CHAPTER- III

GEOPOLITICAL FACTORS IN ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN FIJI
Republic of Fiji is a scattered group of 332 mostly volcanic and coral islands and islets. The size of the islands varies from 10,000 sq. km to tiny islands a few kilometers in area. These are spread over thousands of sq. km in the heart of South Pacific Ocean. Fiji lies between 15° and 22° south latitude and 177° west longitude. The total land area of Fiji is 18,333 sq. kms. The largest island is Viti Levu (10,429) and Vanua Levu (5,566). Other main islands are Taveuni (470 sq. km), Kadavu (411 sq. km), Gau (140 sq. km), Koro (1040 sq. km), Ovalau (101 sq. km), Rabi (69 sq. km), Rotuma (47 sq. km) and Beqa (36 sq. km). One third of the islands are inhabited. The island of Rotuma (47 sq. km) is a Polynesian island, it was added to Fiji in 1881. The meridian of 180° cuts across three places in Fiji (Udu point, Rabi island and Taveuni island) all in Vanua Levu. It shows that 'Fiji is the first country in the world to see the dawn of each new day'.

Historical Background

Fiji was first settled about three and a half thousand years ago by "Lapita people" the original inhabitants of Fiji. They made a distinctive type of pottery, remnants of which had been found in almost all the islands of the Pacific and throughout eastern Polynesia. The Dutch explorer, Abel Tasman discovered Fiji Islands in 1643. Capt. Blight mentioned the first recorded and detailed information about Fiji in 1789 after the mutiny on the Bounty. In the 19th century, many deserted and shipwrecked men anchored here only, that led to the mounting unrest resulting into tribal war. On 10th October 1874 Fiji was ceded to the British crown. From 1879 to 1916 Indians indentured ghirmitia labourers were brought to work in the sugar plantations. Fiji gained

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1 Whittaker's Almanack vol.132
2 Fiji Calling: Exclusively Yours. 1999. Travel Magazine.
independence on 10th October 1970. Fiji until 1987 remained an independent nation within the Commonwealth with a Governor-General appointed by the Queen. On 12th April 1987, a left wing coalition headed by Dr. Timoci Bavada defeated the long term Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamisee Mara and a new government was formed. During this election Indian population outnumbered the indigenous Fijians by 50% and 44%. But later, on 14th May 1987 Lt. Col. Sitiveni Rabuka overthrew the government in military coup and a civil government was restored. Rabuka led a second coup on 25th September 1987 and on 7th October Fiji declared itself a republic and its Commonwealth membership lapsed. In 1990, a new coalition of civil rule was restored but Fijian Indian couldn't hold the power as the constitution was changed and the greater power to indigenous Melanesian Fijians were given. According to Ravuvu, "Fijians had long feared that Indian's would one day rule Fiji." The Fijian Political Party won the May 1992 and February general election headed by Rabuka, and formed a coalition government. In July 1997, constitutional reforms took place and Fiji got readmitted to the Commonwealth on 1st October 1997. In the general election on 8th to 15th May 1999, The Fijian Political Party was swept away by the Fiji Labours Party and its leader Mr. Mahendra Chaudhary became the first ethnic Indian Prime Minister on May 21, 1999. In May 2000, an obscure and little known person called George Speight declared a coup and took hostage the Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhary on behalf of ethnic Fijian. On May 29, President Ratu Sir Kaimisese Mara resigned and allowed military leader Commodore Frank Bainimaramara to impose martial law. On July 3, 2001 Bainimaramara revoked the 1997 constitution and declared himself head of an interim government (all ethnic fijian) to take over the military council. The Great Council of Chiefs appointed Ratu Josepa Iloilo as interim President on July 13, 2001. After the coup of 19 May 2000 the new Prime Minister Qarisie was appointed.

Fiji: Political Divisions

Not to scale.

Legend:
- Political Division
- Fiji Islands
Political Divisions: For administrative purposes the country has been divided into four political divisions such as 1) Western, 2) Northern, 3) Eastern and 4) Central. (Refer to map 2- Political divisions of Fiji. The government of Fiji is structured in six ministries and the basic unit of the Fijian administration is Koro (village). A hereditary chief (Turaga-ni-Koro) heads the Koro. Several Koro are linked as Tikina and several Tikina forms a Yasana or province. Fiji is divided into 14 provinces and each has a main head.

Society: Fiji is a multi-cultural and multi-racial country and all citizens are called as Fiji islanders. According to 1996 data, the population of Fiji Island is 772,655 million people. The density population is 42 persons per sq.km. Fijian society comprises of 395000 (51.2%) indigenous Fijian literally known as "Kaiviti". The Indian Fijians, literally known as "Kaihidi" 337,000 (43.6%) and "others" (like Europeans or Chinese & other pacific islanders) are known as "Kaivelagi" meaning 'people from far away'. The life expectancy at birth is quite high in Fiji (1990-95) it is 73.7 years 69.5 years for male and female respectively. Infant mortality rate (1990-95) is 23 per 1000 live birth. It is a (IMR) health indicator and shares a very good figure of 23 per 1000 live births. The fertility rate of Fiji islands is 3.0 births per women. The UN projected total 848,000m people for the year 2000.

Economy: The Fijian economy is primarily agrarian. The principle cash crop is sugar cane, coconut, ginger and copra. Other produces like molasses, rice, vanilla and variety of fruits, vegetable and root crops are also grown. Sugar export and Tourism are the backbone of the Fijian economy. Other sectors of the economy include agriculture, industry, construction and energy.

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6 Ibid., 5
7 Turner, B. (ed.) Statesman’s Yearbook –2000
**Agriculture- (including forestry and fishing):**

Agriculture is the largest sector of the economy. About 16% of Fijian land have been found suitable for agriculture that occurs mainly along coastal plains and river valleys and deltas of the two main islands. In 1996 the agriculture sector contributed 17.9% of GDP engaging 36.6% of economically active population. Coconuts, ginger and paddy are the most important subsistence crops of Fiji. Pine plantations are common on the western sides of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. Most forest is on communally owned native land that has been planted by Fiji Pine limited. Fishing is an important economic activity in Fiji. The fisheries industry produces canned tuna, beche-de-mer, trochus shell and trochus-shell buttons and shark fin. It became very important in the mid-1990's and earned $F 56 m in 1996. Japan is the main export market for it.

**Industry- (including, manufacturing, mining, construction and power)**

Fiji's manufacturing sector includes clothing and small-scale footwear production and cigarette, food and beverage industries. Aluminum and plastic products, agricultural equipment, boats, cement, furniture and handicrafts are also manufactured. It 1996 this sector provided 24.5% of GDP, engaging 37.0% of the labor force. Manufacturing contributed 12.7% of GDP in 1996 and engaged 24.9% of labor force. The most important branch of the sector is food processing, including sugar, molasses and copra.

**Mining** contributed 3.2% of GDP in 1996 and employed 2.0% of labor force. Gold and Silver are major mineral exports of Fiji. In 1995 gold provided 9.0% of total export earnings. Gold is being mined at two major sites that are operationalized at Mount Kasi in Vanua Levu and Vatukoula near Tavua in northern Viti Levu. The Vatukoula mine exported gold worth $F73m in 1996. The production of Mount Kasi gold mine began in 1996 and expected to earn some $F20m-35m annually for 20 years. It has been estimated that by 2003 total 11,500 Kg gold will be exported and $F 200 million will be earned.
Energy is derived from hydro- electric power. *Electricity, gas and power* contributed 3.8% of GDP in 1996. The ready-made garments industry became an important sector after the induction of tax- exemption scheme. There are 103 tax-exempted factories operating in the country related to ready-made garments. This sector accounted for 18% of the total export earnings in 1994, engaging 65.8% of 13,400 people in the tax-free sector. The South Pacific Regional and Economic Cooperation Agreement (SPARTECA) provides duty and quota free access to New Zealand and Australian markets.\(^8\) Table-25, showing the performance of different industries of Fiji.

