CHAPTER 5

TOURISM POTENTIALITIES OF MALABAR

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Malabar has been a fascination before the world for centuries. Important spices like black pepper, ginger, turmeric and cinnamon grew in profusion in Malabar. Spices were items of special value in the ancient and medieval western world. It is believed that the King Solomon, the wisest man ever lived on the earth had imported cinnamon and timber from Malabar. The ancient Romans sent regular fleets from the Red Sea to trade for these commodities. The vast demand for spices finally prompted the Portuguese to discover the direct sea route to India in 1498. The most beautiful woman ever lived on the earth, Cleopatra is said to have sent an expedition to this beautiful part of the world. That is the charm of the Malabar internationally.

Malabar has in its credit to offer everything that a discerning tourist longs for. Be it historical monuments, secluded beaches, rivers, forests, mighty mountainous ranges, wild life sanctuaries, hill stations, famous temples, festivals, folk art forms, the Ayurveda or Kalari, diverse religious and tribal cultures and philosophies. Malabar is able to retain its old world-charm while imbibing the better elements of modernization even in the new millennium.

But paradoxically, this loveliest northern stretch of Kerala remains backward socially and economically since a long period of time. There is a general complaint that development of the State had been confined to central and southern parts of Kerala. South and central parts were ahead in facilities touching different walks of life including tourism sector. Problems of air connectivity and less developed infrastructure have stood in the way of Malabar achieving the level of success that southern areas of the State have accomplished. Above all, development in Malabar remained stagnant because of the insensitivity of successive Governments to the aspirations of the local people of the region.

The economic and social backwardness of Malabar can easily be understood from the current industrial scene of the region. Those who are raising such complaints, for instance, point out that the major 13 public sector units in Kerala are located in central and southern districts. The lone industrial unit in North Malabar
that could be in this group is the Rs.657 lakh Spinning and Weaving Mills in Kannur. The closure of Grasim Industries in Mavoor in 2001 had added to bleakness of North Malabar’s industrial scene. This prominent industrial undertaking had given employment to 4000 persons and provided business worth Rs.20 crores in Kozhikode city every month. The list of the region’s industries that had shut down include Kerala Soaps and Oils Ltd., Hindustan Lever Oil Mill, Malabar Spinning and Weaving Mill, West India Plywood, Calicut Steel Rolling Company, Beypore, Bharat Steel Rolling Mills, Southern Gas and Steel Complex Ltd. at Cheruvannur, the Ship breaking unit at Beypore, Coconut Complex at Thiruvangoor and the Commonwealth Weaving Factory. Moreover, many tile factories and timber-wood factories, textile mills, beedi and cigar making units have also been shut down. Thus, Malabar has been transformed into an industrial graveyard. In the present globalised scenario, a number of labour-intensive units are also on the verge of liquidation. Thousands of labourers employed in these units have either already lost their jobs or are under the acute challenge of being thrown out of employment. It is high time that something has to be done to reverse this trend. There is an urgent need of rehabilitating these labourers in some other areas. Developing tourism is an important alternative to tackle the problem of unemployment in an area like Malabar especially when the State sector is finding it difficult to raise invisible funds.

Though Kerala has been branded as a ‘must see destination’ all over the world, Malabar remains stagnant in tourism also even in this booming times. Till recently, Malabar had not been highlighted properly in the tourism map of the State. Here in Malabar, rich tradition still continues, amidst tumbling waterfalls, mighty mountain ranges, secluded beaches and endless carpets of green paddy fields making it one of Kerala’s most desirable tourist destinations. Besides a number of well-known sight seeing locations, there are many other lesser-known but wonderful sights to be seen and experienced in all the districts of this region. Malabar region is connected both with its boundaries and to the outside world by road and rail and it also possesses an international airport and one more international airport in the northern part of the region is expected to come in the near future. The proposed international airport at Moorkhanparamba in Kannur district would be the second in Malabar and the fourth in Kerala. This airport can be expected to give a boost to the tourism potential of the region.
No doubt, Malabar cannot claim to have outstanding tourist resource base like Kovalam beach or Kumarakom backwaters in the southern part of the state. Still the region has proved that not only Kappad beach in Kozhikode or Vythiri hill station in Wayanad or Payyambalam beach in Kannur or Bekal fort in Kasaragod, but some relatively less attractive resources can be converted into most sought after destinations with innovative planning and expertise.

The fact that Malabar has not been able to find a place in the State’s tourism map is evident from the available statistical trends on inflow of tourists, particularly foreign tourists to this region for the past couple of years. However of late, it is delightful to note that realizing the neglect of development of tourism in the region for a long period of time, increased attention has been given to the integrated development of Malabar as a tourist destination. There is a strong indication that the scene has started changing particularly in recent times. The recently available statistics on allocation of funds for the development of infrastructure in the region and some strategic moves initiated by the Department also support this observation. The initiatives taken by the Government towards the development of tourism in the region in recent times is explained in the next chapter.

5.2. MALABAR - GENERAL HISTORY

As the name suggests, Malabar is a compound of two syllables such as mala and bar, the former a Dravidian word meaning hill or mountain and the latter a Persian word, which means country. Thus Malabar might have taken its name from the hilly or mountainous character of the region. Malabar has been from time immemorial a land entity with an exclusive identity marked by its singular characteristic. Malabar was a land identified and made a seaport by the early Dravidians who descended to the South of India, after the fall of the Indus Valley Civilization. The people in Malabar were considered to be able navigators and the ancient seaport ushered a new era in trade and commerce.1

Legend, mystery, myth and folklore combine to create a traveller’s delight and a historian’s paradise at the northern tip of Kerala. This is Malabar.......2 The land of Malabar was famous internationally even from very ancient times.

Malabar has a tradition of hospitality that goes back hundreds of years. Kerala, especially the Malabar region, had contacts with the countries of the outside world even from time immemorial. The Arabs, the Babylonians, the Phoenicians, the Israelites, the Greeks, the Romans and the Chinese were among the foreigners who
had contacts with the Malabar Coast in the ancient period. Different varieties of megalithic artifacts like burial stones and urns have been recovered from places near Kozhikode belonging to period even from B.C. 4000. The people of Kerala had established many foreign relations like trade long before the others did.

Ancient Kerala occupied a unique place in the commercial world. Kerala had been famous for her spices and it was her fame as the land of spices that brought foreigners and cultures to her shores even from the third millennium B.C. The ancient Egyptians also used spices from Kerala to make perfumes and holy oils and to preserve the dead bodies of their kings and other highly placed persons by a system of mummification. There are traces of teak found in the ruins of Uru, which must certainly have come from the Malabar Coast. This implies that trade flourished around 3000 B.C. Cotton from the Malabar Coast was a favourite item in Egypt. The Phoenicians visited this region around the same time to trade in ivory and sandalwood. Such spices as pepper, cardamom, cinnamon and ginger were exported from ancient Malabar to the countries of Asia and Europe and they continue to earn valuable foreign exchange even now. Muziris (Kodungallur) was famous to be the ancient world’s greatest trading centre in the East for such highly prized possessions of spices.

The Kerala Mahatmyam written in Sanskrit and the Keralolpatti written in Malayalam contain the traditional beliefs of the people regarding the ancient history of Kerala. According to one legend, the strip of Kerala located to the west of the Western Ghats or the ‘Sahya Mountains’ was believed to be created from Sea by Parasuraman, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu of the Hindu religious beliefs. According to yet another legend of Parasuraman in Keralolpatti, the Perumals were the first rulers in Kerala and the first Perumal’s name was ‘Keralan’ by which the land got its name.

In the first five centuries after Christ, the State was ruled by three main powers, viz. the Aay Rajas on the South, the Ezhimala Kings on the North and the Chera kingdom on the Central Kerala. During these periods, Kerala witnessed a number of invasions from outside. These were periods of extreme political instability in Kerala.

By the middle of the 14th century, the power of the Samoothiri or the Zamorins began to prosper in the north and he occupied Kozhikode after killing the ruler of Polanad. The funds from the rich trading of the Kozhikode port gave him
much advantage on his battles with the neighbouring states. The helpful attitude of Zamorin towards all foreign traders coupled with his reputation as a tolerant and fair-minded monarch attracted foreign traders to Kozhikode in large numbers and made it the chief emporium of Malabar trade. With Kozhikode as the base the Zamorin embarked on a series of campaigns to bring the neighbouring principalities under his suzerainty. Samoothiri attacked Valluvanad and captured the areas including Thirunavaya and thereby took the position of Rakshpurusha from the Valluvakonathiri. During the Mamankam festival all other Rajas used to send flags as a symbol of regard to the Rakshpurusha at Thirunavaya. Thirunavaya was a place of great political importance as it was here that the famous festival Mamankam was held once in every 12 years under the presidency of the Valluvanad ruler. According to tradition, the Mamankam was originally presided over by the Chera emperors and hence the honour now being enjoyed by the Valluvakonathiri of presiding over the festival was the envy of other Kerala rulers, particularly the Samoothiri.

The Samoothiri celebrated the next Mamankam with great exuberance and luxury. But the conquest of Thirunavaya ushered in an era of bitter rivalry between the Samoothiri and Valluvakonathiri. The loss of Thirunavaya dealt a moral blow to the power and prestige of the Valluvakonathiri and his forces were relentlessly pursued by the Samoothiri’s army. Valluvakonathiri sent Chavers or Suicide squads to exterminate Samoothiri. The idea was to restore his right as Rakshpurusha by killing Samoothiri. The Chavers were sworn soldiers who preferred death to defeat. Kudippaka or blood feud was prevalent in the society at that time.

Samoothiri gradually became the master of Malappuram, Nilambur, Vallappanattukara and Manjeri. In the second attack against Perumbadappu, Samoothiri was defeated by the combined armies of Perumbadappu and Valluvakonathiri. After a short interval Samoothiri also invaded Nedungad, Pantalur and Kottakkal. Finally Kochi Raja also submitted to the Samoothiri and became his feudatory. After his successful campaign in the Thrissur areas the Samoothiri turned against the Palakkad Raja and conquered Naduvattam. Thus when the Portuguese landed in the Kerala Coast in 1498 the Samoothiri was a powerful sovereign.

The landing of Vasco Da Gama at Kappad near Kozhikode in May 1498 marked the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Kerala. The Portuguese navigator was sent to the East with the object of discovering a new trade route to India. The bitter rivalry between the Samoothiri on the one side and the Kochi Raja,
the Kolathiri and other minor powers on the other created conditions favourable for the partial realization of the Portuguese dream at least for a short period. On his arrival at Kozhikode, Vasco Da Gama was received by the Samoothiri and his subjects with traditional hospitality.

Though Vasco Da Gama did not visit Kannur on his way to Kozhikode, he had established contacts with Kolathiri, the ruler of North Malabar during his return journey to Europe. His ships which had left Kozhikode on August 29, 1498 were contacted by the boats sent by the Kolathiri and Da Gama was invited to visit the place. The aim of the Kolathiri was to gain wealth and power in the same way as the Samoothiri had acquired both with the help of the Arabs. He gave the Portuguese all facilities for the loading of their ships and Da Gama sent to the shore several goods in exchange in addition to costly presents for the ruler.5

The Portuguese resorted to war against Samoothiri with an alliance with Kochi Raja. Samoothiri wanted to expel the Portuguese; so he attacked and occupied Kochi. But the Portuguese took back the Kochi and reinstated the King. Later, Samoothiri approached Kolathiri to war against Portuguese. The Portuguese had behaved contemptuously to the Muslims at Kannur. Hence, Kolathiri was thinking of teaching them a lesson. The King laid siege at the St. Angelo’s Fort, Kannur. But the Portuguese won this battle also and ultimately Kolathiri was forced to plea for peace.

Later the Samoothiri made an agreement with the Portuguese and allowed them to construct buildings at Kozhikode and Ponnani. This disturbed the Muslim chieftains of Samoothiri including Kunjali Marakkar and they protested and it ended in a war between Samoothiri with the Portuguese on his side against Kunjali Marakkar.

The Dutch was in the race for evicting the Portuguese from the high potential Eastern spices trade. Strategic alliance with the Samoothiri helped the Dutch to drive out the Portuguese once and for all by 1663. The Dutch captured the Kannur Fort from the Portuguese in February 1663. The event came in the wake of their capture of Kochi in January of the same year and that of Thangasseri and Cranganore in the preceding years. The Dutch proclaimed the Kochi Maharaja as the titular head and drove the Portuguese out. With the total control over the Eastern Spices trade, the Dutch East India Company was formed.

In 1741, the Dutch forces were defeated and demoralized by the armies led by Marthanda Varma, one of the most reputed kings of the Travancore kingdom in
the epic battle of Kolachel. By the end of the 18th century the Dutch were expelled by the British.

The Portuguese and the Dutch introduced several novel agricultural crops to Kerala, notable among them being pineapple, papaya, tapioca and rubber and scientific farming methods of coconuts. The Dutch made some significant contributions to the economy of Kerala.

After an interval of a few years from the battle of Kolachel a revolt rose between Muslims and Hindus at Thirurangadi in Malappuram which was a setback to the Samoothiri. He launched another attack on Valluvakonathiri and captured some more of his lands. After the victory in Valluvanad, Samoothiri's forces entered the kingdom of Palakkad Raja. In this war, both the kingdom suffered heavy losses and finally the Samoothiri won the battle.

Meanwhile, Komu Achan, the Palakkad Raja, sought the help of the King of Mysore in resisting the Samoothiri's aggression. The Mysore ruler ordered Haider Ali who was the Faujadar of Dindigal to proceed to the help of the Palakkad Raja. Haider Ali sent Maqдум Ali with his army cavalry and infantry to fight against Samoothiri. The Samoothiri was forced to restore his Palakkad conquests and to pay a war indemnity of Rs. 12 lakh to Mysore. Samoothiri attacked the Palakkad Raja and demanded the ransom agreed in the previous war. Palakkad Raja again went to Mysore for aid and Haider Ali agreed to refurbish the conquered areas from Samoothiri. Subsequently, Haider resorted to war against the Samoothiri and conquered Kozhikode. The Rajas of Malabar went to Travancore and resisted the attacks under the king of Travancore.

After the Anglo Mysore war between the Tippu Sultan and the British, a pact called the 'Sreerangapattanam' treaty was signed in 1792 between them and according to it the British established their rule over Malabar. The British defeated and killed Tippu Sultan in the last Anglo Mysore war at Devanahalli in 1799. The next Samoothiri and all other Rajas including Valluvakonathiri in Malabar were annexed to the British Empire. The whole of Malabar was now in the hands of the British.

The region of Malabar contributed much to the freedom movement in the State. The main specialties of Malabar include the major agitations, the Satyagrahas, the stronghold of Communist party which came to power in a democratic election etc. Malabar was the region of strategic importance to the British Rule and the
freedom movement in Kerala. Likewise, the region played a greater role under the British Rule unlike the Travancore in the South.

