva Malai) is a small mountain stretch located about 11Kms from Nagercoil and about 8Kms from Kanyakumari. Maruthuva Malai is part of the Western Ghat and is visible from the NH47. Most of the mountain areas are owned by private parties.\(^9\)

The word Maruthuva Malai is the short form of ‘Marunthu Vazhum Malai’ which translated means ‘Mountain of Medicinal Plants’.\(^9\) According to legends when Lord Hanuman was carrying Sanjeevani Mountain to Sri Lanka a portion of it fell here to become Maruthuva Malai. According to tradition, the Maruthuva Malai is a fragment of the Sanjeevi Mountain, a piece of which fell down here, and it was carried by Hanuman from Mahendragiri to Lanka for healing the fatal wounds of Lakshmana, the brother of Rama, the epic hero. It stretches for more than a km, reaching a height of 800 feet at the highest point.\(^9\)

This hill is also believed to be noted in Ayyavazhi mythology as Parvatha Ucchi Malai. Apart from the Mythology, this hill is historically related to the life of Vaikundar. So few theologians consider this hill as sacred and consider it one among the Ayyavazhi holy sites. Backing some quotes from Arul Nool and Akilam some even argue that Marunthuvazh Malai is one among the Pathis. Maruthuva Malai

\(^9\) Vivekanandan, N., *op.cit.*, p.11.
Shiva Temple and Nayanar Swamy Ashram are the prime attractions in the vicinity.\(^{94}\)

5.7. Entertainment Attraction (Baywatch)

The water theme amusement park at sunset point offers a unique way to experience the exotic grandeur of Kanyakumari in its integrals. It is located 2 km west of Kanyakumari bus stand. Baywatch comes up with a wholesome family entertainment saga of rapturous experience, which gives you nonstop excitement in a thrilling and bewitching water world.\(^{95}\)

In an effort to augment the tourism potential of Kanyakumari, Shree Bhadra Parks and Resorts Limited, a company under Shree Bhadra group has set out ambitious plans to build a chain of high-tech amusement and theme parks at major tourist centre in southern India, along with an entertainment township at Kanyakumari.\(^{96}\)

Baywatch project is worth Rs. 30 crores. This is a prospective step to increase Kanyakumari’s visibility in the Indian subcontinent.\(^{97}\) The Park will cater to both

\(^{94}\) Ibid.

\(^{95}\) Personal Interview with S. Shibin Joy, Worker, Bay Watch, Kanyakumari, aged 46, dated 29.5.2009.

\(^{96}\) Ibid.

\(^{97}\) Kanyakumari Tourism Booklet, op.cit., p. 8.
domestic and international travelers. The project has been positioned appropriately for its uniqueness in providing fun-filled recreation.\textsuperscript{98}

They provide accommodation in our recommended hotels and assist the needs of the tourists. They offer Spacious Changing Room Block with Lockers, Cloak Room, Toilets and Sale Counter for garments. Variety of quality garments for all age groups, both men and women are available in a very reasonable rate in Counter.\textsuperscript{99}

It has a separate Restaurant and serves vegetarian /non vegetarian foods. A clinic with qualified personnel is functioning throughout the day to take care of sick visitors. Rest room and wheel chairs are available for aged and sick persons. Excellent Ice Cream Parlors, Fast Food Centers and Stalls are constructed in various locations to cater to all the requirements of the visitors. All sorts of fancy items are available in the stalls. Vast area has been made to park tourist vehicles with security.\textsuperscript{100}

Great fun styles equaling international standards keep you on the ecstatic brink of frenzy. Fun loaded rides like Bumping Car, Sky Cab, Crazy Chairs, Hot

\textsuperscript{98} Personal Interview with M. Vivehanandan, Asist. Manager, Bay Watch, Kanyakumari, aged 46, dated 29.5.2009.

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{100} Booklet of Bay Watch, 2009, p. 7.
Tea Cups, Giant Wheel, Columbus, Wave pool, Milky Way, Multiple Splash, Kids Pool are some of the attractions. The location being a prominent place of national integration, by all means, Baywatch has become the abode of leisure, happiness laughter, family gatherings, etc.\textsuperscript{101} The search for providing unique and multiple entertainment facilities for children that match with international standards pave the way for introduction of India’s first Wax Museum, which is line with the Madam Tussauds Wax Museum at London.\textsuperscript{102}

\textsuperscript{101} Booklet of Baywatch kanyakumari,\textit{ op.cit.}, p.1.

\textsuperscript{102} Personal Interview with Akil R. Rathees, Trainee, Bay Watch, Kanyakumari, aged 22, dated 29.5.2009.