**Table-25**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Sector</th>
<th>GDP (at constant Price 1996)</th>
<th>% of people engaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Fishing &amp; Forestry</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Industry (mining, manufacturing, construction)</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Mining</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Manufacturing</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Energy (electricity, gas and power)</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Bureau of Statistics, Fiji.*

**Imports and Exports**

Fiji highly relies on other countries for few goods. The principal imports of Fiji are- machinery transport equipment, basic manufactured good, mineral fuels and food. The major import markets are Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Singapore. The principal exports are- Sugar, gold, re-exported petroleum products and ready-made garments. The major export markets are Australia, U.K and USA. Refer to Table-26, showing the percentage of principal markets of import and export to Fiji.

\(^8\) *Op cit. 5.*
In the 20th century Fiji government brought economic and political changes in the country. It expanded and developed its resource base by establishing productive copra milling, tourism and secondary industries. It also diversified its small-scale industries and strengthened the public works, infrastructure, health, medical sciences and education. Fiji position further strengthened by recent developments in sea and air communications and transport. Today Fiji plays an important role in the regional affairs of South Pacific region.

Sugar and Tourism industry

Fiji’s economic performance relies on the sugar and tourism industry as together they employ 80,000 people. Sugarcane is the principle cash crop and it accounts for 80% of Fiji's total agricultural production. The sugar industry has been the mainstay of the economy for most of the 20th century. Sugar industry accounts for 12% of GDP and employs one fifth of the total labor force and it creates significant multiplier effects. Sugar and its derivatives provided 33.7% of total export earnings. The main cane growing areas are western Viti Levu and western Vanua Levu, with mills at Lautoka, Ba, Rakiraki and Labasa. Due to historical and constitutional reasons the industry has been compartmentalized along racial lines. Indigenous Fijian owns 83% of total land area which Fiji- Indian can not own due to rules of ownership. Fiji- Indian farmers grow cane on land leased by Indigenous Fijian. Sugar industry has been the second largest foreign exchange earner.
after tourism. It provides employment, directly and indirectly to some 40,000 Fijians and accounts for 15% of the labor force. In the absence of agricultural fields Fiji largely depends on tourism. *Tourism* is a critical pillar of Fijian economy principally driven by the private sector. In 1999, tourism contributed about 16% of GDP. Indirectly and directly 40,000 people were employed in this industry. Total foreign exchange generated by tourism was $558 million. The Fiji Visitors Bureau projected 428,500 visitors in 2000. However, this was changed by the political developments due to the coup in May 2000. Fiji could receive only 294,070 visitors representing a debilitating 31% drop against the projected figure. It is a number one earner of foreign exchange.\(^9\) Table-27, showing tourism foreign exchange earnings from 1991 to 2000.

**Table-27**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Earnings $ F (millions)</th>
<th>Change Over $ (million)</th>
<th>Previous Years % age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>286.3</td>
<td>-8.3</td>
<td>-2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>328.1</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>347.4</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>392.5</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>405.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>414.5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>446.7</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>482.5</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>558.6</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000*</td>
<td>426.3</td>
<td>-132.3</td>
<td>-23.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Bureau of Statistics (2000* provisional figure). Prepared by Fiji Visitor Bureau, September 2001.*\(^{10}\)

The reason for fewer earnings in 2000 is the general global recession. It has been estimated that the tourism industry will atleast take 2003-2004 to achieve the level of visitors arrivals of 1999. Tourism earns more foreign exchange earnings than the Sugar industry, garment, gold, fishing and timber

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etc. Table-28, showing the performance of top six industries of Fiji (1998-2000) that is contributing significantly to the overall economy.

Table-28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tourism F ($) m</th>
<th>Sugar F ($) m</th>
<th>Garment F ($) m</th>
<th>Gold F ($) m</th>
<th>Timber F($) m</th>
<th>Fish F ($) m</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>482.5</td>
<td>244.2</td>
<td>302.8</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>558.6</td>
<td>263.2</td>
<td>322.1</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>413.5</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Seminar Paper on Sustainable Development of Ecotourism in Pacific Island Countries.

Apart from this tourism is the major job generating force in different spheres such as, accommodation, transport (taxi and bus), retailing, restaurants and bars, travel agencies and airlines. The total labor force is around 200,000 in many sectors of the economy related to the tourism industry. The Fiji Visitors Bureau has projected total number of 561,000 tourists in 2004. The principal market indicated that Australia contributed about 26% of the total arrivals in 2000 and remained the biggest source of visitors. New Zealand contributed 17% visitors and short-haul markets contributed 43% of visitors.

Fiji Tourism Industry: Scenario and Trends

In the early twentieth century Fiji was first developed for tourism as a stop-over port for sea travelers en route from North America to Australia. Fiji’s first tourist hotel, the Grand Pacific in Suva was completed in 1914. The Fiji Publicity Board (renamed as the Fiji Visitors Bureau in 1953) was established in 1924.\(^{11}\) The first report on Fiji’s tourism potential was the "Cheikki Report" (1961) that accentuated tourism as a means of strengthening the economies of the Pacific and the Far East.\(^{12}\) The golden age of the tourism started in 1962 from Australia to Fiji when it introduced the "duty free"

\(^{11}\) King, B. E.M., Creating Island Resorts, (London & New York: Routledge Pub....)

shopping (exemption of custom duty). Hotel construction grew with the Hotel Aid Ordinance in 1964. The tourism industry until the Independence was working according to the plans made by colonial administration. After the Independence in 1970 with the development of wide body jets, an international air route was started to Fiji. The Air Fiji commenced its operation in 1972 as a regional carrier, which subsequently became the national carrier.

During 1961 till the Tourism Development Programme of 1973 Fiji had a steady pattern

**Fig-19**

![Tourist Arrivals in Fiji (1961-1971)](image)

of growth. The tourist arrivals rose from 14772 in 1961 to 152,151 in 1971. In the initial stage of tourism (1961-1962) Fiji received tourists only from four countries notably, Australia, New Zealand, USA and Canada. USA generated maximum tourists from 1961 to 1964, which was later surpassed by New Zealand and Australia. In 1964 tourists from UK, Europe and Pacific also joined in. In 1973/74 Fiji’s first National Tourism Development Plan was prepared with consultation and assistance of United Nations Development
Programme and The World Bank.\textsuperscript{13} The national tourism development plan was based on the surveys of various regional and urban plans. The plan included all the aspects of the country for instance, geology, topography, climate, vegetation, indigenous animal life, reef system, settlement pattern, land tenure, demography, historical influences etc. The major emphasis was given to three aspects such as the topography, climate and the land tenure system. It was one of the first comprehensive plans focussed on a developing country.\textsuperscript{14} A major survey was carried out on the topography of the country to find out the best sites for the tourism development. The land adjacent to the beaches and shoreline was considered suitable and targeted for beach-related recreation and relaxation activities. The subtropical climate and beach environment was considered as an important element for the planning of tourism promotion and development. Being in the Southern Hemisphere Fiji attracts North American tourists from June to September, as it is vacation period there. The suitable areas for the tourism development were chosen according to the weather condition i.e. warm, dry and pleasant areas. The land tenure system plays a major role in the planning as 82.5\% of the land is classified as 'nature land' that cannot be bought or sought freely. 9.5\% 'state land' and 8.0\% of 'freehold land' is available. The aim of the land tenure in the National Tourism Development Plan was to achieve a reasonable distribution of the equity benefits of development between owner and the developer. Apart from these three aspects distribution of population was also examined to know the availability of labour supply to work in the tourism areas. The key recommendation of the plan was to optimize infrastructure, usage, and encouragement of architectural styles keeping in mind the local tradition and art. According to United Nation Development Programme