In earlier times, the establishment of British supremacy over the different regions of Malabar did not go unchallenged by patriotic elements of Malabar population. The Naduvazhis of Malabar turned against the British Empire. The more serious of the revolts against the British in Malabar were organised by Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja of the Kottayam royal family. The British tried to capture him but he continued his resistance by resorting to guerilla warfare after he escaped to Wayanad jungle hills. In his attacks the British suffered heavy losses and sued for peace. Disputes again arose in between the British and the Pazhassi Raja and both resorted to war again. Finally, the British Armies under Sir Arthur Wellesley emerged victorious and Pazhassi Raja was killed.

5.3. NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT AND SALT SATYAGRAHA

The Non-Cooperation movement, which was started after the Nagpur Session (1920), made considerable headway in Malabar too. There was widespread boycott of foreign goods, courts of law and educational institutions in the region. Meanwhile, the Khilafat Movement was started as a protest against the action of the British Government in disrupting the Turkish Empire and depriving the Sultan of Turkey of his spiritual headship as the Khalifa. This agitation also made tremendous impact on the Muslim population of Malabar. Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Shaukat Ali visited Malabar to organise Khilafat Committees and to accelerate the tempo of the national movement against the foreign government. The Malabar Rebellion of 1921 was an event of great political significance in Kerala. The Salt Satyagraha which began under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in March 1930 had its repercussions in Malabar as well. Payyanur was the main venue of Salt Satyagraha in Malabar. Several batches of Satyagrahis from Kozhikode, Palakkad and other parts of Kerala marched to Payyanur to take part in the struggle. Many top leaders like K.Kelappan, Muhammad Abdur Rahman and K. Madhavan Nair were arrested for breaking salt-law and were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment.

5.4. TEMPLE ENTRY FOR UNTOUCHABLES

An important event of the social reforms movement of Kerala was agitation of the removal of untouchability. At the fifth All Kerala Political Conference held at Vadakara (Kozhikode district) in 1931, many important resolutions including the one
demanding temple entry for the so called untouchables were passed. The famous Guruvayoor Satyagraha was an off-shoot of this resolution. Since the Samoothiri, the hereditary trustee of Guruvayoor Sreekrishna temple, did not agree to allow the untouchables to worship in the temple, local leaders decided to launch a Satyagraha to achieve this end. Appeals of eminent people including Gandhiji, Rabindranath Tagore and others to allow the untouchables into the temple had no effect. The Satyagraha was started under the auspices of the Kerala Provincial Congress. The leader of the Satyagraha was K.Kelappan and the Captain of the Volunteer Corps A.K.Gopalan. As a last resort, Kelappan began ‘fast unto death’. The Satyagraha attracted countrywide attention and political workers from all over India converged on Guruvayoor to extend help to the Satyagrahis. Though the Guruvayoor Satyagraha failed to achieve its immediate objective, it had helped to create a climate in favour of the eradication of untouchability.

5.5. QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

The Quit India Movement of August, 1942 was widespread in Malabar. During this Movement, there were sensational and violent incidents in Malabar involving disruption of communication and attack on government offices and police stations. Some young workers under the leadership of Dr. K.B.Menon organised meetings and demonstrations in defiance of government ban. They also organised the boycott of schools, colleges and courts of law. A secret journal called Swatantra Bharatam was published during this period. The Kizhariyur bomb case, in which 27 persons including Dr. K.B.Menon were charge-sheeted, was the most important episode of the struggle.

5.6. MALABAR REBELLION

Malabar Rebellion of 1921 was the most important event associated with the political movement in Malabar. The agrarian system in Malabar under British rule had been responsible for violent upsurges on several occasions. Those earlier uprisings, however, were not strongly influenced by a political ideology of nationalism. An exception to this may be found in the Malabar Rebellion or Mappila outbreak of 1921 which had its origin in an anti-imperialist movement.6

The Non-cooperation movement was in full swing during the period. The progress of the Khilafat movement in Ernad and Valluvanad Taluks created alarm in
official quarters and the Government brought these two Taluks under prohibitory orders. The attempted arrest of the Secretary of the local Khilafat Committee at Pukottur in Ernad Taluk led to a series of violent clashes between the police and the Mappilas. The ultimate result was that the rebels achieved a large measure of success in extirpating British authority in their strongholds like Malappuram, Thirurangadi, Manjeri and Perinthalmanna and establishing their own governments in these places. Subsequently martial law was declared and repressive measures were adopted. In the later stages of the Rebellion the Mappilas committed several violent atrocities and forfeited the sympathy of the majority community. The Rebellion was at least suppressed by the British Government with an iron hand.

5.7. WAGON TRAGEDY

One of the tragic episodes of the Rebellion was the 'Wagon Tragedy' in which 61 of the 90 Mappilas carried as prisoners in a closed railway goods wagon from Tirur to Coimbatore jails on November 10, 1921 died out of suffocation. In the wake of the suppression of the Malabar Rebellion and until almost the end of the decade, struggle purely for political freedom was on a low key.

5.8. BIRTH OF POLITICAL JOURNALISM

The post-rebellion period saw the birth of political journalism in Malabar. In March 1923, Mathrubhumi was started from Kozhikode to popularize the message of the Congress. The Al Ameen started publication from Kozhikode with the aim of fostering the spirit of nationalism among the Muslim masses. A movement for tenancy reform was also started during this period. The movement for the boycott of the Simon Commission in 1928 created a stir among the people in Malabar. The presidential address of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru laying stress on the Socialist ideology of Complete Independence (Poorna Swaraj) at the meeting of the All Kerala Political Conference at Payyanur in 1928 gave a fresh stimulus to political activity in Malabar.

5.9. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Malabar played an important part in the second phase of the Disobedience Movement started by Gandhiji with his famous Salt March in March 1930. The Movement was accompanied by the organised boycott of courts of law, educational institutions, foreign goods and toddy shops. In many places, particularly Payyanur
and Kozhikode, salt laws were broken and hundreds of agitators courted arrest. A significant feature of the Movement was that a large number of women took an active part in it.

5.10. THE LEFT MOVEMENTS

One of the distinctive features of the freedom movement in Kerala in the 1920's and 1930's was the increasing involvement of peasants and workers. This was aimed at releasing a tremendous mass force into the mainstream of the national movement. In the case of Malabar, a section of political activity had paid serious attention to the agrarian problems from the very beginning of the National movement. North Malabar was particularly very active in these agitations.7

The involvement of the peasants and labourers in the movement was the cause as well as the consequence of the emergence of a powerful left wing in Kerala politics. In 1934, the left nationalists formed the Congress Socialist Party.

A strong factor that helped the growth of the left movement was the support it received from the radical section of the nationalist Muslims in Malabar. In several parts of Malabar, left groups were started functioning and soon the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee was dominated by them. The leftists preferred to remain organizationally within the Congress and call themselves socialists. Thus both the left and right groups joined together in order to ensure the success of the Congress candidates in the elections of 1936 in Malabar. But the rift came into open with the outbreak of the II World War, the resignation of the Congress ministries in the provinces and the starting of individual Satyagrahas. The left met in secret enclave at Pinarayi (Kannur district) and in December 1939 the Communist Party was born.

5.11. THE LAND OF MALABAR

The region of Malabar is sandwiched between the Western Ghats on the east and Arabian Sea on the west. The rich vegetation of the region, like tall teak trees has been the hallmark of Malabar even from ancient times. The well-known rivers of the State like Bharatapuzha (the largest river in Kerala), Kallai, Valappattanam, Kabani, Bhavani, Mahe etc. flow through the region. Malabar has in its credit an extensive cultivation of commercial crops like coconut, betel, areca nut, pepper, coffee, tea, cashew nut and a wide variety of medicinal plants and paddy fields. There are minor deposits of gold in Malappuram and Wayanad districts. Iron and mica ores are found in some parts of Malabar.
Malabar can be accessed only through four passes such as the Palakkad Gap, Wayanad Ghat Pass and the Kozhikode Gap (Thamarassery Ghat Pass) and the Costal belt north of Kasaragod district connecting Kerala to Mangalore in Karanataka. While Thamarassery and Wayanad Ghat Pass connect Kerala to Karnataka, it is the Palakkad Gap that connects the State to Tamil Nadu. These passes have been the main areas of transportation and trade and have much historical importance since many invaders and travellers reached Kerala through them.

5.11.1. Climate

The climatic conditions of the State tell about the geographical diversity of Kerala. The high ranges experience the cool and bracing climate whole of the year, but the plains are hot and humid. The Malabar region covers the extensively humid belt of mountain country parallel to the west coast of the peninsula. The centres like Vaithiri, Kuttiady and Lakkidi get the highest rainfall in the southwest and northeast monsoons.

About 50 per cent of the Malabar is the coastal areas while the rest is of mountainous in nature. The districts such as Palakkad, Malappuram and Thrissur experience high temperature compared to other districts in the region.

5.11.2. Malabar Coast

Malabar Coast which is long and narrow coastal plain is situated in the southwest coast of India. It is on the Arabian Sea and is bordered inland by the Western Ghats mountain range. The region, varying in width from 48 to 113 km extends about 845 km from Goa in the north to Cape Comorin in the south. The regular annual visit of monsoon makes the Malabar Coast a fertile rice-growing area. The historically important Coast of Malabar possesses a number of important port cities. Important among them are Kozhikode, Kochi and Kollam and they have served as strategic centres of the ocean trade of the country for centuries. Malabar Coast has seen the scenes of trade struggles in the 16th and 17th centuries between the Portuguese and their European and Indian rivals. The port cities of the Malabar Coast feel very cosmopolitan and hosted groups of Christians, Jews and Muslims in India.

5.11.3. Malabar Pepper

Pepper is called the king of spices. The Malabar pepper is known as *Karutha Ponnu* which means black pepper. It was weighed like gold and used as a common
medium of exchange. Malabar is mentioned in ancient travelogues as Spice Coast of Kerala. Malabar pepper was one of the causes of colonial invasions to the State. The pepper grown in Wayanad is known the world over as Tellicherry Pepper. It is the Malabar’s undulating slopes, acidic soil and dense protective canopy of trees make it ideal for the cultivation of spices, particularly the pepper.

Malabar’s black pepper is the most qualitative pepper in the international market from the time immemorial to the date. At one time a pound of pepper was thought to be a most elegant gift for a king and was used as money to pay taxes, tributes, dowries and rent. Black pepper is a well known preservative. Its Sanskrit name, maricha, means ‘a particle of fire’. It has been used as a medicine and food flavouring for centuries.

The basis of the major political developments and military action, which followed Vasco de Gama’s arrival in Malabar, was India’s export trade in pepper. The Portuguese alliance with the Raja of Kolathiri was a shrewd move to take advantage of princely jealousies for the purpose of establishing a rival pepper mart at Kannur. Thalassery, being the chief emporium for the East India Company’s pepper trade, the factory at Kozhikode was subordinate to it. Then the English shifted their headquarters to Thalassery on account of its proximity to the finest pepper and cardamom lands in Malabar.

Muziris (today’s Cranganore or Kodungallur), where the Periyar flows into the sea, was once a rich port from where the pepper was exported to foreign lands. Pliny is quoted as saying: ‘The only quality of pepper is its pungency and yet it is for this very undesirable element that we import it in very huge quantities.’ It was paid for with the gold – old Roman coins have been found in excavation sites in the State. The fiery taste of pepper lured a large number of traders, who sped East in search of spices. The export volumes were enormous, and there was panic in Malabar. As one story goes, the natives ran to the Samoothiri to complain: ‘Sire! We are in trouble! The Portuguese merchants are not just shipping away our pepper. They are uprooting and taking away the very pepper vines!’ The Samoothiri smiled, and calmly said, ‘Let them! Can the Portuguese take with them last monsoon rain that gives the pepper its special flavour?’
5.11.4. Malabar Cuisine

Malabar extends a warm welcome to a culinary expedition in its land. Malabar is famous to the outside world for its spicy cuisine as well as sweet dishes. Malabar cuisine has a clear cut demarcation between Mappila cuisine and Syrian Christian cuisine. In the case of the former, the Arabic influence is quite visible, while the latter's inclination has been to Syrian, Dutch, Portuguese and English.

Among them the lightly flavoured Malabar biriyani is very famous. It is believed that the Malabar biriyani was brought to Kerala by the Arab sea traders. The biriyani, rich mutton curries and sweet desserts beckon visiting tourists to tingle their taste buds. The biriyani is rice, fried and spiced to be topped with meat, chicken, fish or prawn. It is served with crisp pappadams, nadan kozhi (chicken) curry, curd raita and pickles. Ghee rice or Nei Choru is another typical Malabar food. Muslims in Malabar also make a porridge called alisa, made of ghee, wheat and meat. Malabar cuisine, also called Mappila cuisine, is mostly non-vegetarian. Malabar Mappilas use abundant quantity of rice, coconut and jaggery. With the Sea so close by, it is no wonder that Malabar cuisine offers a variety of sea food dishes. The vast stretches of Malabar seashore are blessed with succulent lobsters, prawns, crabs, mussels and a full range of delicacies. Each of these cooked with exotic Malabar spices make this land a seafood paradise. The food varieties prevailed in other parts of Kerala like Puttu, Appam, Idiyappam etc. have their own flavour for Malabaris. The share of foreign influence in the Christian food habits is in the form of introducing cashews, raisins, wine, yeast etc.

Kozhikode offers to a visitor its multi-coloured, multi-flavoured Halwas, Mysorepaks, and wonderful varieties of sweets. Thalassery tradition in the culinary field is one with extreme grandeur. There is little wonder in saying that where there is a Malayalee chef in the world that will be a 'Tellicherian'.

5.11.5. Culture and Art Forms

Malabar is a region blessed with great natural beauty and rich heritage. It is also a mythical land. Malabar, which is also famous as the land of charity, is rich in folk-culture, visual arts and festivals. Different religions, groups and communities in their historical evolution have subscribed to the growth of a dreamlike panorama of dance and visual art forms in this land. This is the land which has witnessed the rise and fall of so many dynasties, the victory and failure of so many invaders. Yet, very
little has changed in this region. It did not give up its artistic caliber and martial spirit. As is evident from the explanation which follows in the succeeding sections, majority of the well known art forms including the famous Theyyam and Kathakali are the contribution of Malabar to the cultural history of Kerala. A conglomeration of people descending from varied traditions is harmoniously living here. Malabar is also home of Poorams, Velas, Oppana, Kolkkali and a diverse art forms being enacted. This is the land which has found its place in the cultural almanac of the world by producing the Great Thunchan (father of Malayalam language) and Kunchan (profounder of the art form Thullal). The celebrated writers of Malayalam language were born on the banks of Bharathapuzha, an important river of Kerala. In fact, this soil is the replica of Kerala with its own little additions and omissions.