\textsuperscript{13} Op cit. 10. \\
\textsuperscript{14} Op cit. 12.
(1973) every report and consultancy to government on tourism stressed the importance of identifying and promoting Fijian culture and environmental attraction. The priority of the plan (1973) was to identify and develop **Mamanuca-Coral Coast region.** The Native Land Trust Board (NTLB) negotiated leases for all the resorts in the Mamanuca and emphasized to make nature reserves in **Castaway, BeachComber, Mana, Levuka and Vomo Islands of Mamanuca group of islands.** The seven islands of Mamanuca group to develop, as nature reserves are - **Malamala, Monuriki, Vanualevu, Monurika, Kadoma and Vunivadra** which covers an area of 5647 hectares, 0.3% of Fiji's total area (Ministry of forest). 15 Refer to Map-, showing the nature reserves of Fiji. Mamanuca was a deliberate choice as it is located off the West Coast of Fiji's main island Viti Levu and is close to the international airport i.e. Nadi. The plan stressed that tourism in the Mamanuca should be "**A mechanism to establish national parks and nature reserves (terrestrial and marine) scenic areas and other points of natural interests.**" 16 This proposal was never implemented in Mamanuca or anywhere else in Fiji. The plan had strong recommendations for the low- density, bure-style accommodation in order to strike a balance with the small-size of the islands. Public access to the beaches adjacent to the tourism development was given the priority with the construction restricted to 100 feet (30 meters) from the high water mark. This recommendation was later incorporated into Town Planning Act in 1980. The salient features of the plan suggested Fijian's to teach tourists and develop understanding about their traditions and customs. To attract visitors the theme was "**Fiji-The way it ought to be.**" 17

16 IUCN, 1992
17 Travel and Tourism Analyst (NY)
### Table-29

#### Tourist Arrivals (1972-1984)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Pacific</th>
<th>Japan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>47752</td>
<td>33259</td>
<td>43390</td>
<td>10935</td>
<td>7748</td>
<td>5303</td>
<td>11951</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>54300</td>
<td>42954</td>
<td>42066</td>
<td>11724</td>
<td>8421</td>
<td>5429</td>
<td>15789</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>58275</td>
<td>48076</td>
<td>30529</td>
<td>11574</td>
<td>6595</td>
<td>5009</td>
<td>14786</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>58482</td>
<td>42242</td>
<td>25770</td>
<td>10655</td>
<td>4711</td>
<td>5533</td>
<td>9266</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>66591</td>
<td>37601</td>
<td>28193</td>
<td>11265</td>
<td>4545</td>
<td>4788</td>
<td>9311</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>63748</td>
<td>41338</td>
<td>28171</td>
<td>11555</td>
<td>4311</td>
<td>5763</td>
<td>8703</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>74922</td>
<td>40825</td>
<td>29449</td>
<td>9803</td>
<td>4177</td>
<td>6052</td>
<td>8957</td>
<td>5709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>73191</td>
<td>44434</td>
<td>27336</td>
<td>10085</td>
<td>4768</td>
<td>7624</td>
<td>11851</td>
<td>5665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>72260</td>
<td>36389</td>
<td>30137</td>
<td>13386</td>
<td>5244</td>
<td>8990</td>
<td>10137</td>
<td>7141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>80912</td>
<td>30490</td>
<td>24164</td>
<td>15708</td>
<td>4818</td>
<td>6921</td>
<td>9647</td>
<td>10666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>95455</td>
<td>28304</td>
<td>23211</td>
<td>13698</td>
<td>4332</td>
<td>6111</td>
<td>9976</td>
<td>18029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>85027</td>
<td>24048</td>
<td>25636</td>
<td>13037</td>
<td>5888</td>
<td>8330</td>
<td>10588</td>
<td>14401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>101405</td>
<td>20803</td>
<td>37285</td>
<td>16522</td>
<td>8569</td>
<td>11283</td>
<td>13178</td>
<td>14864</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fig-20

![Tourist Arrivals in Fiji (1972-1984)](image-url)
In 1985 Fiji's 9th National Development Plan (1985-1990) placed considerable stress on investment in the tourism sector from both the government and the private sector. The tourism industry was recognized as the most important industry for the future in terms of employment opportunities and economic growth. In 1986, Tourism Convention took place, the deliberation of the Convention was "to contribute to the buoyant mood of the industry."\textsuperscript{18} The Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kaimisese Mara in the opening address declared that- "The government is firmly committed to the tourist industry, and over the years government help has been very positive. We have provided ... the infrastructure... incentives. To this encouragement there was a splendid response by the industry."\textsuperscript{19}

On May 14th, 1987 the coup by Sevitini Rebuka, spoilt the image of Fiji as an island paradise. The hotel industry suffered badly and lost F$ 80-100 million revenue, hotel occupancy dropped by 20-30% as compared to seasonal average of 70%. The international airlines suspended their flights resulting into 50% drop in the visitor's arrival.

The coup halted the growth of the economy and Fiji's second most important industry in terms of foreign exchange earnings shattered. Within the four week of the coup the government of Fiji organized another tourism convention and proposed nine-point plan for the speedy economic recovery and the reconstruction of the tourism industry. The Fiji Visitors Bureau (FVB) initiated a marketing drive to protect the overseas image of Fiji's tourism industry. The government of Fiji granted emergency grant of F$ 500,000 to FVB for marketing and management. But on 25th September 1987 second coup took place affecting severely the inbound travel flow. The second coup was described as the 'worst than the first' and was blamed for the total collapse of the Fiji's second largest industry. In the entire South Pacific region, Fiji Republic was considered the only place upholding and

\textsuperscript{18} Fiji Visitors Bureau, 1986.  
demonstrating the virtues of a "truly Democratic" form of governance. This was a role model for countries elsewhere around the globe and made Pope John Paul-II to make a significant remark on this Democracy. The pope visited Fiji (1986) and described "Fiji as a symbol of hope in a troubled world."\(^{20}\) In 1989 the Fiji Trade and Investment Board (FTVB) attracted Asian investors and Direct flights from Japan by Fiji's National Carrier were introduced. Fiji's premium resort complex at Denarau Island comprising of the Sheraton and the Elegant was purchased by a Tokyo based giant Electrical and Industrial Enterprises Corporation (EIE). The year 1989 can be considered as the watershed in the history of Fiji's tourism. As for the first time, a 'National Environment Strategy' was prepared and 140 sites of national significance were identified and registered. Out of 140 sites eight was located in the Mamanuca island group for the tourism purpose. Table-30 showing the eight sites of Mamanuca island group.

### Table-30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type of Attraction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole Mamanuca group</td>
<td>Coastal/Marine Ecosystem, Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadi Bay Reefs</td>
<td>Reef Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malamala Island (Molomolo group)</td>
<td>Marine Ecosystem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maualevu Island (Mamanuca-i- Ra)</td>
<td>Geological Site Rock Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kadoma Island (Mamanuca-i- Ra)</td>
<td>Shearwater Nesting Colony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monuriki Island (Mamanuca-i- Cake)</td>
<td>Iguana Habitat Seabird Nesting Colony, Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vomosewa Island (Other Island Category)</td>
<td>Flying Fox Camp/ Island Vegetation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vunivadra Island (Other Island Category)</td>
<td>Seabird Nesting Colony.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: IUCN, 1992*

The most important event of 1989 was the preparation of Tourism Master Plan by the Ministry of Tourism and Transport that encouraged community based tourism activities through the establishment of ecotourism units. The marketing campaign started with the slogan "Discover the Fiji you
don't know" and "Discover the Fiji, you will never forget." The aim of this campaign was to educate tourists about the cultural and natural resources of Fiji. These attractions were the amalgamation of life style of indigenous people, rainforests, coral reefs and adventure activities like boating, rafting and snorkeling.

Table-31

Tourist Arrivals in Fiji (1985-1990)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Pacific</th>
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In 1991 an ecotourism unit was established within the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation. In 1993 tourism took over sugarcane and became the largest earner of foreign exchange generating F$364 million. From the point of view of achieving sustainable growth and reducing dependency on sugarcane (subject to high price fluctuation) tourism was given the topmost priority. In the year 1994 tourism department was upgraded to the status of ministry. In 1995, in Fiji Tourism Convention (August, 1995) Radike Qereqeretabua said that "the tourism industry provides by far the best alternative we have today to help our country achieve the levels of economic growth that can restore and enhance investor activity, and confidence and self esteem for our people."22

The Fiji Tourism Development Plan 1998-2005 issued in 1997 stated that "tourism is the number one earner of foreign exchange."23 The plan estimated 30,000 jobs out of which 200,000 will be earned from 'tourist dollar'. It was recognized that the most developed areas in the country are the Coral Coast, Nadi and the Mamanuca island groups. In 1999 it contributed 16% of GDP and generated F$ 558 million to the economy. On May 2000 a coup outbreak in the leadership of George Speight. Due to the coup hotels, resorts and some airlines slashed their prices to make Fiji more lucrative for tourists. In order to rebuild the image of Fiji tourism the FVB was granted over F$ 4 million to market Fiji. The slogan "Spirit of Fiji"24 was adopted to attract the tourist's. Even after the 2000 coup none of the sectors of the economy could surpass tourism and still tourism is the largest gross foreign exchange earner in Fiji. In August 2000, FVB launched a recovery plan and

23 Ibid.
24 Fiji Calling, Road to Discovery: Strategy to Woo Tourists. October 2000.
offered low air prices coupled with attractive resort packages (minimum of 5 days and maximum of 21 days). A Tourist Action Group was formed with various agencies in places like Australia, New Zealand and USA.

**Table-32**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>UK</th>
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</table>

**Fig-22**

The tourists arrived from different places of the world during the two major coup of 1987 and 2000 showed substantial decrease
Factors for the development of Tourism industry

Fiji tourism resources encompass outstanding natural environment (unspoiled beaches, reefs, lush green verdant terrestrial environment) and distinct culture consisting of traditional ceremonies and unique handicrafts.

Tourists Season and Climatic Conditions: - Fiji enjoys a mild tropical maritime climate, with sea breezes throughout the year. The climate in Fiji can be categorized under two broad classes, i.e. the 'wet season' and the 'dry season'. Fiji's 'wet season' extends from November to April, and the 'dry season' from May to October. The annual rainfall is 117" (2,974 mm) and occurs throughout the year. Fiji has mild average temperatures of around 25°
C, but on a hot summer day it can be 30°C, the oceanic influences prevent undue extremes of heat or humidity. Tropical cyclones or hurricanes are most prominent during November to April and is also known as 'hurricane season'.

**Flora and Fauna:**

Fiji has a rich biodiversity its indigenous flora and fauna is related to that of Indonesia and Malaysia. Fiji has over 3000 identified species of plants out of which 10% indigenous plant species are identified as endemic. Fijians use native flora for food, medicine, implements and building materials. Fijian flora has been divided into five broad categorizes such as, 1) *Rainforest Plants*, 2) *Edible Plants*, 3) *Garden Plants*, 4) *Coastal & River Plants* and 5) *Aquatic Plants*. Fauna: There are six species of bat that are native mammals found only on Fiji. It has 20 species of land dwelling reptiles, four species of turtle and four species of sea snake. Fiji has around 100 species of birds out of which 23 are endemic. The Fiji petrel, the pink billed parrot finch, the red throat lorikeet and the long legged warbler are rare and endangered species and the major attractions in Fiji. The richest diversity of fauna lies underwater, especially inside reefs and protected lagoons. There are hundreds of species of hard coral, soft coral and sea fan and sea sponge. Soldier fish, surgeon fish, trumpet fish, red lizard fish goat fish, bat fish, butterfly and parrot fish are variety of fishes with exquisite colors, different size and shapes are found in Fiji. In open sea and deeper waters, larger fish such as tuna, bonito, swordfish, rays and sharks are commonly found. Other marine animals found here are molluscs, crustaceans, sea slugs, feather stars, starfish, Christmas- tree worms etc.

**Accommodation:**

Tourism is Fiji's largest industry and there is no shortage of accommodation. At the time of Tourism Development Programme in 1973, Fiji had a flourishing industry. In 1972, Fiji had total of 2,575 rooms, which increased to 4,305 rooms in Opcit. 5.
1988 and 5,770 rooms in 1996. The accommodation in Fiji ranges from dorm beds with rock bottom pieces (F$ 5 per night) to world class luxury resorts charging up to F$ 1,000 per night. Accommodation prices in Fiji are subject to value added tax (VAT) of 10%. The places of stay for tourists have been divided under five categories: 1) **Rental accommodation**: Rental accommodation in Fiji has been found at Suva, Pacific Harbour and Nadi. These are basically apartments with cooking facilities, meant for long-term stay and save a fair amount of money. 2) **Hotels**: Fiji is unique tropical island destination with extensive hotel stock. Almost 35% of luxury hotels are concentrated in the Nadi area. The second and third ranked areas of Mamanuca, Yasawa islands and the Coral coast together account for 95% of all luxury hotels. **Middle-range hotels** are plentiful in Fiji prices of which ranges from F$ 35 and F$ 80 for double accommodation. Amenities provided by these hotels include air-conditioner, tea and coffee making facilities, restaurant, bar and pool. Fiji has many **budget hotels** in Nadi / Lautoka area, Coral coast and Suva on Viti Levu. In few low budget hotels common cooking facilities are available, 3) **Guesthouses**: They are normally cheap hotels situated in remote areas meant especially for government officials but are given for rent if found vacant. 4) **Resorts**: The term resort refers to any accommodation in Fiji that is near the sea, ranging from luxury hotels to backpacker style. The resorts can be divided into two headings notably, 'backpacker resorts' and 'small resorts'. The backpacker resorts are concentrated on the offshore islands such as Yasawas, Mana in the Mamanuca, Kadavu, Nanu-i-Ra and Leluvia near Ovalau. Small resorts are in vogue especially for water sports and relaxation. Natadola Beach Resort on Viti Levu, Nukubati Island Resort on Vanua Levu, Lomaloma Island Resort in the Lau group and Vatulele Island Resort off southern Viti Levu are some of the famous resorts in Fiji. 5) **Hostels**: Suva and Nadi have youth hostels affiliated with IYHF and YWCA. There is some low end hotels with dormitory accommodation with minimum facilities that caters to tourists need. The prices for all types of accommodation vary between low and high season. Other type of accommodation includes homestays, B&B type accommodation etc. It has been seen that the overall average room occupancy in Fiji is low. The total numbers of rooms in the industry are 4,610 out of which Nadi holds the largest stock of rooms followed by Coral coast. The international hotel chains operate approximately 25% of room stocks. According to Licensing data 215 licensed accommodation are established out of which 10% is owned by Indigenous Fijians, 41% by Indo-Fijians and the balance 'others' foreign companies. The hotel and restaurant sector accounts for about 4% of GDP however,
the multiplier effects are estimated to contribute around 12-15% of GDP. Tourism accounts for about 22% of gross foreign exchange earnings. Net earnings are estimated to be around 65% of the gross. Fiji Bureau of Statistics calculated the turnover of accommodation with various components such as accommodation (58%), food (21%), bar and liquor (11%), telephone (2%) and miscellaneous (8%) was included. Table 34. Hotel and Tourist Accommodation, Room Occupancy Rate and Hotel Turnover by areas, 1998.