5.11.5.1. Theyyam

Theyyam is the oldest ritualistic temple art form in India and one of the most spectacular in terms of artistry and symbolism. This divine dance is rampant in Malabar region from at least 1500 years ago. Theyyam has always been the mascot of the rich cultural heritage of Malabar. This unique form of the most ritualistic performing folk art is a connoisseur’s delight due to its visual splendour. Kannur and Kasaragod districts are the centers of Theyyam in Malabar. Theyyam is also known as Thira or Kaliyattam. Etymologically Theyyam means Delvam (God) in Malayalam. The word Theyyam refers both to the performance and the performer. The beauty of Theyyam is that, it is more about the participation of beholder than the actual performance. Colours, particularly red, fly by the strings of music as the dancer spins on the axis of this creation. The performer becomes a super natural being when he wears the make-up of Theyyam. The pageantry of the make-up and the paraphernalia, with red as the dominant colour (as the colour of power, Shakthi) speaks volume of the aesthetics of the art form.

The villages in these two districts are attracted by innumerable number of tourists, philanthropists and art lovers from all over the world in search of the magnificent Theyyam performances. The Theyyam season begins on the 10th day of the Malayalam month of Thulam (end of October) and ends until the middle of Edavam (the end of May), the months of harvest and festivals. Theyyams are generally performed in Kavus (shrines), in open paddy fields, in the courtyards of Tharavads or ancestral houses and sacred groves. The Kavus of worship decorated with sculptures made of wood are very different in nature when compared to the
other Indian Hindu temples. These are shrined without deity inside it. Quite often Theyyam or God may be represented by a sword, a stool, a piece of wood or mask. The traditional performers wearing exotic dresses involve in ritualistic dances.

*Theyyams* are considered as the human manifestation of godly powers. Ancestors and ancient warriors of the locality too are worshipped by being manifested in the super natural structure of Theyyam. The method of worship is highly ritualistic form in tune with the traditional Indian concept of worship like that of Shakti, Shiva, Vishnu, Bhoota, Naga, Ghost, ancestor, warrior and blood.

*Theyyam* has a myth - the age-old belief that Goodness destroys evil. Every Theyyam symbolizes holy purpose as declared by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. The roots of most of the Theyyam can be traced to mythological incarnations of Lord Vishnu and Shiva, each having independent stories of origin.

Like many other performing arts, the *Theyyam* has different branches to be specialized by an artist. They are: recitation of *Theyyam* song or *Thottam*, make-up including preparation of costumes, playing of costumes, and dancing. Some of the *Theyyam* songs are lengthy texts including the legends, myths, and traditions of the respective folk deities. The make-up involves face-painting in different styles and body decorations. The folk musical instruments have an important place in the Theyyam performance. The artist has to master the skill to play them according to the foot work of the dancer and strictly follow the rhythm.

The most important item of the Theyyam performance is dancing. In certain dance items a dancer has to wear burning wicks around his waist and observe fire-walk wearing the heavy head-dress. Like in Kathakali, oil massage is applied to the body of a young dancer. To develop his physical culture, body-building practices are taught like in Kalaripayattu. A good training in Kalaripayattu is a must for a Theyyam artist who performs certain types of Theyyams.

In the rituals that precede a Theyyam performance (*'thottam’ or ‘vellattam’*), a performer chants the stories related to the Theyyam. These songs, broadly described as *'thottam pattu’* (rustic songs in praise of a God), are known for their literacy perceptions of an early age. Thottams are sung without any specific make-up or costumes worth mentioning apart from the wearing of some red clothes. On the other hand, vellattam requires a particular make-up, costumes and a special headgear. The former is mandatory for all Theyyams whereas only a few have the latter.
Theyyam (Rakthachamundi); Theyyams are the most important performing folk arts in North Malabar
Theyyams like ‘Pottan’ (Pottan Theyyam) consume country liquor and often go into a trance. Some of the Theyyams used to drink the blood of birds or goats. Hunting of animals is a forte of another group of Theyyams, known as Wayanattukulavan, where the devotees come from far away places with game as offering. This is a common sight in the interior villages in Kasaragod. Other popular types of Theyyams are Kathivannur Veeran, Kannangattu Bhagavathy, Kuttichathan, Gantakarnan, Rakta Chamundi, Gulikan etc.

Theyyam festivals are considered as the celebration of the entire village, irrespective of the economic and cultural background of the devotees. Devotees enjoy the presence of their favourite God or Goddess communicating directly with them. There are about four hundred different kinds of Theyyam each having a variety of masks and make-ups. The same Theyyam is known by different names in different localities.

Thus, Theyyam is embedded in the culture and tradition of North Malabar. Theyyams are a strong force in the villages of erstwhile North Malabar, which embraced and nourished the Communist movement. What makes the concept of Theyyam even more interesting from the socio-cultural perception of social anthropology is that labourers are transformed into supernatural beings as Theyyams. Even the wealthy landlords bow their heads before Theyyams.

In recent times, teachers of a few training institutes in North Malabar have been encouraging the visiting foreign students to carry on studies on Theyyam. They find that their involvement in this field had given encouragement to some native scholars to study and analyse this dying art. An artist, economically depressed and socially suppressed would escape from his bondedness in search of more opportunities. For centuries the Theyyam artist was in a bonded system and a victim of the social relations. However, he carried the message of this art through the blood, sweat and tears.15

Theyyam offers a fascinating and novel experience to any visitor to the northern part of the Malabar region. The visual splendour and aura of mysticism have made Theyyam a very popular and fascinating performing art. These are some of the aspects that attract tourists. Theyyam needs an international exposure as it will uphold the fact that the age-old traditions are as immortal as the Gods one believes in.
5.11.5.1.1. **Kuttichathan**

One of the important *Theyyams* of North Malabar is "Kuttichathan". As per legend the cowherd Chathan who was minding the cattle in the famous *namboodiri illam* namely Kalakattillam later got defied into Kuttichathan. A victim of feudal setup, Kuttichathan appears as a symbol of man's irrepressible urge for freedom. The prototype of Kuttichathan is the Shiva and Vishnu cults resulting in presenting a synthesis of human virtues as well as short comings.\(^{16}\)

5.11.5.1.2. **Sree Muthappan Madappura**

Sree Muthappan Madapura is situated 18 kilometers away from Kannur town. This temple is on the banks of the Valapattanan river at Parassinikkadavu. Among the *Theyyams* that are performed in North Malabar, one of the prominent *Theyyams* is Parassini Sree Muthappan *Theyyam*. The places of Muthappan worship are invariably known as Madappura. The two most important Madappuras are located in Parassinikkadavu and Kunnathurpadi, both in Kannur district. During the festival season from December 17 to January 16, Muthappan *Theyyam* festival is held at Kunnathurpadi. On the other hand, in Parassinikkadavu, *Muthappan Theyyam* is being performed around the year. These two shrines are drawing large number of pilgrims from far-flung places.

5.11.5.1.3. **Perumkaliyattam**

Usually a *Theyyam* performance is held annually and it is based on the Malayalam calendar. However, there are bigger *Theyyam* festivals that are staged in a shrine only once in 12, 25, 60 or even in 100 years. Such mega festivals are broadly known as *Perumkaliyattam*. It is a weekly long celebration wherein one can witness the performance of different kinds of *Theyyam*. This super festival attracts lakhs of people from different parts of the state. At least one *Perumkaliyattam* or bigger festival will be taking place in any of the villages in North Malabar every year.

5.11.5.2. **Kalaripayattu**

*Kalaripayattu*, the unique physical-cum-martial art, which originated in Malabar, taken to China by the Buddhist monks became the fabled model for the modern martial arts. Re-enacting the tradition of nurturing a healthy soul within a healthy body, training is being imparted at several Kalari centers in various parts of Malabar especially in Kozhikode and Kannur districts, where the principles of this ancient art are experienced by the discerning tourists to these centers under the
auspices of Kalari ashans (also called gurukkals). The inflow of Western tourists to these centers is on the increase year after year.

The scientific instructions given during the training period include the handling of various traditional weapons. Kalari training is also holistic in nature. In Kalaripayattu, Ayurveda fitness programmes play a major role in preparing the performer's mind and body. Kalari Marma Chikitsa (treatment based in vital points) is oriented towards injuries to bones and muscle tissues. Uzhichil, a form of massage using medicated oil is prescribed as part of the training, aimed at maintaining a healthy constitution, a flexible body and good blood circulation. Moreover, it activates circulatory system to increase supply of nutrients and oxygen to tissues. It increases metabolism, reduces fat and improves transport of waste materials from its site of origin to excretory origins.17

Today it has become more relevant in treating orthopedic and neurological conditions like back pain, arthritis and rheumatism. Many Kalaris in Malabar are also traditional centers for Ayurvedic massages and treatment. The movements of Kalaripayattu are used in many of the traditional art forms like Kathakali, Koodiyattom, Theyyam, Thira and even in the contemporary theatre of Kerala.

The two major styles prevalent in this martial art form are thekkan or southern style and vadakkan or northern style. According to tradition, the vadakkan style was originated from the mythical Parasurama, the creator of Kerala. The thekkan style is indebted to the great Saint Agasthya. Recent research studies have proved that Kalaripayattu was evolved during the early centuries of Christian era as a fighting and training technique of warriors. In course of time it was systematized and developed into a scientific way of weapon training and physical culture.18 Parisakali is another martial art prevailed in North Malabar, which also needs considerable physical training and the knowledge of usage of arms.

5.11.5.3. Circus

Circus also has a special association with Malabar. The circus, as a form of entertainment in modern India, evolved in Kannur district. Thalassery, the home town of circus, is famous for having given birth to many famous circus artistes. Keeleri Kuhniraman who was a great master of Kalari tradition and also the great circus acharya of Kerala founded the first circus training institute at Thalassery in 1901. Kerala's own martial art Kalaripayattu and its training methods helped a lot in putting the State in the forefront of the Indian circus.
5.11.5.4. Oppana

Oppana is a dance form essential to the wedding entertainment and festivities of the Malabar Muslims. Maidens and young female relatives sing and dance around the bride, clapping their hands. It goes far in the night. The songs of Mappilappattu are first sung by the leader and are repeated by the chorus. The themes are often teasing comments and innuendoes about the bride's anticipated nuptial bliss. **Oppana** is often presented as a stage item today. Though **Oppana** has some resemblance with the **Kaikottikkali** practiced by women in Kerala, it is more akin to the song and dance ritual prevalent in Arabian countries.

5.11.5.5. Duffmuttu

**Duffmuttu**, also known as **Aravanamuttu**, is a group performance popular among the Muslims of **Malabar**. The Aravana or Duff is a musical instrument of Arabian origin. This is staged as a social event during festivals and nuptial ceremonies. The artistes beat their palms or fingers on a quaint round percussion instrument called the **Duffu**, the leader of the group sings the lead, while the others form the chorus and move in circles. The songs are often tributes to martyrs, heroes and saints. **Duffmuttu** can be performed at any time of the day and has no fixed time limit. This is mainly performed by males of the community.

5.11.5.6. Kolkkali

**Kolkkali** is performed by both Muslims as well as Hindus in Malabar. Muslim **Kolkkali** is slightly different from that of Hindus. Hindus perform this art form at the temple festivals and in connection with **Theyyam** performances. It is played according to **Valthary** or **Thalam** by the Gurukkal (master). Muslims in Malabar perform **Kolkkali** to entertain people during the social gatherings and marriages.

5.11.5.7. Other Attractions

A visitor can also spend on the rivers and backwaters of the palm fringed coastline of **Malabar** with visits to small islands, enjoying fishing, immerse a swim in the beauty of sunset and above all the breath taking view of untouched rural **Malabar**. **Vallyaparamba** is a beautiful backwater stretch in the northernmost districts of **Malabar**, sprinkled with islands and fed by rivers. There are nine islands in this backwater. In some islands, a visitor can see toddy tapping, beedi making and coir manufacture that reflect the typical village life of the rural **Malabar**. The **Valapattanam River** which figured prominently in the history of North **Malabar**, is a
major link between the mainland and the Arabian Sea. *Kettuvallam* (houseboats) have been introduced as a tourist attraction in the river over the last few years. Pazhassi Dam site near Mattanur offers an ideal retreat for tourists, the scenic beauty of which is well known.

Malabar is also home to one of India's highest mountain ranges, the Western Ghats that present Kerala in its own distinctive identity. The region has much to offer by way of wildlife and eco-tourism. The heavy monsoon supports a wide variety of flora and fauna. The Silent Valley National Park, which is believed to be the sole surviving bit of evergreen forests, shelters exotic wildlife. Nilambur which is the original home of the *Cholanaickans* is the world famous for its Canoll's Plot, the world's oldest teak plantation and bamboo woods. The exotic nature's own Nelliampathy hill is the delight of trekkers and adventurous lovers. The Malampuzha garden with its breathtaking views and elegant garden are a feast for any one's eyes. For its hypnotizing scenic beauty, Wayanad is nature lovers' delight. About one-fourth of this greenery is protected forestland with two major wild life sanctuaries - Muthanga and Tholpetty. For the wildlife enthusiasts, Wayanad is indeed a must-see destination. The acclaimed Edakkal Caves offer a glimpse into intriguing Stone Age paintings and inscriptions. Wayanad offers plenty of opportunities to tourists like plantations tours, farm tours, forest treks, bird watching, visit to elephant training centers; its plentiful brooks and waterfalls are ideally suited to boating, fishing and angling. Paithalmala in Kannur district, which is almost like a boundary wall dividing Kerala and Karnataka, attracts tourists because of its height, beauty and mystery. This potential hill resort calls adventurous tourists, lovers of nature and those who love calmness and wish to share pleasant moments of life.

Malabar has also been a land of crossroads of faith, the land where Christians, Muslims and Jews put down their first markers in India; it is full of temples, mosques and churches. This is the land of religious tolerance and communal harmony. The famous Guruvayoor Shree Krishna Temple, Kodulgallur Cheraman Juma Masjid, Pazhayangadi Mosque of Kondotti, Thirunelly Vishnu Temple in Wayanad, Thrichambaram Shree Krishna Temple near Taliparamba, Parassinikkadavu Shree Muthappan Temple, Madayi Mosque, Thalankara Malik Deenar Juma Masjid in
Kasaragod, Mother of God Church, Kozhikode are some of the important among them.