Table 34

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Room Nights Available</th>
<th>Room Occupancy Rate (% age)</th>
<th>Hotel Turnover (F$ 000)</th>
<th>% Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suva</td>
<td>366,153</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>21,907</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lautoka</td>
<td>141,304</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>13,002</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadi</td>
<td>638,142</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>8,1069</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coral Coast</td>
<td>423,626</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>65,559</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamanuca</td>
<td>234,646</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>65,171</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Areas</td>
<td>120,571</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>13,272</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>111,069</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>9,245</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Fiji)</td>
<td>203,5511</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>269,225</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bureau of Statistics, 'Statistical News', 3 March 2000, Suva,

Accessibility:

Tourism in Fiji developed on the basis of transit stopovers by air. Fiji started tourism with a wide variety of carriers on east west routing from Australia or New Zealand to USA or Canada and on north south routing from Japan to New Zealand (Refer to map - direct international air route to Fiji). Now Fiji has become the hub of pacific region because of its central location in the South Pacific. Aviation plays extremely important supporting role in promoting tourism in Fiji. The tourism has grown on the basis of scheduled flights and is totally dependent upon air services. The scheduled flights have dominated holiday tourism in Australia, SE Asia and the USA whereas, the European markets have developed with non-scheduled operators.
Fiji: Direct International Air Routes

(Not to scale)

Legend

- International Routes
- Continents
Air: Fiji has two International Airports notably, Nausori airport (Suva) and Nadi International airport (Lautoka) both on the Viti Levu island. The domestic air services are concentrated on four airports such Nadi, Suva on Viti Levu Island and Savusavu and Labasa on Vanua Levu Island. An important aspect of Fiji's tourism industry has been the provision of RTW fare (round the world fare) that offers attractive packages to tourists.

Nadi airport: (Pronounced as 'nandi'). Nadi developed as an essential transit point for aircraft with 1960's and into the 1970. It serves as an international gateway for the Fiji islands and is 9 Kms north of the central Nadi. Airlines with direct services to Nadi includes Fiji's Air Pacific, Qantas, Air New Zealand, Korean Air, Air Caledonia, Air Nauru, Royal Tongan Airlines, Solomon Airlines, Air Marshall Airlines and the Canadian Airlines International. Nausori airport is situated 23 Kms north-east of down town Suva. It is mostly used for the domestic flights. The Royal Tongan Airlines, Air Marshall Airlines and Air Nauru have an international flight that arrives at Nausori.

Fiji has well served and sophisticated network of domestic airlines which have frequent and reliable flights. (Refer to map-4, Domestic air routes) The international airports of Nadi and Nausori near Suva, both on Viti Levu also serves as the main domestic hubs. Other domestic airports include Savusavu and Labasa on Vanua Levu, Matei on Taveuni, Vunisea on Kadavu, Bureta on Ovalau and in the Mamanuca, Malololailai and Mana islands. Many of the smaller islands have airstrips receives very few visitors. The two main domestic airlines of Fiji are Air Fiji and Sunflower Airlines. The Air Fiji serves out of Nausori, while Sunflower's hub is Nadi. Refer to Map.5 and 6, showing airroutes of Air Fiji and Sunflower Airlines from Nadi and Nausori to different islands of Fiji. Other air services are also available such as Vanua air charter, Island hoppers helicopter and Turtle Airways seaplanes. The major challenge faced by the tourism industry is to make a good working relationship with the airlines that service Fiji.

Fiji: Domestic Air Routes

(Not to scale)
Fiji: Air Routes of Air Fiji

Legend
- Destination

Air Routes

Fiji Islands

0  40  80  Km
Fiji: Air Routes of Sunflower Airlines
**Bus:** Fiji has an extensive and inexpensive bus network. Ninety percent of Fiji's 5100 km of roads are on its two largest island i.e. Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The main bus stations are at Lautoka, Nadi and Suva. Express buses operate along the Queens and Kings Road.

**Train:** The only passenger train is on Viti Levu. It is the scenic giant for the tourists and runs from Coral coast between the Fijian resorts to Natadola beach. Otherwise the railways services are basically for sugar industry. They are called sugar trains and are used for carrying sugar cane from the cane growing areas of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.

**Ferry / Boat:** The three ports of entry are Suva, Lautoka and Levuka. The international fleet is a mix of private and government vessels. Altogether 7,189 ships including local ships, yachts and foreign vessels are called into the three ports. Fiji has regular and sophisticated ferries such as, Patterson Brothers, Beachcomber Cruises and Consort Shipping. The ferry services operates between Viti Levu, Vanua Levu and Taveuni, between Viti Levu and Ovalau and between Viti Levu and Kadavu. Refer to Map- 7, showing ferry routes to different islands in Fiji. Cruises to the other islands (Mamanuca and Yasawa islands) are very popular. The cruise owners offer organized tours to Viti Levu, Ovalau, Taveuni and Vanua Levu islands. Fiji offers many tours within the country including trekking, cycling, hiking, walking etc.

**Markets:**

Australia, New Zealand and USA have traditionally been important tourist market for Fiji. The top six tourist generating markets are Australia (27%), USA (14.8 %), New Zealand (14.2 %), Japan (13.3 %), the UK (7.0 %) and Canada (4.3 %). These countries accounted for over 80 % of total tourists.
Between 1997-98, 25.39% Australian tourist arrived in Fiji. An upward trend continued contributing 17.385% between 1998-99. In 1999-2000 due to the political crisis in Fiji a negative growth of 34.99% in tourist arrivals has been registered.

Table-35

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>New Zealand</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Europe</th>
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<td>19674</td>
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</table>

Fig-24

Tourism attractions in Fiji:

Fiji islands are blessed with rich ecological diversity. These islands have every attraction that a tourist look for such as, sand dunes to tropical rainforests, incredible native orchids, ferns on mountaintops, rare birds, beautiful landscape, rivers and spectacular waterfalls to pristine reef systems, prairie grasslands to sprawling mangroves and white sandy beaches. Fiji islands are famous for world class scuba diving, snorkeling experiences and dramatic coastal walks.

Archaeological sites: Fiji has number of archaeological sites. The Tavuni Hill Fort near Sigatoka has been recognized and opened for tourists. Nukubolu near Savusavu has remains of an extensive ancient village and pools of hot springs.

Bird- watching: Taveuni and Kadavu islands are the best bird watching places in Fiji. Colo-i- Suva Forest Park on Viti Levu island has some native and rare birds in this park.

Trekking: Fiji offers an exclusive trekking experience to tourists on Viti Levu (Colo-i-Suva Forest Park) and Taveuni (Lavena Coastal Walk and Bouma Falls) islands. These places have well marked self-guided trails. Other good places for trekking are Lake Tagimaucia on Taveuni, Mount Tomanivi on Viti Levu and Abaca National Park and Mount Koroyanitu near Lautoka.

Village visits: Village visits to Fijian highland life with unique culture and traditional ceremonies such as "Kava" (narcotic root of Piper methysticum, a type of pepper plant, dried and ground to powder) presentation. Tourists are welcomed with short Kava ceremony followed with certain protocols.

Surfing: Surfing has been considered as an ancient sports activity in Fiji. It offers a very special experience to tourists to surf over crystal clear reefs. The
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best surfing sites in Fiji are along the southern (Frigates Passage near Beqa Lagoon) and eastern (Malolo and Wilkes passages) Viti Levu.

**Boating / Rafting:** Many expensive resorts in Fiji are specialized in game fishing with boat chartering and fishing tours. Smaller resorts arrange for local boats to the tourists for fishing with 'catch and release' motto. Rafting (Bilibili) on the other hand has been an exciting activity. The rafts are made of local bamboo material and serve tourists scenic beauty while on tour. Ba and the Navua River on Viti Levu are two major spot famous for rafting.

**Snorkelling / Diving:** Fiji's warm clear waters with beautiful underwater life and amazing coral reefs offer an exciting and enjoyable experience to snorkellers and divers. In Fiji many resorts have their own equipments and experts and many have equipment for hire to undertake these activities. Fiji has great snorkelling and diving sites. The best snorkelling sites are on outer islands notably, Mamanuca and Yasawas, Taveuni's Prince Charles Beach and Vuna Reef, Kadavu off the Matava, The Lomaviti groups Caelai and Leluvia islands. Other sites are on Viti Levu at Natadola Beach, Nanuanu-i-Ra island and Beqa Lagoon. Fiji has been considered as 'divers paradise' and offer certification and advanced courses to learn scuba diving with PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) and NAUI (National Association of Underwater Instructors).

**Ecotourism in Fiji**

Tourism Council of South Pacific (TCSP) actively promoting sustainable tourism and ecotourism, both actually & locally (Hall, 1994). The South Pacific government has developed their tourism potentials as a means of achieving economic diversification (Miline’97). According to Bertram and Watters (1985) few South Pacific countries like Nauru, Fiji and Palau are suffering from the MIRAB syndrome (migration, remittances, aid and bureaucratic expansion) that has been described as the region’s economic malaise. Low per capita GNP has been identified as the fundamental problem
of the region and underdevelopment. The Fijian government has been promoting Fiji as a multifaceted ecotourism destination with a mixture of natural, historical and cultural resources. Thirteen areas have been identified as the Ecotourism regions (See Appendix-IV). According to Vant S Stot Fiji is the most successful country in promoting mass tourism and ecotourism.\(^{27}\)

The government of Fiji claims that the very foundation of ecotourism was laid in the first Tourism Master Plan (1972/1973) but a very little attention was given to the Fijian culture. Consequently, the natural environment became the sole attraction for the tourists and cultural environment took the back seat. Soon, the government realized that the people and their unique culture are the main attractions and incorporated the cultural resources in the tourism strategy. Over the years ecotourism gained momentum and attributed to the development of niche markets demanding environmental conscious and educated travelers into Fiji. In 1991 an ecotourism section was established in the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (See Appendix-V). Initially ecotourism was defined as- "A community-based activity that creates secondary attractions for the tourists".\(^ {28}\) But it was elaborated in 1995 and an official definition of ecotourism and policies were devised. A team of government officials working on a strategy called "Ecotourism and Village Based Tourism: A Policy Strategy for Fiji" approved the following definition:

"A form of nature based tourism which involves responsible travel to relatively undeveloped areas to foster an appreciation of nature and local cultures, while conserving the physical and social environment, respecting the aspiration and traditions of those who are visited and improving the welfare of the local communities".\(^{29}\)


\(^{28}\) Op cit. 12.

The target of Ecotourism set to achieve following objectives:

◆ A deeper understanding of the natural environment and culture of the area visited.

◆ Opportunities for learning and experiencing the way in which people coexist with the nature.

◆ Minimize the negative environment and social impacts in areas visited by tourists.

The ecotourism resources have been divided under two headings: (1) Natural resources and (2) Historical/ Cultural resources.

(1) Natural resources: Fiji has a wide range of physical attributes notably white sand beaches, ocean, colorful corals, vegetation, rivers, mountains, sand dunes and waterfalls, wildlife and a large number of islands (330). Marine resorts in Denarau, Pacific harbour, Mamanuca and Yasawa islands, Sigatoka and Nadi river, Sigatoka Sand dunes and Wainabau falls all are natural resources that attracts major chunk of tourists. Fiji is also prompting deliberate ecotourism as a small-scale niche activity on peripheral islands such as Taveuni and Kadavu (Fiji Visitors Bureau, 1996). 30

(a) Taveuni island: Taveuni is the third largest island of Fiji. It is also known as the "Garden Island of Fiji." This is the only island that is crossed by International Date Line. Taveuni is a typical example of volcanic island and it has verdant and dense rainforest and exotic flora and fauna. It has a variety of attractions notably, Bouma National Heritage Park. It is a best location for bird watching with over hundred species of birds. The Tagimoucia or Medinilla Waterhousie (Fiji's national flower) grows at a higher altitude in Taveuni. Taveuni is world famous among divers for its spectacular colorful

30 Opcit, 27
corals at Rainbow Reef. Apart from it Somosomo strait (literally means 'good water' in Fijian) is famous for its soft coral growth and diverse fish life. Lavena, Prince Charles and Beverly beaches of Taveuni are the exceptions with white sand beaches. Taveuni is the most fertile area of Fiji islands with lush green landscape. Thus, the priority has been given to protect its natural and cultural heritage. Organized trips include bird watching, rainforest walks, village sites, Bouma falls, Lavena coastal walks and Prince Charles beach for snorkeling, swimming and Kayaking in its crystal clear water.

(b) **Tavuni Hill Fort:**

The fort is situated on a small hill in Sigatoka valley on the banks of Sigatoka River. A Tongan chief built the fort in the late 18th and 19th century. Inside the fort there is more than fifty relics, including the ruins of housing and ovens, graves, shell mounds and stone tables to cut up human beings. In addition to its historical resources it is also rich in natural resources. The lookout points along the walking tracks provides impressive views of mountains, peaceful pastoral scenes with farms and paddy fields with tapioca plants. The proposal has been given to establish Tavuni Hill Fort, Sigatoka Sand Dunes, Sigatoka town and the Natadra Coast as potential ecotourism destination. Other than these two ecotourism destinations government of Fiji has proposed 'five marine protected areas' (MPA's) refer to map... 1) Somosomo Strait. 2) Savusavu Peninsula and Reef in Savusavu Bay. 3) Ulunikoro- Kadavu. 4) Yunuca island- Beqa. 5) Beachcomber/ Treasure islands.