As indicated in the introductory chapter, Malabar region consists of seven districts viz., Kasaragod, Kannur, Wayanad, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Palakkad and Thrissur. A fact profile of these districts is given in the Table No. V.1. Having discussed the present scenario of tourism industry in Malabar and a brief general history of the region in the preceding sections, an attempt is made to analyse the potentialities of tourism in the region on a district-wise basis in the succeeding sections. Besides, the table (Table V.2) which follows represents a brief summary of tourism potentialities of districts in the region consisting of important tourist spots and other attractions.

5.12. KASARAGOD

Kasaragod, the northernmost district of Kerala, is known for its coir and handloom industries. Fishing is the main source of livelihood. Kasaragod is known is the land of Gods, forts, rivers, hills and beautiful seashores. The enduring charm of its beach, the architectural marvel of the temples, mosques and churches and the unique folk art forms are genuine areas of attractions for the tourists. Spectacular pageants of Theyyam, yakshagana, kumbla (buffalo race), poorakkali, kolkkali etc. enchant visitors. The tourism potentials of the district are discussed in the following paragraphs:

5.12.1. MONUMENTS

5.12.1.1. Bekal Fort (16 km south of Kasaragod on the National Highway)

The 300-year-old Bekal fort, situated on the sea shore of Pallikare village, is an important place of tourist attraction in the district. It is one of the largest and best-preserved forts in Kerala. The beautiful Bekal beach with the historically and archaeologically significant Bekal fort in the background is now being developed into an international tourist destination.

Legend says that the Bekal fort belonged in ancient times to Kadampa dynasty and later came under the Kolathiri Rajas. Still later, it became part of the Vijayanagar Empire. In 1763, the fort fell into the hands of Haider Ali. After the overthrow of Tipu Sultan in 1799, Bekal fort was incorporated into the dominations of the English East India Company.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Name of the District</th>
<th>Previous Name</th>
<th>Area (In Sq. kms)</th>
<th>Population (2001 Census)</th>
<th>Altitude</th>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Average Annual Rainfall (In centimeters)</th>
<th>Tourist Season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1         | Kasaragod           | Kasargod      | 1,992            | 12,03,342                | Sea level | Max : 36.5 C°  
Min : 27.35 C°   | 344                      | August to March       |
| 2         | Kannur              | Cannanore     | 2,966            | 24,12,365                | Sea level | Max : 32.6 C°  
Min : 21.4 C°    | 344                      | August to March        |
| 3         | Wayanad             | Waynad        | 2,131            | 7,86,627                 | 700 - 2100 m above sea level | Max : 35 C°  
Min : 20 C°       | 250                      | August to May         |
| 4         | Kozhikode           | Calicut       | 2,344            | 28,78,498                | Sea level | Max : 35 C°  
Min : 22 C°       | 254                      | September to May      |
| 5         | Malappuram          | Malappuram    | 3,550            | 36,29,640                | Low land: Sea level  
High land : 477 m to 2340 m above sea level | Max : 37 C°  
Min : 22 C°       | 290                      | September to March    |
| 6         | Palakkad            | Palghat       | 4,480            | 26,17,072                | Midland 7.62 m to 76.2 m above sea level | Max : 38.6 C°  
Min : 21.15 C°    | 240                      | September to February |
| 7         | Thrissur            | Trichur       | 3,032            | 29,75,440                | Sea Level                       | Max : 35 C°  
Min : 22.5 C°     | 254                      | September to March    |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourist Attractions</th>
<th>Thrissur</th>
<th>Palakkad</th>
<th>Malappuram</th>
<th>Kollam</th>
<th>Kannur</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>No.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Beaches</strong></td>
<td><strong>Palakkad Fort</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kollam</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kollam</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kollam</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bekal Fort, Ananthapuram, Lake Temple</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Backwaters</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Monuments</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Hill Stations</td>
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</table>

**Note:** The table lists various tourist attractions and their respective locations in the Malabar region.
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Wild Life Sanctuaries</td>
<td>Aralam Wild Life Sanctuary</td>
<td>Tholpetty Wild Life Sanctuary, Wayanad Wild Life Sanctuary</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Waterfalls</td>
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<td>Meenmutty, Kanthanpara, Sentinel Rock</td>
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The fort is a wonderful phenomenon of Kerala’s sculpture. The technical skill displayed in the construction of the fort would spring a surprise on the visiting tourists. The Department of Tourism, Government of India had already approved a project of Rs. 1000 crores to develop Bekal into an international tourist center. In 1992, the Central Government declared Bekal fort as special tourism area. It was with the intention of transferring Bekal fort into international tourist center that in 1995, the Government formed Bekal Tourism Development Corporation. The Corporation is engaged in arranging basic facilities for the project. It has also chalked out programmes to develop other tourist centers of the district as part of the Bekal Project.

5.12.1.2. Ananthapuram Lake Temple (30 km from Bekal)

This 9th century temple is the only lake temple in Kerala. Situated at Kumbala, 12 kilometres northeast of Kasaragod, it is considered as the moolasthanam (original abode) of Ananthapadmanabha, the deity of Sree Padmanabha Swamy Temple, Thiruvananthapuaram. The temple is located at an isolated place. The temple surrounded on all sides by water would appear as if it was made out breaking of huge rock. The temple premises and the main temple are connected by a bridge. A crocodile in temple pond, said to be 150 years old, is a major attraction. Near the pond, there is a cave and atop the cave there is a Ganapathy Temple. The annual festival celebrated here in the second fortnight of April is attracted by a large number of devotees.

5.12.2. BEACH DESTINATIONS

5.12.2.1. Pallikkare Beach (1 km from Bekal Fort)

This is a shallow beach which offers a spectacular view of the Bekal fort. There are ample facilities for recreation and relaxations.

5.12.2.2. Kappil Beach (6 km from Bekal Fort)

The Kappil beach, which is remote and secluded, is fast becoming a major tourist attraction in the district. Situated nearby, Kodi cliff, offers a panoramic view of the Arabian Sea.

5.12.2.3. Kanwatheertha Beach (3 km north of Manjeswaram)

Kanwatheertha, a clean and neat 4 kilometres beach and swimming pool like lake formed by seawater, is one of the gifts of nature.
5.12.3. PILGRIM CENTERS

5.12.3.1. Madhur Temple, Madhur (8 km north of Kasaragod Town)

The Srimad Anantheswara Vinayaka Temple, with its exotic architecture and copper plate roofing is the main attraction in the district. The river Madhuvahini flows nearby.

5.12.3.2. Madiyankulam Temple (3 km from Kasaragod)

Situated at the heart of Kanhangad town, this temple is dedicated to Bhadrakali, the fierce form of Goddess. A nine-day annual festival known as 'Pattutsavam' is celebrated here. The Bhuta dance is performed during the festival in May/June and December/January.

5.12.3.3. The Mahalingeswara Temple, Adoor (45 km east of Kasaragod)

This temple is located in wooded surroundings on the southern banks of the river Payaswini at Adoor. The temple has Sanskrit inscriptions written in Kannada script which has been ascribed to the Chalukya King Kirthi Varma II.

5.12.3.4. Malik Deenar Mosque, Thalankara (1 km from Kasaragod)

The historic Malik Deenar Juma Masjid in the typical Kerala style is believed to have been founded by Malik bin Deenar. His mortal remains are buried near this mosque. This is the best-kept and most attractive masjid in the district. The annual festival of Uroos is popular.

5.12.3.5. Anandasramam (15 km from Bekal)

This was founded in 1939 by Swamy Ramdas and Mother Krishna Bhai known as Pappa and Mathaji to devotees. This internationally renowned spiritual center offers a quiet and peaceful ambience best suited for meditation and spiritual studies.

5.12.3.6. Nityananda Ashramam, Kanhangad (27 km from Kanhangad)

This temple, which was built in 1963, resembles the Somnath temple in Gujarat. A life-size panchaloha statue of Swamy Nityananda is the major attraction.

5.12.4. BACKWATERS

5.12.4.1. Chandragiri (4 km south of Kasaragod town)

Situated on the Chandragiri river, this town is known for the large 17th century Chandragiri fort, one of a chain of forts. It offers a breathtaking view of the river and the Arabian Sea. There is a beautiful bridge over the Chandragiri river. A mosque is situated nearby. In Chandragiri, there is a vantage point to watch the sunset. Here a boat club has been built to attract tourists.
5.12.4.2. Valiyaparamba (30 km from Bekal Fort)

Situated 5 kilometres west of Cheruvathur, Valiyaparamba is a beautiful backwater stretch in the district, sprinkled with islands and fed by four rivers. There are nine islands in this backwater. Edayilakkadu island occupies a typical Kavu spread over 20 acres with thick vegetation. The sight of monkeys parading down the road is really enjoyable. In some other islands a visitor can witness toddy tapping, beedi making and coir making units that reflect the typical village life of Malabar. Valiyaparamba, the most unexplored and the most pristine backwater stretch in the region is fast turning into a much favoured backwater resort that offers enchanting boat cruises. A visitor can make his journey a memorable one by backwater cruise in traditional houseboats, Kettuvallams. Bekal Boat Stay, promoted by Bekal Resorts Development Corporation Ltd., operates houseboats in the Valiyaparamba backwaters. One of the house boats is designed so as to cater to the needs of large groups like corporate meets, sales conferences, family get together or any other special occasion. According to the choice of the traveler, variety of cruises like short cruise, sunset cruise, moon light cruise, overnight cruise etc. and two day and three day packages have been arranged.

5.12.5. HILL STATIONS

5.12.5.1. Ranipuram (85 km from Kasaragod)

Known as Madathumala, Ranipuram is 780 metres above sea level. This hill station is famous for its trekking trails and varied vegetation - evergreen trees, monsoon forests and grasslands. The extensive forests of Ranipuram merge with Karnataka forests. In its natural beauty, this spot is comparable to Ooty. Wild elephants can be seen wandering on the top of the mountains. The District Tourism Promotion Council (DTPC) has already selected Ranipuram as an ancillary project as part of developing Bekal fort and its surroundings as one of the most important tourist centers of the district.

5.12.5.2. Veeramani Hill (Located near Cheruvathur by the side of the NH 17)

This is a newly emerging hill destination at Maicha in Cheruvathur Grama Panchayat, which is a plateau comprising about 20 acres. This hill station has an elevated position enabling to enjoy the scenic beauty around in all directions. The Arabian Sea and the estuary of Nileswar river, the Valiyaparamba backwaters and islands at the west, the Kariangode river with road and rail bridges at the north and the beautiful fresh-water lake called Ramanchira, an abode of migratory birds at the
east are some of the beautiful sceneries from the Veeramala Hill worth mentioning. Hundreds of people visit this place daily to enjoy the scenic beauty and experience the cool breeze available all around the day. The remnants of a Fort built by the Dutch in the 18th century make it a place of historical importance too.

5.12.6. OTHER TOURIST DESTINATIONS /ATTRACTIONS

5.12.6.1. Bekal Hole Aqua Park (1 km from Bekal Fort)

The only one of its kind in northern Kerala, this unique aqua park provides water sport facilities like pedal boats and water cycles.

5.12.6.2. Manjeswaram

A number of temples, mosques and churches make this ancient town a prominent pilgrim center. There are two old Jain Bastis at Bengara Manjeswar on the southern bank of the Manjeswar river. About 11 kilometres from Kumba-Badiadka road is the Mother Dolorus Church of Bela. The hundred-year-old Roman Catholic Church constructed in 1890 is the oldest in this area and is an important pilgrim center in the district. Manjeswaram is also the birthplace of Rashtrakavi Govinda Pai.

5.12.6.3. Kottancherry Hills (30 km northeast of Kanhangad)

Kottancherry hills are situated near Konnakkad in Hosdurg taluk. These mountains are full of dense forests, meadows and medicinal plants. It is 3000 feet above the sea level. Beyond the mountain ranges bordering on Karanataka boundary, there is the well-known pilgrim center called ‘Thalakkaveri’. Kottancherry bears resemblance to the scenic beauty of Kodaikanal. The rainforests near the Konnakkad is ideal for trekking.

5.12.6.4. Edneer Mutt (10 km northeast of Kasaragod)

The Mutt of Edneer well known as a seat of art and learning belongs to the Sankaracharya tradition.

5.12.6.5. Tulur Vanam (4 km east of Panathur)

Tulur Vanam is also known as Kekulom (the eastern place). The temple here is consecrated to Kshetrapalam and Bhagavathi. The eight-day annual festival commencing from Sivarathri attracts devotees from all over the district as well as from Coorg.

5.12.6.6. Pandiyan Kallu

A rock rising in the sea about 2 kilometres from the Trikkannad Temple, Pandiyan Kallu is an ideal spot for adventurous swimmers. Legend has it that the
Bekal near Kasaragod - The destination of the future

Payyambalam Beach near Kannur - Famous for its flat laterite cliffs that jut into the sea.
ship of one of Pandiya kings who attacked the Trikkannad temple was converted into a rock.

5.12.6.7. Kodakkallu (6 km from Bekal Fort)

Kodakkallu, also called it Muniyarakkallu by local people, is situated in a private land, just half a kilometer from Muniyarakkallu bus stop, near Periyattidakkam, in the district on the National Highway between Kasragod and Kanhangad. This structure, like an umbrella or mushroom commonly called Kodakkallu (the umbrella stone) is believed to be monument of Megalithic age (3rd century BC to 2nd century AD) constructed in laterite. This stone is about 6 feet high and approximates 6 feet in radius and supported by four laterie stones, creating a hollow space inside.

5.12.6.8. Nileswaram

The cultural center of the district, Nileswaram was the seat of the Nileswar Rajas, patrons of arts and culture for centuries. A folklore center of the Archaeological Department of the State functions in the Palace of Nileswar Rajas. The town is also famous for its numerous kavus (shrines), temple festivals and the Kavil Bhavan and Yoga Cultural Centre which offers rejuvenation therapy and naturopathy treatments like mud and herbal baths.

5.13. KANNU

Kannur district is bounded by a wealth of natural beauty with Coorg district of Karnataka state in the east, Kozhikode and Wayanad districts in the south, Lakshadweep Sea in the west and Kasaragod district in the north. The District itself shares much of this natural splendour. Kannur has been a key contributor to the natural, religious, political and industrial heritage of the State. The landscape of Kannur – with picturesque seashore, virgin beaches, rocky cliffs, confluences of rivers and sea, backwaters, deltas, rivulets, streams, mangrove forests and coconut palms – can immensely attract tourists. The District is famous for its richness in tradition and culture. Similarly, it has been the cradle of many colourful folk art forms and folk music of Kerala. Kannur is rightly called “The city of Looms and Lores”. As indicated earlier, Theyyam is a ritualistic performing art form of North Malabar, specifically in Kannur district. Kannur produces world famous handloom cotton fabrics. The following are the important tourism resources of Kannur:
5.13.1. BEACH DESTINATIONS

5.13.1.1. Muzhappilangad Beach *(15 km from Kannur and 8 km from Thalassery)*

This beach is a newly developing tourist destination of North Malabar. The beach has a length of 4.5 kilometres. The vehicles can be driven without getting stuck into the sea-sand. This is the reason why Muzhappilangad beach is considered to be the only drive-in beach in Kerala. This is an important peculiarity of this beach. The beach is also known as swimmers’ paradise since there are no waves in the beach which extends from Muzhappilangad to Moidu bridge. A visitor can have access to this beach through five panchayat roads starting from the National Highway. Adventure sports like water scooter riding, gliding and parasailing are available here.