For the implementation of these marine protected areas the Global Environment Facility's International Water Program has been approached for the funds. This particular proposal is an agreement between the principle users of the reef i.e. the local community and the dive operators.

(2) **Historical/ Cultural resources:** Fiji's historical and cultural resources provide a rich menu to the tourists. The archaeological remains, song and
dance, handicrafts and traditional village life all provide tourists a unique Fijian cultural experience.

(2.1) **The Fiji Museum: Na Vale Ni I Yaya Marori.**

The Fiji museum is located in the heart of Suva's Thruston Garden. It was opened in 1904. Recent developments have made it a major tourist attraction center. It has a remarkable collection of archaeological material dating back to first settlement 3,500 years ago. The museum has four sections:

a) Pre-history section: It includes the traditional Vitian culture, Vitian household, ways of dressing, music, games and warfare.

b) History gallery: This section has figurehead of SIRIA- a vessel that brought many indentured laborers to Fiji and was wrecked on Nasilai ref with loss of many lives.

c) Masi gallery: Masi or black cloth is made of bark of the mulberry tree. It is worn by both men and women and used as a presentation item at special ceremonies.

d) Video theatre: The history and culture of Fiji is screened in the museum in video theatre. In order to preserve and promote Fijian ancient pottery art fifth gallery has been opened. The museum has sponsored a program on "An Architectural Ideas Competition" and designed a new National Center for Culture and Arts. In this program the local artists and artisans display and demonstrated their skills of pottery making at the museum on every Thursday and Friday. The art of pottery making is practiced only in two places in Fiji i.e. Sigatoka (Nasilai) and Rewa. This program is benefiting locals in two ways firstly, it is preserving and promoting its cultural heritage and secondly it is stimulating the art to provide income to its talented artists.

2.2) **Traditional ceremonies:**

31 Op cit. 3.
a) Yagona drinking: or Kava, is an infusion prepared from the narcotic root of piper methysticum, a type of pepper plant, derived and ground to powder. The drink is prepared in Tanoa (bowl) served on important occasions. It is extremely important part of Fijian culture and certain protocol has to be followed while performing this ritual.

b) Fire walking: The 'vilavilairevo' (literally means 'jumping into the oven') is practiced on Beqa island. Traditionally, it was performed on special occasions in the village of Nava Kaisese. But now it is performed for commercial purposes also. There are regular fire walking performances at Pacific Harbour Cultural Center at Suva's Hibiscus Festival

2.3) **Traditional Culture:**

It includes the traditional village life and bure style, art, pottery-making, mat and basket making, wood-carving etc.

a) Bure: Bure is a traditional Fijian house. The skills are kept alive for tourist industry. Most beautiful example of a traditional village is Navala, in the highlands of Viti Levu. Traditional bures are rectangular with a hipped or gabled roof with few windows.

b) Art: The painting of Debora Veli crafts dance and music is the main tourist attractions. The dances are performed in the moonlight or torch light that enacts stories and legends in the hotels and resorts. The men generally perform spear dances and women fan dances.

c) Pottery-making: The pottery making is an old tradition. The best known pots are Tugea's clay pots and Wati's pots. Tugea and Wati are the best known potters of Sigatoka and Rewa respectively. d) Mat and basket making: Basket and mat weaving is a traditional culture. The mats are made of Pandanus leaves and are used as floor carvings, dining mats, sleeping mats and even for baptism and funerals. e) Black cloth or traditional textile: Masi, also known as malo or tapa is designed and printed in black and rust colour, The cloth is made of inner bark of the mulberry bush.
Places Surveyed During the Field Work in Fiji

Legend
- Places Surveyed

Locations:
- Beachcomber Island
- Abaca Village
- Suva
- Pacific Harbour
Field Survey: A Summary

The field survey was carried out from 23 to 30th October at three different places such as Pacific Harbour, Beachcomber Island and the Abaca Village Visit (Refer to map-1, places surveyed during the field work in Fiji). In Pacific Harbour and Beachcomber Island total of sixty tourists were interviewed results of which has been mentioned on the page 127. A brief summary of field survey and researcher’s observation of Pacific Harbour and Beachcomber Island has been discussed below.

Pacific Harbour and Beachcomber Island:

Pacific Harbour is a planned town with up-market housing and tourism development with meandering canals and 18-hole golf course. It is located 78 km east of Sigatoka and 49 km west of Suva. The Fijian Cultural Center and Market Place with shopping complex consist of gift shops, boutiques, restaurants are two important places of Pacific Harbour. It offers Lake Tour around an artificial village in a drua (old style canoe) where boat stops along the way to show traditional techniques for canoe making, weaving, tapa, pottery and mat making (refer to plate- 1).

Beachcomber Island is situated on a marine sanctuary in the heart of Mamanuca group (refer to plate- 2). It is 19kms from the main island of VitiLevu and considered as the first island to be developed among two dozen islands of Mamanuca group. It has two transfer options- a 25 minutes ride on the Fast Cat 'Drodrolagi' from the Pt Denarau and the 70 minutes leisure cruise on the 3 masted schooner 'Tui Tai'. Beachcomber Island Resort has two type of trips, a) single day and b) overnight stay. All the meals are included in the package and the delicious Fijian and International dishes are served buffet style on the Island itself. The Beachcomber Island offers two types of activities to tourists. A) Charged activities: it includes windsurfing, fishing, canoeing, sailing, jet skies, water-skiing scuba diving, Parasailing (refer to plate- 3) etc. Other Activities includes famous Beachcomber band (refer to plate- 4) that provides soothing dinner music and dance performances. B)
Free activities: it includes fish feeding (refer to plate- 5) snorkelling, volley ball, minigolf, cultural show and coral viewing (refer to plate- 6 a and 6 b). There were three types of accommodation available in Beachcomber Island: 1) **Bure**: total of 20 bures were available with several private facilities i.e. fridge, tea, coffee makers and ceiling fans. 2) **Lodges**: 14 twin lodges, comfortable private rooms with fridge, tea coffee makers and ceiling fans. 3) **Dormitory**: 84 two tiered bunk with individual lockers "Grand Bure" (share facility) was the largest and unique traditional 'Bure.'

The researcher also carried out a survey of Abaca Village Visit in the Koroyanitu National Heritage Park (KHNP) a community based ecotourism enterprise with a project vision of "**Bless our heritage to bless the world.**" Since 1992 The Native Land Trust Board (NLTB), South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP) and New Zealand (NZODA) have supported the Ecotourism project in KHNP.