With the objective of exploring the potentialities of tourism in Kannur district, recently a survey was conducted by the DTPC by making use of the expertise of National Institute Water Sports, Goa. The survey brought out the potentialities of backwater tourism in rivers and shallow waters of the beaches of the district. In the survey report, there was a special mention for the prospects of utilising Anjarakandy river for developing backwater tourism activities.

5.13.1.2. Dharmadam Island *(100 metres from the mainland at Dharmadam)*

This small island, which is situated in the sea like a green spot, is only 100 metres away from the mainland at Dharmadam. During ebb time one can reach here by foot. From the island, the rocks around and the beauty of Muzhappilangad beach are beautiful scenes.

5.13.1.3. Payyambalam Beach *(2 km from Kannur railway station)*

Payyambalam beach is one of the most beautiful beaches in Kerala. This is an ideal place to spend pleasant evenings. Unlike many other beaches that are crowded and dirty, these beach sands are clean and calm. Tourists to this spot can relax at a well laid out garden where they can inhale the fresh air and feast their eyes on the Arabian Sea. A massive structure of a mother and baby created by the renowned sculptor Kanayi Kunhiraman, is a major highlight of this garden. This beach having laterite rock jutting out into the sea on one end is a neat and long one, which is a relief to the tourists who seek rest away from the modern city life. The laterite cliffs preserve the eco-system of the land and act as a natural barrier.
The location of a crematorium near here further adds to its aura. The mortal remains of many nationalists and political leaders are laid to rest here. Some of them include literally stalwarts like Swadeshabhimani Ramakrishna Pillai and Pamban Madhavan, A.K.Gopalan, E.K.Nayanar, K.G.Marar and Chadayan Govindan.

A major hurdle to the development of the beach was the dilapidated narrow bridge that gave access to the sea front. There is a proposal by the government for constructing a new bridge in place of the old. A Kudumbasree unit operates here to keep the beach clean under the aegis of the DTPC.

5.13.1.4. Kizhunna Ezhara Beach (11 km from Kannur)

This beautiful stretch of sand is one of the most secluded beaches in Kerala.

5.13.2. MONUMENTS

5.13.2.1. St. Angelo Fort (3 km from Kannur town)

Protruding into the sea St. Angelo Fort, also known as Kannur Fort, is an important historic structure on the Malabar Coast. The fort proclaims the strength and beauty of Portuguese architecture. This seafront laterite fort was constructed in 1505 AD by the first Portuguese Viceroy, Don Francisco De Almeda. The barracks and its cannon are still intact and continue to enthrall visitors from far-flung places. Fort St. Angelo, the triangular fort built by the Portuguese on this tiny tongue of land, was once a springboard for European powers in their efforts to gain control over the fertile coast of Malabar. It stands out among the structures built by the colonial powers to gain a foothold on the Malabar Coast. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the English fought among themselves and against local rulers on the coast stretching from Mahe to Kannur. The result was that the Portuguese and later the Dutch settled in Kannur, the British in Thalassery and the French in Mahe.

Recently different projects have been implemented by the Department of Tourism to protect the fort in a good condition. The projects envisage beautifying the fort retaining its antiquity and providing parking area. The projects also aim at providing boating facilities for visiting tourists near the fort area. The fort, which is now under the Archeological Survey of India, is a major tourist attraction after it was renovated a few years ago. The fort also offers a vantage view of the picturesque Moppila Bay Harbour and the Arakkal Mosque (Arakkal Kettu).

5.13.2.2. Thalassery Fort (22 km from Kannur in the south direction)

Thalassery fort, which had witnessed many ebbs and tides of history, is of much significance to tourists who are interested in historical events. The fort is
situated in the Thiruvallappad hill of Thalassery town. This rectangle shaped fort was constructed by the East India Company in 1708. The fort is built of laterite bricks in an area of two acres. It still remains the sentinel to three hundred years of turbulent history. The history of this fort is closely associated with that of Thalassery town. Tellicherry, as the British called it, was one of the most important trading centers in Malabar as it was situated on a group of hills that are protected by natural backwater. It is like Rome, built on seven hills.

This fort has to tell many stories of the victory and defeat of Kolathiri, Tippu Sultan and Pazhassi Raja. It was here that the leader of Hyder Ali's army was imprisoned and the deathbed of Swathi Thirunal's successor was arranged. This was once the headquarters of the British in Malabar. The British used this fort as a jail and currency manufactory.

After a long period of neglect, this archaeological monument and symbol of British influence has been renovated. This historical monument is all set to be projected as a prominent tourist destination in Kannur district. Recently the renovated fort has been reopened to the public. The Archeological Survey of India has a plan to open a public information gallery inside the fort that will display archeologically important objects and pictures.

5.13.2.3. Gundert Bungalow (20 km from Kannur and 5 km from Thalassery town)

The Gundert Bungalow is situated on a hillock called Illikkunnu near the National Highway. Dr. Herman Gundert, Missionary of the Basal Mission and linguistic extraordinary rendered invaluable service to Malayalam language during his stay in Thalassery for nearly 20 years from 1839. Dr. Gundert left behind a substantial body of work in German, English, Malayalam and Tamil as his scholarships extended over a remarkable range of specialized fields. Over this period, he edited and compiled the first English Malayalam dictionary. He also published two Malayalam journals, including the Rajya Samacharam, which is believed to be the forerunner of contemporary Malayalam newspapers. Thalassery Municipality installed his statue and a street has been named after him.

5.13.2.4. Arakkal Kettu (4 km from the headquarters of Kannur)

‘Kettu’ in Malayalam means complex. Arakkal Kettu is still owned by the Arakkal family of Kannur. The complex consists of an old, dilapidated building
complex and a ‘pandikasala’ (godown). These were once the seat of Arakkal family of Ali Rajas and Arakkal Beevis and a center of trade and commerce. This 200 year-old building has been renovated recently. The renovation conducted by the Archives and Tourism departments preserved the durbar hall building of the palace complex to house a museum. The work was fully funded by the Department of Tourism which sanctioned Rs. 96 lakhs for the renovation project. The renovation has given a facelift to the entire complex, a cluster of decayed buildings around the village open ground, including residential structures, mosques and ‘pandikasalas’, the old storehouses of the Arakkal family. While renovating the project, one can see that great care has been taken to ensure the sense of cultural heritage, the legends and the history of this unique royal house.

There are different legends as to the origin of this royal family, which still exists. According to one legend, the Arakkal family was an offshoot of the Kolathiri dynasty at Chirakkal near Kannur. The origin of the Muslim royal family can be traced to the marriage of a Kolathiri princess to a Muslim youth who saved her. Another version links it to the family’s history to Cheraman Perumal’s nephew, Muhammed Ali who was believed to have founded the principality in the first century of the Muslim era. Another story traces the origin of the Arakkal family to Aryan Kulangara, which was believed to be the family name of Perumal’s sister.

Arakkal Palace is of great Islamic Royal Heritage. The Palace is protected and being preserved a museum of great Islamic history and Royal heritage. Recently, the United Nation’s Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation has awarded UNESCO Asia Pacific Heritage Award 2006, to Kerala Tourism on this basis.

5.13.2.5 Thodikkalam Siva Temple (34 km from southeast of Kannur)

The Thodikkalam temple, located 2 kilometers away from Kannavam in Thalassery taluk, is famous for its beautiful mural paintings. They represent scenes from Hindu mythology like Rugmini Swayamvaram, Ravana Vadham etc. The pictures spread over 700 square feet in about 40 panels were drawn on the four walls of the temple sanctum using natural colours and primarily based on Saivic – Vaishnavic stories. The temple is believed to have been constructed 2,000 years ago.

5.13.3 HILL STATIONS

5.13.3.1 Paithal Mala (65 km northeast of Kannur)

Paithal Mala is a beautiful calm hill station on the Kerala-Karnataka border. This potential hill resort is 4500 feet above sea level. A visiting tourist can spot a
A variety of wild animals, patches of dense forests and waterfalls that offer breathtaking view of the surrounding vistas. This hill station can be developed as a leisure getaway for the environmentally inclined people. These are some of the reasons why Tourism Department has identified it for a comprehensive development into a major tourist project in Kannur district.

The top of the hill is of 300 hectares of land. Paithal Mala, also called Vaithal Mala, is blessed with the ambience of a spot having latent potential for eco-tourism. According to tourism authorities, this hill station would be developed into an important eco-tourism destination with the Government sanctioning works estimated at Rs. 3.31 crores for developing infrastructure. The estimated amount of the tourism complex is Rs. 1.72 crores. Paithal Mala Tourism Complex and Eco-tourism Project, which is a part of the Integrated Northern Circuit Scheme of the Central Government, envisages camping areas, facilities of providing camping equipment, an information centre, trekking routes and view points, signage and toilets. This project is expected to play a decisive role in the development of tourism in North Malabar.

5.13.3.2. Ezhimala (45 km from Kannur)

Bordered by sea on three sides, Ezhimala is situated 45 kilometres away from Kannur. The Capital of the ancient Mooshika kings, Ezhimala, is considered to be an ancient historical site. Carved stone pillars and an ancient burial chamber can be seen at the foot of the hills. The hills are noted for rare medicinal herbs.

An old mosque, believed to contain the mortal remains of Shaikh Abdul Latif, a Muslim reformist is located here. Ezhimala now possesses strategic importance in the naval map of India.

5.13.4. PILGRIM CENTRES

5.13.4.1. Thrichambaram Temple (20 km from Kannur near Taliparamba town)

Thrichambaram Sree Krishna temple is the sacred place of the Vaishnava cult. The deity here is Sree Krishna. The sculptures on the walls of the sanctum sanctorum are in a class by themselves. The annual fortnight festivals are held during March. Another temple dedicated to Sree Balarama, brother of Lord Krishna, is at Mazhoor near Taliparamba. On the first day of the festival, the idol of Balarama is taken out in procession from the temple at Mazhoor and brought to the Thrichambaram temple. On the next day, the idols of Sree Krishna and Balarama are taken out ceremoniously. The festival end with Lord Krishna retreating to His abode,
that is Thrichambaram temple, while his brother Balarama returns to Dharmakulangara temple.

5.13.4.2. Parassinikkadavu Temple (18 km from Kannur town)

Parassinikkadavu Sree Muthappan temple, situated on the banks of the Valapattanam river and dedicated to Lord Muthappan, is believed to be the incarnation of Lord Shiva. The significant feature of this temple is that this is the only temple in Kerala where Theyyam, the ritual dance form of North Kerala is performed every morning and evening. Tourists are attracted by pleasure boating services on the river near the temple and houseboat cruises at the Parassini river.

5.13.4.3. Kizhakkan Kottam, Valakkai, Taliparamba (18 km from Kannur town)

This Kottam is perhaps the only temple dedicated to Sugreeva, the deposed monkey-king who helped Lord Rama in the encounter with Ravana.

5.13.4.4. Madayi Mosque (28 km from Kannur)

This famous 12th century mosque was built by Malik Ibn Dinar with white marble said to have been brought from Arabia.

The Madayi Kavu temple and the Vadukunnu temple are the other important pilgrim centers near Madayi. There is also a dilapidated fort at Madayi which is supposed to have been built by Tippu Sultan of Mysore. The view from the mosque is fascinating.

5.13.4.5. Akkara Kottiyur, Ikkara Kottiyur (64 km from Kannur)

Lying on the deep forests on the banks of Bavali river, theses temples are renowned for the annual festival which starts with Neyyattom on Swati asterism in May-June and ends with Thirukalasattu after 28 days. Thousands of devotees from various places attend this festival.

5.13.5. OTHER TOURIST SPOTS/ATTRACTIONS

5.13.5.1. Valapattanam (7 km from the north of Kannur)

Valapattanam, a small town on the Valapattanam river, is renowned for its wood-based industries and timber trade. The port of Azhikkal and Azhikkal Beach are located near by. Valapattanam is also a famous fishing harbour as well as the main source of the irrigation project in the district. It is a fascinating experience to watch the traditional mode of timber transportation - by tying long pieces of timber together and allowing them to float down the stream.
5.13.5.2. Thalassery (20 km south of Kannur)

The British legacy in Thalassery is often associated with cricket, as this town is still known as the cradle of crickets in Kerala. Another British legacy of this town is its bakeries. It is said that the origin of crickets and cakes at Thalassery was simultaneous. The British appointed native people as their butlers and taught them how to make baked dishes. They also played their favourite game – cricket – with their local subordinates.

If cricket and cakes are British legacies, Thalassery has a largely indigenous legacy, its circus tradition. The best circus artists in the country invariably hail from Thalassery. Though circus tradition of Thalassery is certainly on the decline, it can be aptly called a town of circus, cakes and cricket. This town is also the seat of the martial art, Kalaripayattu, forerunner of karate and kung-fu.

5.13.5.3. Aralam Wild Life Sanctuary (55 km from Thalassery)

This sanctuary, the northernmost wildlife sanctuary of Kerala, is located on the western slopes of the Western Ghats next to the State farm at Aralam. Covering an area of 55 square kilometers, this sanctuary was established in 1984. The headquarters of the sanctuary is near Iritty. A recent plant diversity study conducted in this small sanctuary reveals that this protected forest area is very rich in its biodiversity. The sanctuary is an easily accessible haunt for natural enthusiasts.

5.13.5.3.1. Vegetation

Though small, the entire sanctuary has different types of vegetation as it has different types of terrain. The types of vegetation are moist deciduous forests, semi-evergreen forest, evergreen forests, hilltop evergreen forests and grasslands. The hilltop evergreen forests found at Ambalappara are shola-like forests but with a different kind of species combination. The recently conducted expedition survey in the sanctuary identified more than 520 species of flowering plants, 75 species of ferns and more than 100 species of mosses. The study also identified 130 species of trees of which 80 species are with restricted distribution in the Western Ghats. The possible extinct species 'coffea crassifolia' have also been found with good and viable population. This floristic expedition has also brought to light that there are 25 species of climbers and 15 species of epiphytic flowering plants. There are about 490 hectares of teak and eucalyptus plantations within the forest area.
5.13.5.3.1.1. Fauna

A variety of animals and birds usually found in the Western Ghats are seen in Aralam. Different kinds of deer, bear, elephant, and bison are quite common. Leopard, jungle cat and various types of squirrels are sighted.

5.13.5.4. Meenkunnu Beach *(12 km away from Kannur)*

Meen Kunnu beach is situated at Azhikode and offers solitude. This virtually secluded beach is a tourist paradise with golden sand and silver surf.

5.13.5.5. Malayala Kala Gramam *(29 km from Kannur)*

Situated at Kannur's southern tip in New Mahe, this renowned center for art and culture conducts courses in painting, sculptures, music, dance and pottery. It houses the only art gallery in Kannur.

5.13.5.6. Parassinikkadavu Snake Park *(17 km from Kannur town)*

This snake park is the only one of its kind in the State and perhaps the whole of India. There are three snake pits and fifteen glass cases for snakes. There is a separate building with air-conditioned rooms in the park for housing four king cobras. One, five metre long, and the other three are kept in separate glass houses. Snake demonstrations are conducted every hour.

5.13.5.7. Pazhassi Dam *(37 km east of Kannur)*

Pazhassi dam site is an ideal retreat for tourists and is famous for its scenic beauty. Pleasure boating services are available here.

5.13.5.8. Moppila Bay

Moppila Bay is a natural fishing harbour lying near St. Angelo Fort. A sea wall extending to about half a furlong, projecting from the fort separates the rough sea and also inland water. Mechanised and country crafts can enter into the island from the sea and anchor safely.

5.14. WAYANAD

The name Wayanad is derived from the expression 'Wayalnadu' which means land of paddy fields. When the state of Kerala was formed in 1956, Wayanad was part of Kannur district. Later South Wayanad was added to Kozhikode district and then on November 1, 1980 North and South Wayanad joined together to form the present Wayanad district. The district is rich in natural wonders, history and tradition. Today, this mist capped, mountainous, spicy scented valley for learning and enjoyment through the bounteous treasures of nature’s beauty is all set to woo
visitors in and out of the country. With its vast expanse of greenery mountains, salubrious climate, hypnotizing scenic beauty, Wayanad stands as one of the loveliest hill stations of Kerala. The Department of Tourism has already inducted Wayanad as the hub of 'Destination Kerala' project. The presence of a large tribal population in their natural habitat is an important characteristic aspect about Wayanad. The leading tourist centers of South India like Ooty, Mysore, Coorg, Kozhikode and Kannur are around this region. The following paragraphs give a brief explanation of tourist attractions in the district.

5.14.1. HILL STATIONS

5.14.1.1. Vythiri (100 km from Kozhikode)

Tucked away at the northern tip of Kerala, this quaint little hill station is famous for its coffee, tea, cardamom, pepper and plantations. Beautiful mountains and breathtaking scenery dominate other tourist attractions.

5.14.1.2. Pakshipathalam (10 km from Thirunelly)

This is an important bird watching center in Wayanad. A visitor can access this spot only by trekking. From the watch center of this bird sanctuary, rare species of birds can be sighted.

5.14.1.3. Chembra Peak (14 km south of Kalpetta)

Chembra is the highest peak in North Kerala about 2100 metres above sea level. This is among the most picturesque hill stations close to the Western Ghats and a delight to trekkers and nature lovers.

5.14.1.4. Lakkidi

Lakkidi is a place of scenic beauty with picturesque hills, streams and luxuriant vegetation, one of the highest locations in Wayanad and registered the second highest degree of rainfall in the world. This hill station is situated 700 metres above mean sea level at the crest of the Thamarassery Ghat pass.

5.14.1.5. Pookkode Lake (15 km from Kalpetta)

This natural perennial fresh water lake, very wide and deep is one of the rare reservoirs of water in Wayanad. Surrounded on all sides with meadows and trees, this place is a center of solitude for profound travelers. Thick bushes and tall trees along the path round the lake give a calm and spiritual atmosphere. Boating facilities, a children's park, a handicrafts and spices emporium and a fresh water aquarium are among the tourist facilities available here.
5.14.2. PILGRIM CENTRES

5.14.2.1. Thirunelly Vishnu Temple (32 km northeast of Mananthavady)

The eye-catching scenic beauty of Thirunelly has made it a center of tourist attractions. The Vishnu temple at Thirunelly, touched and soothed by the streams of Papanasini, provides eternal bliss to the visiting travelers. One myth strand says the idol of Vishnu was installed by Brahma himself. The Papanasini is believed to have the divine power to wipe away all the sins committed through generations. It is believed that pithru-tharpana (oblations of manes) done here will also lead to the transformation of the spirits of the departed to salvation. Papanasini river and the temple attract a large number of tourists.

5.14.2.2. Glass Temple of Kottamundra (20 km from Kalpetta)

The Glass Temple of Kottamundra, on the slope of Vellarimala, is a famous Jain family temple in Wayanad. It is dedicated to Parswanatha Swamy, the third Thirthankara of the Jain faith. Icons of Parswanatha Swamy and this temple have thousand reflections in beautiful patterns on the mirrors placed on the inner side of the temple walls.

5.14.2.3. Sree Mahaganapathy Temple, Sulthanbathery (Heart of the town)

This temple has a beautiful image of Lord Ganapathi. This is more than 800 years old.

5.14.2.4. Erulam Sita Devi Temple, Pulpally (8 km from Sulthanbathery)

This temple is dedicated to Sita Devi and her sons, Luv and Kush. The three-day festival known as Thira Utsavam features Theyyam and Paniyarkali.

5.14.3. WATERFALLS

5.14.3.1. Meenmutty (29 km from Kalpetta)

An interesting 2 kilometres jungle trek of the main Ooty road, Meenmutty is the largest and the most spectacular waterfall in Wayanad. A unique feature of this waterfall is that water drops about 300 metres over three stages.

5.14.3.2. Kanthanpara (23 kilometres from Kalpetta)

This waterfall and its surroundings make for an ideal picnic spot.

5.14.3.3. Sentinel Rock Waterfalls (23 kilometres from Kalpetta)

Situated near Meppadi, this waterfall is locally known as Soochipara. It provides opportunity to white water rafting, swimming and bathing. Tree top huts at Soochipara will give unique valley views of Western Ghats and glimpses of glimmering shallow water of the surrounding springs.
5.14.4. OTHER TOURIST DESTINATIONS/ATTRACTIONS

5.14.4.1. Kuruva Island *(15 km east of Mananthavady)*

These 950 acre uninhabited islands on the eastward abound Kabani river. Mainly there are three islands and a few submergible satellite islands. The main island contains two small fresh water lakes. Rare species of birds, orchids and herbs are found here. These islands present a unique eco system, which may be of great interest for nature loving tourists.

5.14.4.2. Boys Town *(15 km north of Mananthavady)*

This is an Indo-Danish Project and was established by the Wayanad Social Science and Gene Park. The major attractions here are the herbal garden, nature care center, sericulture, perm culture etc.

5.14.4.3. Tholpetty Wildlife Sanctuary *(20 km east of Mananthavady)*

This sanctuary has a wide variety of animals including elephants, tigers, gaurs, wild bears, sambar, spotted deer, wild cats, monkeys, wild dogs etc.

5.14.4.4. Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary *(40 km from Mananthavady)*

Established in 1973, the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary is contiguous to the protected area network of Nagarhole and Bandipur of Karnataka on the northeast and Mudimalai of Tamil Nadu on the southeast. Rich in bio-diversity, the sanctuary is an integral part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, which has been established with the specific objective of conserving the biological heritage of the region. It was from here that Pazhassi Raja fought valiantly against the British.

The park houses diverse species of plants and animal life. Emphasis is being given on scientific conservation with due consideration to the general lifestyle of the tribals and others who live on the fringes of the forest.

5.14.4.5. Edakkal Caves *(12 km from Sultan Bathery)*

Believed to the abode of Neolithic man, Edakkal Caves at Ambukuthy near Ambalavayal throw light into the history of mankind. The two Edakkal Caves are natural rock cutout formations. These caves have been made famous world wide for their ancient carvings and pictorial wall inscriptions of human and animal figures with peculiar headdresses and swastik forms and symbols. Archaeologists opine the place as one of the earliest centers of human habitations.

5.14.4.6. Pazhassi Tomb *(35 km northeast of Kalpetta)*

The memorial of the 'Lion of Kerala' - Veera pazhassi Raja, the king of erstwhile Kottayam dynasty, who fought with British imperialism - is situated at
One of the tree houses in Wayanad - a major tourist attraction in the district

Kappad near Kozhikode - The historic beach where Vasco De Gama landed on 27th May, 1498
Mananthavady in north Wayanad. The Pulppally cave is where Pazhassi took refuge until the British captured him.

5.14.4.7. Banasura Project, Padinjarathara (25 km northeast of Kalpetta)

A mini hydel project with the largest earth dam in India and the second largest in Asia is built here. The major tourist attractions are a sprawling sanctuary and a park with ever flowering trees.

5.15. KOZHIKODE

Kozhikode, also known as Calicut, is famous in history as the capital of the Zamorin Rajas. Opening up the gateway of India to Vasco da Gama in 1498, Kozhikode has carved for itself a landmark in the history of India. Kozhikode was the most important region of Malabar in the past. Today, serene beaches, historic sites, wildlife sanctuaries, hills, rivers, a unique culture and a warm, friendly ambience make Kozhikode a popular tourist destination. The following sections review the tourist spots and various other attractions in Kozhikode district:

5.15.1. BEACH DESTINATIONS

5.15.1.1. Kappad (16 km from Kozhikode)

This is the historic beach where Vasco da Gama set foot on 27 May 1498 AD with 170 men in three vessels. A small stone monument at the beach commemorates this historic event. An interesting feature of the landscape is the sprawling rock that protrudes into the sea. The temple on the rock is believed to be 800 years old.

5.15.1.2. Beypore (10 km south of Kozhikode)

Beypore is a small coastal town for centuries as a ship-building centre and still famous for its country crafts called Uru built by the traditional shipbuilders known as khalasis. Ancient Beypore was much sought after by merchants from Western Asia for its ship-building industry. Beypore is still a favourite destination among Arabs shopping for large boats.

5.15.1.3. Thikkoti Lighthouse

The lighthouse, which overlooks Velliymakkallu - the rock much dreaded by mariners-off Moodadi coast, was built after a shipwreck. The remains of this ship can still be seen here. The region around the Velliymakkallu rock is the transit home of migratory birds.
5.15.2. HILL STATIONS

5.15.2.1. Peruvannamuzhi (60 km from Kozhikode)

The dam site set amid hills is a beautiful picnic spot. The reservoir here provides facilities for speed and rowboat cruises. A lake surrounded by natural forests is the main attraction here. Other main attractions include uninhibited islands, a bird sanctuary and a crocodile park.

5.15.2.2. Thusharagiri (50 km from Kozhikode)

This is an important tribal tourist spot in Kerala. Two streams originating from the Western Ghats meet here to form the Challipuzha river. The river diverges into three waterfalls creating a snowy spray, which gives the name Thusharagiri, or the 'Snowy peak'. Famous for its trekking tracks, Thusharagiri is located near Vythithri in Wayanad. Here an eco tourism project has become operational under the aegis of the Thamarassery forest range. The Vanasamrakshna Samithi (VSS) is an integral part of this project. The VSS is vested with the responsibility of guiding tourists to the three waterfalls of Mazhavilchattam, Erattumukku and Thumbithullumpara besides organising trekking to the higher reaches – Thenpara (5 km) and Avanjithodu (6km). Trekkers start early morning from the second waterfall and climbs uphill through the pristine, dense evergreen forests populated with exotic birds and wildlife to reach Vythiri by evening.

5.15.3. PILGRIM CENTRES

5.15.3.1. Lokanar Kavu (6 km east of Vatakara)

Lokanarkavu is dedicated to Bhadrakali. The temple finds mention in the Northern Ballads (Vadakkan Pattukal). Thacholi Othenan, the legendary hero of Kalaripayattu, Kerala’s martial art form, used to worship the deity here. The offering of erattipaayasam is believed to please the Goddess here.

5.15.3.2. Vettakkorumakan Temple, Balusseri (25 km from Kozhikode)

This temple was once famous for its vazhipadu (offering) of breaking 10,000 coconuts overnight by a single person. The idol of this war-god is in the form of a mirror.

5.15.3.3. Thali Temple (Kozhikode city)

This temple was built in the 14th century by Swamy Thirumulpad, the Zamorin and was the venue of Revathy Pattathanam, the annual cultural and intellectual event. The temple is a fine example of the total integration that can exist between wood and laterite, which is a remarkable feature of the Kerala style of architecture.
Route Map from Kozhikode to places of tourist interest.
(Distance in kms. by Road)
5.15.3.4. Mother of God Church (½ km from Kozhikode city)

This church built around 1513 AD, is the only one of its kind in Kerala and is built in the Roman Architectural style. It houses a portrait of St. Mary, believed to be 200 years old.

5.15.4. OTHER DESTINATIONS/ATTRACTIONS

5.15.4.1. Pazhassi Raja Museum and Art Gallery (5 km from Kozhikode)

Located at East Hill, the Pazhassi Raja Museum, run by the State Archeological Department, displays ancient mural paintings, antique bronzes, old coins, excavated earthenware, models of temples, megalithic monuments like dolmonoid cysts, umbrella stones etc. Situated next to the Pazhassi Raja museum, the Art Gallery has paintings of Raja Ravi Varma.

5.15.4.2. Krishna Menon Museum

This museum has an exclusive wing dedicated to the late V.K.Krishna Menon, great Indian leader. His personal belongings and souvenirs are exhibited here.

5.15.4.3. Kalipoika (2 km from Kozhikode)

A recreational boating centre within the heart of the city is located at Arayadathupalam. Boating in pedal boats and rowboats are facilitated here.

5.15.4.4. Kallai

Kallai was once the second largest timber-trading center in Asia. A steel bridge built by the British is still intact here.

5.15.4.5. S M Street

Sweet Meat Street is the busiest shopping area in the Kozhikode city. The name is derived as a result of presence of numerous sweet and meat stalls in the street.

5.15.4.6. Science Planetarium

Situated within the city at Jaffarkhan colony, the planetarium offers extensive insight into the mysteries of the universe, the planets and the galaxies.

5.15.4.7. Regional Science Centre

Situated on the same compound of the planetarium, the science center abounds with puzzles and wonders. This center is an eye opener into the amazing and exiting dimensions of science. A visitor can see the functioning of a replica of
Red Rover controlled by a computer to move over a simulated Mars surface. Red Rover is one of the objects send by NASA to explore the surface of Mars.

5.15.4.8. Kakkayam (45 km from Kozhikode)
At this picturesque dam site, there is exotic wildlife and excellent trekking and rock climbing opportunities. Tourist season is between November and April.

5.15.4.9. Vadakara (48 km from Kozhikode)
Vadakara was a flourishing trading and commerce center in ancient times. It is the birthplace of Thacholi Othenan – the legendary hero of the Vadakkan Pattu (ballads of North Malabar). Lokanar Kavu Bhagavathy temple is situated 5 km away from Vadakara town. The candid murals and carvings here are delight to art lovers.

5.15.4.10. Vellarimala
Vellarimala in the hilly reaches of Kozhikode district is a pristine not crowded by the tourists. Scintillating waterfalls and velvet green landscapes make this an ideal spot for trekking. A visitor can undertake an adventurous trekking trip and reach Chandakkunnu near Nilambur in Malappuram district where the Kanjirappuzha joins the Chaliyar.

5.15.4.11. Kuttiadi (78 km from Kozhikode)
This picturesque village is the site of the Kuttiadi Hydro Electric Project.

5.15.4.12. Iringal
This is the birthplace of Kunjali Marakkar, who commanded the Zamorin’s fleet and held the Portuguese vessels at bay for a long period. The birthplace of the valiant admiral on the southern bank of the Moorad river is preserved by the Department of Archaeology.

5.15.4.13. Mananchira Maidan
Mananchira is the heart of the city, which sites important institutions like the Town Hall and the Public Library. One of Kozhikode’s old buildings, the Commonwealth Trust Office is situated here. The musical fountain inside the maidan and the meticulously landscaped lawns surrounded by traditional buildings in the Kerala style, attract visitors.

5.15.4.14. Kuttichira
The architecture of the old mosque in Kozhikode bear great resemblance to the typical Hindu temple complex with pillars, ventilators and huge tanks as well as stylized floral carvings and geometric designs. The stone inscriptions found in the
Maccunti mosque at Kuttichira, reveals an interesting aspect in the history of the Zamorins of Kozhikode and their patronage of Islam in Kerala. Mishkal Masjid is one of the oldest mosques in the city. This four-storied structure is supported by wooden pillars.

5.15.4.15. Mannur Temple (12 km from Kozhikode)

This temple is more than two centuries old. Modelled like the Siva temple at Tiruvannur, this is an exquisitely carved Gajapathishta styled laterite structure. The noon pooja here are considered very special.

5.15.4.16. Varakkal Devi Temple

This temple is regarded as the 108th and the last Devi temple built by Sree Parasurama. It is believed that Parasurama ploughed this area in order to make Devi (the Goddess) appear. Vavu Bali is the main festival of this temple. On this day, it is said that the sea is surprisingly calm as if facilitating the religious observances.

5.16. MALAPPURAM

Malappuram, which literally means a terraced place atop hills, was carved out of the districts of Kozhikode and Palakkad in 1969. The district lies in between the Arabian Sea in the west, the Nilgiri hills in the east, and Palakkad and Thrissur districts in the north. Malappuram was the military headquarters of the Zamorins of Kozhikode since ancient times. It was the venue for many of the Mappila revolts (uprising against the British East India Company in Kerala) between 1792 and 1921. Malappuram has contributed much to the cultural heritage of the state. It was a famous center for Hindu-Vedic learning and Islamic philosophy. The major tourist spots and other attractions of the district are explained in the following paragraphs:

5.16.1. PILGRIM CENTRES

5.16.1.1. The Jama-at Mosque (2 km from Malappuram)

The Juma-at mosque is an important pilgrim center for Kerala Muslims. The four-day annual nercha festival at the mosque is celebrated in April. Adjoining the mosque is a mausoleum of the Malappuram Shaheeds whose brave exploits have been immortalized in Mappila Ballads.

5.16.1.2. Pazhayangadi Mosque, Kondotti (18 km east of Manjeri on the way to Kozhikode)

Kondotti is a famous pilgrim center for Muslims. The five day long Valiya Nercha feast at this mosque celebrated in February/March, draws a large number of
devotees. The *Kubha*, the 500-year-old tomb of Thangal is the embodiment of Persian-Mahabaliapuram styles.

**5.16.1.3. Kadampuzha Bhagavathy Temple, Tirur (3 km north of Vettichira on the Highway connecting Kozhikode and Thrissur)**

Dedicated to Kiratha Parvathy, this is one of the most sacred *shakthi* centers in Kerala. Absence of idols is the unique feature of this temple. *Pooja* is performed at a hole (about 6 centimetres in diameter) in the earth where the Goddess is said to have disappeared after showing Her presence to Shankaracharya.

**5.16.1.4. Thirumandhamkunnu Bhagavathy Temple, Angadippuram (3 km from Perinthalamanna town)**

This temple is dedicated to *Bhadrakali*. This is one of the ancient and renowned temples in Kerala. An important custom of the festival celebrated here is the arrival of Vellathirith to give audience to the Malayankutty, the headman of the *Pana* tribal community. *Kalampattu* is an important *vazhipadu* here.

**5.16.1.5. Navamukundha Temple, Thirunavaya (8 km south of Tirur)**

Situated on the banks of Bharathapuzha, Thirunavaya is a place of great historical importance. This is said to be the traditional headquarters of the mythical Brahmin hero, Parasurama. Thousands flock here to *karkidakavavu* day to perform the *pithrukriya* rites for the departed souls. The Navamukundha temple is said to be the sacred spots blessed with the presence of Saraswathi, Gayathri, Lakshmi, Parvathi, Shami, Ganga and Yamuna.

**5.16.1.6. Vettakkorumakan Temple, Nilambur (36 km from Malappuram)**

The Nilambur *Pattu* festival held here features singing of hymns by the members of the Royal Family along with the tribal of Nilambur. The festival starts with *kodiyettam*, the hoisting of the festival flag brought by the tribals from the forest, who are warmly received by the royal family.

**5.16.1.7. Thunchan Parambu, Tirur (32 km from Malappuram)**

Tirur is the birthplace of Thunchath Ezhuthachan, the father of the Malayalam language. On *Vijayadashami* day, people from different places come here for *vidyarambham*, the ceremony in which children are initiated into learning. The iron stylus with which Ezhuthachan wrote his texts on palm leaves and the ancient *kanjira* tree (nux vomica) under which he taught his disciples and composed his poems are treasured have been exhibited here.
5.16.1.8. Poonthanam Illam, Kizhattoor, Perinthalmanna

This is the house of Bhaktakavi Poonthanam Namboodiri of the 16th century, known for his work Janappana (song of knowledge). Sree Krishna temple where he used to pray is situated nearby. The Poonthanam Illam and the family temple are being turned into a monument.

5.16.2. BEACH DESTINATIONS

5.16.2.1. Tanur

The small coastal fishing town of Tanur was one of the earliest settlements of the Portuguese. It is believed that St. Francis Xavier visited the place in 1546. About three kilometres south of Tanur town is Keraladasapuram temple, dedicated to Lord Vishnu and believed to be one of the oldest temples in Kerala.

5.16.2.2. Padinharakara Beach

This beach is at the end of the Tipu Sultan Road near Ponnani. It offers a breathtaking view of the confluence of the rivers Bharatapuzha and Tirur Puzha and the Arabian Sea.

5.16.2.3. Vallikkunnu Beach

The main attraction here is a beach resort set in the middle of a coconut grove. Just a short distance away, the Kadalundi bird sanctuary is located.

5.16.3. OTHER TOURIST DESTINATIONS/ATTR ACTIONS

5.16.3.1. Kottakkal (12 km southwest of Malappuram)

This small town is home to the famed Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala, one of the pioneer institutions of Ayurveda in India. Ayurveda, India’s unique science of life and medicine has a major role in attracting foreign tourists to Kerala. The Kottakkal Aryvaidya Sala was founded in 1902 by Vaidyaratnam P.S.Warrier. Now this institution has branches all over the state as well as in Delhi and Chennai. The Vaidyasala runs an Ayurveda Research Centre, a nursing home, a hospital, an Ayurveda college and a medicinal herbal garden.

5.16.3.2. Kadalundi Bird Sanctuary (19 km from Kozhikode and 7 km from Beypore port)

This is an earthly paradise for migratory birds. The sanctuary, which is spread over a cluster of islands, covers an area of 3 kilometres in a scenic area surrounded by hillocks, where the Kadalundi river flows into the Arabian Sea. The large flocks of birds come here is the wonderful view that enthrall bird watchers and nature lovers.
Over a hundred varieties of native birds and over 60 varieties of migratory birds flock here in large numbers. This spot is also famous for a wide variety of fish, mussels and crabs.

The Local Grama Panchayat plans to develop this area as a major tourist center in Malabar. An information center, a bird museum, photo exhibition hall, miracle expo center and science museum are being planned. There is also a proposal to include water cruise facilities and for this purpose a fleet of motorboats will be introduced.

5.16.3.3. Teak Museum, Nilambur (37 km from Malappuram)

Situated at Canoli Plot, Nilambur, this is the only teak museum in the world. Nilambur is an extensive forest area well known for bamboo. A butterfly park is also attached with the museum. The cholanaickans, said to be among the oldest aboriginal tribes of Kerala, live in the Nilambur forests.

5.16.3.4. Adayanpara (15 km from Nilambur)

Spread over an area of two and half acres of mountainous regions, Adayanpara is tucked away near Muttiyel at Nilambur. This tourist spot is famous for its waterfalls and the splendour of its lush jungles.

5.16.3.5. Nedumkayam (15 km from Nilambur)

This is one of the beautiful and dense forests in Kerala where the rain forest flourishes. Elephants and other wild animals can be viewed from the wooden rest house built by the British. Here an elephant-training center also attracts visitors from far away places.

5.16.3.6. The Nercha Festival, Veliancode

The nercha festival at Veliancode was commenced after the death of the Veliancode Thangal who is claimed to be the descendent of Prophet Muhammad and who had come to the place from Surat. The main functions of this annual festival are recital of the Holy Quran at the Jaram of Thangal and also a feast to the poor. Large number of devotees takes part in the festival.

5.17. PALAKKAD

Palakkad district, known as the greenery of Kerala, is gifted with rare flora and fauna, wildlife sanctuaries, rivers, rare birds and animals, historical monuments, places of worship and the traditional Ayurveda treatment centers. These gifts of nature give it the scope to become one of the best tourism destinations in the State and the district is fast emerging as a major eco-tourism center. It is a land of
Ayurveda: India's unique science of life and medicine; the age old healing system in Malabar

A view from Kadalundi Bird Sanctuary (near Beypore port), an earthly paradise for migratory birds
palmyras and paddy fields. In the past, the area was known as Palakattuseri. The
district is bordered on the north and northwest by Malappuram district and on the
south by Thrissur district. Situated at the foot of the Western Ghats, this is the
gateway to Kerala from the north. The discussion follows is a brief analysis of
tourism resources of the district:

5.17.1. HILL STATIONS

5.17.1.1. Nelliampathy (52 km south of Nenmara)

Nelliampathy, a forest range area occupies a chain of ridges cut off from one
another by valley of dark evergreen forests. The highest peak is Nellikota or Padagiri,
15,232 metres above sea level. A hill station with cool climate, Nelliampathy is
accessible from Palakkad. At least ten hairpin bends have to be negotiated on the
ghat road that passes through the breath taking evergreen forests of the Sahya
Ranges. Seethakundu at Nelliampathy offers a panoramic view of about one-third of
the area of Palakkad district.

5.17.1.2. Attappady (38 km northeast of Mannarkkad)

Attappadi, a beautiful synthesis of mountains, rivers and forests, is of great
interest to anthropologists. This mountain valley is populated by tribes and some
settlers from Tamil Nadu. The Malleeswaram peak is worshipped as a gigantic Shiva
linga by the Adivasis who also celebrate the Shivarathri festival with great fervour.

5.17.1.3. Dhoni (15 km from Palakkad)

Dhoni is a reserve forest area with small, beautiful waterfalls. The spot can be
reached after a three-hour trek from the base of the Dhoni hills. This hill country is
the delight of trekkers.

5.17.2. WILD LIFE SANCTUARIES

5.17.2.1. Silent Valley National Park (40 km northwest of Mannarkkad)

Spread over 90 square kilometers, Silent Valley National Park is the closest to
a virgin forest in the entire Western Ghats. The core of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve,
this Park is probably the most magnificent gifts of nature to mankind, a unique
preserve of tropical rain forests in all its pristine glory. In this National Park, it is
estimated that there are more than thousand kinds of trees. Sairandhri Vanam,
meaning the forest in the valley, as referred to in the Mahabharatha and the river
Kunthi offers a mythological dimension to this National Park. The river Kunthi
descends from the Nilgiri hills above an altitude of 2000 metres and transverses the
entire length of the valley, finally rushing down the plains.
5.17.2.1.1. Flora

The Silent Valley forests belong to the bio-geographical class of the Malabar rain forests. The flowering plants here include 966 species belonging to 134 families and 599 genera.

5.17.2.1.2. Fauna

The valley has a fair representation of all peninsular mammals. They include lion-tailed macaque, Nilgiri langur, bonnet macaque, tiger, leopard (panther), leopard cat, fishing cat, common palm civet, brown palm civet, ruddy mongoose, stripe necked mongoose, wild dog, sloth bear, otter, flying squirrel, Malabar giant squirrel, Indian pangolin, porcupine, wild boar, sambar, deer and elephant.

Birds, butterflies and moths are varied and plenty. There are more than 100 species of butterflies and 400 species of moths. Quite a few of them are extremely rare and endemic.

Unlike in most other sanctuaries, viewing wild animals in Silent Valley is quite difficult because of thick vegetation.

5.17.2.2. Parambikulam Wild Life Sanctuary (110 km from Palakkad)

The Parambikulam Wild Life Sanctuary, parts of the neighbouring Anamalai Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu is one of the best in Kerala. This sanctuary is a fine example of serene, tranquil and undisturbed ecosystem. It offers a scintillating sight of rare wild animals. The reservoir harbours several varieties of aquatic fauna.

5.17.2.2.1. Forest Types

The following various kind of natural forests are found in this sanctuary:

(i) West coast tropical ever green forests
(ii) West coast semi ever green forests
(iii) South Indian moist deciduous forests
(iv) South Indian dry deciduous forests
(v) Moist bamboo brakes
(vi) Reed brakes

5.17.2.2.2. Fauna

Mammals

Mammals found here include bonnet macaque, lion tailed macaque, Nilgiri langur, loris, tiger, leopard, jungle cat, civet, mongoose, fox, bear, elephant, gaur, spotted deer, sambar, barking deer, wild boar and pangolin.
Reptiles

Crocodile, varanus, pond terrapin, cane turtle, gecko skink, chameleon, snakes like king cobra, spectacled cobra, krait, viper, python, green keel back, rat snake, vine snake etc. are the different kinds of reptiles found here.

Visitors can have boat race in the Parambikulam lake and tour the sanctuary with the help of guides.

5.17.3. OTHER TOURIST DESTINATIONS/ATTRACTIONS

5.17.3.1. Palakkad Fort

The oldest granite fort situated in the very heart of the town, is the most beautiful and the best-preserved fort of Kerala. It was built by Hyder Ali of Mysore in 1766. The fort was taken over and modified by the British in 1790. The Archaeological Survey of India now preserves it. Nearby the fort, there is a children’s park and an open-air stadium called Rappadi.

5.17.3.2. Malampuzha Garden (10 km from Palakkad)

This famous picnic spot that comprises a dam and beautifully landscaped gardens is situated on the lower hills of the Western Ghats. The dam is located in idyllic surroundings with a hilly background. The garden on Mughal model below the dam is the beautiful attraction for the tourists. The small garden on Japanese style is also very attractive. The gigantic ‘Yakshi’ statue situated in the garden would cause surprise and wonder to anyone visiting Malampuzha. The fish-shaped aquarium is an added attraction. The other attractions are the snake park, the rock garden, the amusement park and the fantasy park and the thrilling rides therein.

5.17.3.3. Pothundi Dam (45 km from Palakkad)

Situated on the way to Nelliampathy, Pothundi Reservoir Complex is a charming location for picnic and half day trips.

5.17.3.4. Kottayi (15 km from Palakkad)

This tiny village had become famous as the native place of the late Chembai Vaidynatha Bhagavathar, the doyen of Karnatic music.

5.17.3.5. Lakkidi (30 km from Palakkad)

The Killikurissimangalam of Lakkidi near Ottappalam is well known as the birthplace of Kunjan Nambiar, the 18th century satirist and trendsetter in Tullal (classical art form). The poet’s house has been preserved as a monument by the State Government.
5.17.3.6. Mayiladumpara (22 km from Palakkad)

This grove takes its name from the large number of peacocks (mayil) found here.

5.17.3.7. Jain Temple of Jaini Medu

Situated on the western suburbs of Palakkad town, not far from the railway station, this historic granite temple displays images of the Jain Thirthankaras and Yakshinis. This is one of the few places in Kerala where the vestiges of Jainism have survived without substantial damage. Kumaranasan wrote his monumental poem 'Veena Poovu' (the fallen flower) at a Jain house here during his brief stay with his master Sri Narayana Guru.

5.17.4. Festivals and Other Attractions

5.17.4.1. Kalpathy Ratholsavam

Kalpathy is one of the ancient Brahmin Agharams in Kerala and is located in the heart of the town. The Music and Car Festival or Kalpathy Ratholsavam remains a grand event of Malabar which has its origin in the erstwhile Madras Presidency. The Sri Viswanathaswamy temple (Kundampalam in popular parlance) on the banks of 'Nila' river at Kalpathy is an ancient shrine. It is believed that the deity was brought from the Holy Ganges at Varanasi and the great Bana had worshipped in this temple. An inscription on a stone near the temple proclaims that it was built in the Malayalam year 600 (1424 AD) by Shri Itti Komban Achan, the then Raja of Palakkad. The main center of the festival is Kalpathy Viswanathaswamy temple. The three satellite temples in the villages of New Kalpathy, Old Kalpathy and Chathapuram also celebrate the festival.

During the Car Festival, music concerts by eminent musicians are a regular feature. While the rituals inside the temple and the mode of worship are strictly according to the Tamil Brahmin culture, the practices outside like drum beating, decoration of Ratham etc. are virtually of Kerala style. Kalpathy has been announced as a heritage village by the government recently.

5.17.4.2. Kachamkurichi Temple (Arat Festival)

This temple is a well-known Vishnu temple in the district. The Arat festival here in the month of many attracts many spectators.
Palakkad Fort - The age old granite fort is one of the best preserved historic monuments in Malabar

Thrissur Pooram - Magnificent pageantry of colourful images
5.17.4.3. Nercha Festival at Ottappalam Mosque

This annual festival is celebrated to commemorate the death of Saint, Uthman Auliya. This festival attracts the local Muslims in large numbers.

5.17.4.4. Pattambi Nercha

This festival is celebrated in memory of Aloor Valiya Pookkunji Thangal, a noted Muslim saint of South Malabar. It falls during January/February.

5.17.4.5. Pavakoothu

This is also known by another name Tholpavakoothu. This is a shadow play, which proclaims Palakkad’s indebtedness to Kambha Ramayanam and Tamil literacy culture.

5.18. THRISSUR

Thrissur, with its rich history, cultural heritage and archaeological wealth is often called the cultural capital of Kerala. Thrissur town is built around a hillock top. Raja Rama Varma popularly known as Sakthan Thampuran was the chief architect of the present Thrissur town. The renowned Pooram festivities are the unique feature of this district. There are a lot of pilgrim centers and tourism destination here. The following few sections deal with the tourism potentials of Thrissur.

5.18.1. PILGRIM CENTRES

5.18.1.1. Guruvayoor Sree Krishna Temple (29 km west of Thrissur)

Thrissur is a good base for a pilgrim trip to Guruvayoor. It is one of the most sacred and important pilgrim centers of India and is also known as the Kasi of the South. The Sree Krishna temple, which attracts thousands of pilgrims, is said to date prior to the 16th century. According to legend, the temple is the creation of Guru, the preceptor of the Gods and Vayu, the God of winds. The most famous offering of the temple is Thulabharam, where a devotee presents to the deity his own body, weights against products like bananas, rice etc. The temple is dedicated to Krishna known here is Guruvayoorappan or the Lord of Guruvayoor and the idol is said to have been worshipped by Lord Brahma himself at Dwaraka. It is at this temple that Melpathur Narayana Bhattathiri composed his well known Sanskrit devotional poem ‘Narayaneeyam’

5.18.1.2. Bhagavathy Temple, Kodungalloor (50 km from Kochi)

This temple is well known for the Bharani festival. On Bharani day, special nivedya (nectar) called variyaripaayasam is offered to Bhagavathy. This is performed
by adikals (priests). Early morning, the deity is ceremoniously taken out of the sree kovil (sanctum sanctorum) and placed on a raised pedestal for public worship. Simultaneously, the temple flag is hoisted signifying the victory of Bhagavathy over Darika (evil).

5.18.1.3. Koodalmanickam Temple, Irinjalakkuda (21 km from Thrissur)
Situated 10 kilometres away from Irinjalakkuda railway station, this is the only temple in India, dedicated to Lord Bharatha, the brother of Sree Rama. The colourful eleven day annual festival with a pageant of thirteen caparisoned elephants is held in April/May. The festival in this temple marks the end of the Hindu temple festival season in Kerala.

5.18.1.4. Vadakkunnathan Temple (In the heart of Thrissur town)
This is a classic example of the Kerala style of architecture. The temple houses the sacred shrines of Paramashiva, Parvathy, Sankaranarayana, Ganapathy, Sree Rama and Sree Krishna. The central shrines and Koothambalam exhibit exquisite vignettes carved in wood. This temple is the site for the famous Thrissur Pooram.

5.18.1.5. Sree Rudhira Mahakali Temple (Uthralikkavu), Wadakkanchery (2 km from Parithipra)
The annual festival of this temple dedicated to Kali, is one of the important festivals of Malabar. Known as Uthralikkavu Pooram, the eight-day long festival with a pageant of about twenty-one caparisoned tuskers ends with a colourful display of fireworks.

5.18.1.6. Mammiyoor Shiva Temple (1 km from Guruvayoor)
This temple contains two adjacent shrines of Shankaranarayana and Shiva. Mammiyoor and Guruvayoor Sree Krishna temples are linked to each other in several aspects and hence, it is considered auspicious to worship them on the same day.

5.18.1.7. Sree Rama Temple, Kadavallur (10 km from Kunnamkulam)
A distinctive feature of this temple is the annual twelve-day annyonnam, a scholarly debate on Vedas. Sree Rama is worshipped in three forms here – in the morning as in vana vasa (exile in forest), at noon as in sethu bandhana (in an angry mood) and at night as the king of Ayodhya.

5.18.1.8. Cheraman Juma Masjid, Kodungalloor (2 km from Kodungalloor)
This mosque resembles a Hindu temple in appearance. Built in 629 AD, this is the first mosque in India and second in the world where Juma prayers were started.
As per the legend, King Cheramanperumal of Kodungalloor left for Mecca, embraced Islam, accepted the name Thajuddeen and married the sister of the then king of Jeddah. Before his death, Thajuddeen handed over to the king of Jeddah several letters addressed to Kerala kings seeking their help to propagate Islam. The King came to Kerala and met the then king of Kodungalloor who helped the former to convert Arathali temple into a Juma Masjid.

5.18.2. WILD LIFE SANCTUARIES

5.18.2.1. Chimmini Wildlife Sanctuary (35 km from Thrissur)

This sanctuary, established in 1984, is located in the western valley of Nelliampathy in the Mukundapuram Taluk of Thrissur district. The headquarters of this sanctuary is at Echippara which is 28 kilometres away from Amballoor village in the north direction. Part of it is adjacent to the Peechi-Vazhani sanctuary and the rest to the Parambikkulam sanctuary. An artificial lake has been formed here by the dam across the Chimmini river. The sanctuary occupies the watershed areas of the Kunu Mali and Mupliyan rivers and is encircled by hills.

5.18.2.1.1. Main attractions:

Flora

Evergreen forests, semi evergreen forests and leaf-shedding trees are found in large numbers.

Fauna

One can see mammals including leopards, elephants, bears, wild pigs, wild bison, tigers etc. in this sanctuary.

Trekking trails

There are many paths to climb the rocks and study the forests for a visitor.

5.18.2.2. Peechi-Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary (20 km east of Thrissur)

Established in 1958, this sanctuary is in the catchment areas of the Peechi and Vazhani dams with headquarters at Peechi, 15 km away. The sanctuary is part of the Palappilly-Nelliampathy forests and forms the northern boundary of the Chimmini sanctuary. Generally pleasant climate is experienced in this enchanting place consisting of plains and hills. Ponmudi is the highest peak (923 metres) in this region, which runs to the altitude ranging from 45 metres to 900 metres.

5.18.2.2.1. Main attractions

Flora

Evergreen forests are sparsely seen in the sanctuary, which is blessed with various kinds of flora. In the wet leaves shedding forests, various kinds of trees grow
in abundance. There are also evergreen forests in the sanctuary. More than 50 different orchids and innumerable rare medicinal plants are also found here.

**Fauna**

Carnivorous animals like leopard, tiger, fox etc., and herbivorous animals like elk, spotted deer, barking deer etc., are found in this sanctuary.

**5.18.3. OTHER TOURIST DESTINATIONS/ATTRACTIONS**

**5.18.3.1. Town Hall**

For a sight of mural paintings all over Kerala, one can visit the Town Hall, an inspiring building with an art gallery or 'Chitrakaliam'.

**5.18.3.2. Zoo (2 km from Thrissur town)**

Within the 13.5 acres of the compound live a variety of fauna like the lion tailed macaque, sloth bear, species of birds and deer. The snake park has reptilian collection of king cobras, kraits and rat snakes.

**5.18.3.3. Art Museum**

Located within the zoo compound, the art museum displays collection of woodcarvings, metal sculptures and ancient jewelers and kathakali figures. There is also a wonderful collection of traditional Kerala lamps.

**5.18.3.4. Punnathur Kotta (2 km from Guruvayoor)**

Punnathur Kotta is the place where the temple elephants (more then 60 in number) are taken care of. Nowhere else so many elephants can be seen at any one time.

**5.18.3.5. Cheruthuruthy (32 km north of Thrissur)**

Cheruthuruthy is the seat of Kerala Kalamandalam, renowned the world over for its Kathakali training centres. It is in this academy that the best of Kathakali performers get their rigorous training. The institution also offers training in music, drama and other dance forms including Mohiniyattom, Koodiyattom and Ottam Thullal.

**5.18.3.6. Athirappally-Vazhachall Waterfalls (63 km from Thrissur)**

The waterfalls at Athirappally amidst sylvan forests are a beseeching sight. Vazhachal waterfall is near to Athirappally at distance of about 5 kilometers. Visiting tourists can enjoy the calm, serene and pristine beauty of the nature at these locations.

**5.18.3.7. Peechi Dam (63 km from Thrissur)**

The Peechi dam site is a spot for picnic and excursions. Boating facilities are arranged at the reservoir. Kerala Forest Research Institute is situated at Peechi.
5.18.3.8. Anakkayam (20 km from Chalakkudy)

Anakkayam, on the Sholayar Peringalkuthu route, is famous for its lake with cool and placid waters. The place got its name from a herd of elephants, which used to visit quite often and the legend goes that place became Anakkayam because some elephants had been drowned in this lake. The location is breathtakingly beautiful with its rushing waters, chiseled rocks and silent streams.

5.18.3.9. Sakthan Thampuran Palace

Also known as Palace Thoppu, the campus covers an area of six acres. Here one can witness three savakudeerams (tombs) including that of Sakthan Thampuran, the great ruler of the Cochin dynasty.

5.18.3.10. Thrissur Pooram

Thrissur Pooram is the most colourful temple festival of Kerala. It attracts large masses of devotees and spectators from home and abroad. Celebrated in Medom (April-May), it consists of processions of richly caparisoned elephants from various neighbouring temples to the Vadakkunnathan temple.

The most colourful processions are those from the Krishna temple at Thiruvambadi and the Devi temple at Paramakkavu, which is quite significant even for its devotees. The Pooram festival was introduced by Sakthan Thampuran, the Maharaja of the erstwhile Kochi state. There may be no other festival in Kerala that draws such an unbelievable mass of people to a single event. The pooram festival is also well known for the magnificent display of fireworks. Fireworks start in the early hours and the dazzling display lasts three to four hours. Commencing in the early hours of the morning, the celebration lasts till the break of dawn, the next day.

5.19. CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it is obvious that Malabar, a generously and undiscovered land, is naturally gifted with the best of scenic beauty. Its untouched, rich tropical rain forests with an array of flora and fauna make it a greenery bed. The region offers unique and diverse tourism products that form the perfect setting for all types of tourists. Besides a number of well-known sight seeing locations, there are many other lesser-known but wonderful sights to be seen and experienced in all the districts of this land. No doubt, Malabar possesses so much potentiality for the development of tourism. As was referred to in the earlier part of this chapter, developing tourism is an important alternative to tackle the problem of unemployment in an area. When once tourism gets prominence and developed in Malabar, it would be able to offer thousands of job opportunities to its unemployed
youths as well as to those who are under the acute challenge of being thrown out of their employment in the presently crisis-ridden industrial and farm sectors in the region.

REFERENCES

11. ibid. p. 41.
18. ibid. p.165.