Koroyanitu National Heritage Park is located in the steep hills above Nadi and Lautoka. Mount Koroyanitu the third highest peak in Fiji that rises to 1,195 meters above sea- level. It offers unique combination of Fijian highland life, surrounded by the country's highest mountains and some of the best remaining forests in the west. The landscape of Mount Koroyanitu associated with a large and very old volcano, located at Navilawa. KHNP has vast variety of flora, fauna and unlogged tropical maontanne forests which includes primitive Gondwanaland gymnosperm (*Acmopyle floriduli*), Kauri (*Agathis vitiensis*) a high value tree specie and the Reed (*Miscanthus floriduli*) used for the traditional thatching and the construction of the wall. KHNP covers an area of 25,000 hectares in 13 different villages. The Conservation Area (CA) comprises of four administrative districts such as Abaca, Vakabuli, Nalotawa and Navilawa villages that are above 600 meters from the sea level.32

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In 1992, the Native Land Trust Board (NLTB), South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Japan National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation (JANCPEC) and New Zealand Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation (NZCPEC) established ecotourism in Abaca Village. These organizations prepared an ecotourism resource map in close consultation with local people. They identified and demarcated sites for recreation facilities and alignments for tracks and trails on the ground. Scenic lookout points offering panoramic views of the coastline and outlying islands were also established. A truck for village transport was also purchased as part of ecotourism project. The commercial side of the project was taken into consideration for locals to earn livelihood through ecotourism. For example, school and college going students were trained as eco-guides and the income generated from Sunday visitors was deposited to the church for the maintenance of ecotourism products. The "Abaca Ecotourism Cooperative Society limited" was registered to define the rule and regulations for participation at Abaca Ecotourism Programme. Certain rules were set for the tourists to visit the Abaca Village -

(a) Dress modestly. Don't wear shorts, women must not wear halter-tops or have their shoulders bare, (b) Do not wear hats as they are interpreted as a sign of disrespect, (b) Do not carry things over shoulders such as backpacks, cameras etc. (c) Remove shoes when entering a house or lodge. (d) Men may sit cross-legged while women should sit with legs together and placed to the side. (e) Show respect for ceremonies by remaining seated and silent. Speak softly and do not make excessive noise as raised voices interpreted to be expressing anger. (f) Enter the village only after you have been welcomed by one of the villagers. (g) Body extremities should not be over exposed (wearing a "Sulu" would be ideal, it is available for F$10 or for hire at F$1 at Abaca Visitors Center). (h) The tradition the length of the dresses and shorts should be below the knees. (i) If offered a bowl of Yagona (Kava) clap your
hands once, take the bowl and say "Bula" to the chief and drink all the content. Hands back the bowl and clap three times to show the appreciation. (J) Ask before taking photos inside the buildings. (H) Take back your rubbish back with you.

Abaca Village Visit: A Case Study

The researcher chooses to take up a case study of Abaca Village because it has received an "Ecotourism Award for the Year 1999" by the New Zealand Government.

Abaca (pronounced as "Ambartha" had once been called NAGAGA means, "Cave." The letters ABC were interpreted by their ancestors as: A = Ai Vakatekivu means beginning, B = Bulatawa Mudu means Eternal life, C = Cakacaka Mana means Miracle work)\(^3\) has been blessed with a wide range of tropical vegetation and grassland that makes wonderful trekking route in a black volcanic mountainous landscape. Abaca Village is situated in the lap of Koroyanitu Mountain range (Mt. Evans) refer to plate- 7, entrance of Abaca village and considered as trekker's paradise. The area has beautiful tracks for nature walks through native rainforest, archaeological sites and swimming holes. The trek includes a full day hike to Mt. Koroyanitu and the village visits. Abaca village offers a rich cultural experience of Fijian highland community in a beautiful natural setting. For the village visit, visitors are expected to follow certain protocols that are provided by Visitors Center. Refer to plate- 8, the office incharge Ms. Kalesi (extreme right), and the village transporters Mr. Vijender (first from left) and Mrs. Rohimi (second from left) and the local guide Lapani (at the back) who accompanied the researcher for identifying the local flora, fauna and landmarks. Admission to Park is F$ 5 and F$ 3 for guided treks.

\(^{3}\) Abaca: Ecotourism Guidebook. Published by Japan National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation. 1999.
The village chief’s permission was taken before visiting the village. As a tradition and mark of respect a bundle of Yagona (Kava) or sevusevu was gifted to the chief. The Chief (Turaga Ni Koro) of Abaca Village - Ratu liesa Tiqe Saukitoga, with his wife and grand children (refer to plate- 9). The main attraction of the village was the traditional Fijian houses called BURE (refer to plate-10). The Bure consists of wood and grasses, the main post of which is made from VESI (hardwood tree). The wall was constructed of bamboo and roof was covered with reeds called SINA. The black sticks on top of the roof were piercing on both the sides to support the structure. The materials used for posts and wall lasts for 30 -40 years but the roof are rethatched every 5- 10 years. There was no electricity and kerosene lamps were the major source of light in most of the houses. There were a total of 86 people in Abaca Village and 14 houses that belonged to the same family.

**Rara and Lali:** Rara was the central green or grass (lawn) in the middle of the village considered as the place to perform ceremonies and festivals, such as wedding or funerals. Houses were located around the Rara (lawn). Lali (refer to plate -11) an instrument made of wood, used for the ceremonies like wedding and funerals.

**Nase Lodge:** The Nase Lodge (refer to plate -12) situated about 400 meters from the village. It has 12 bed dormitory (F$ 15 per person) with facilities like gas cooking stove, utensils, cold shower and toilet, the safe drinking water. There were barbecue facilities and meals were also provided for F$ 5 each. The Visitor Center also stocks bottled water and fresh seasonal garden produce.

**Savuione Waterfall Trek:** The trek to Savuione Waterfall (refer to plate-13) was two hours trek from the Nase Lodge. The trek route was dominated by two types of vegetation notably, tropical forests (see plate-14) and open grassland (plate- 15). The Savuione falls in the terraced gardens of old Navuratu Village ended at the inviting swimming hole below the lodge (refer to plate- 16).
Vereni Falls and Kokobula Scenic Viewpoint: The trek included a short five minutes walk to the spectacular lookout platform above Vereni Falls and then another fifteen minutes ahead on the Navuratu track to the Kokobula Scenic Viewpoint. This spot offered a magnificent view of the Park and the coastline (plate-17).

According to chief of Abaca Village- "the people of Abaca village believe that 'ecotourism' can help to protect their Vanua (land) and it will continue to provide the food, medicines and other products needed by future generations."
Field Data Analysis

Section 1:
Age group

As is the trend worldwide, the tourists coming to Fiji were mainly in the age group of 25-35 years. This age group constituted 35% of the tourists. The age groups of less than 25 years and 45 years plus comprised of 26.66% and 28.35% respectively. 10% of the tourists belong to the age group of 35-45 years.

Fig-25

Gender

The gender analysis of tourists showed higher percentage of female tourists than male. Approximately, 56.66% and 43.33% females and males respectively visited the country.

Fig-26
Nationality

Australia and New Zealand are traditional tourist generating markets due to their proximity to Fiji. These countries contributed total of 30% and 23% tourists respectively. USA contributed 23.33% and UK 16.66% of tourists. Japan contributed 3.33% and others (including Canada and Pacific countries) contribution was 3.33%.

Fig. 27

Purpose of visit

According to the surveyed data, it has been seen that the Fiji is one of the most important places for holidaying. The total of 93.33% of the tourists came exclusively for holidaying. However, 6.66% were reported for visiting friends and relatives.

Profession of tourists

The data reveals that 46.66% tourists belong to private sector notably business, architect and accountant. It was followed by researchers and students with 23.33% whereas government servants contributed only 10% of total tourists. Other professions like free lancer, retired people, housewives, carpenters, storekeeper's etc accounted for 20% of the tourists.
Attraction to visitors

Fiji is famous for Sea, Sun, Sand and Smile. The natural environment and the scenic beauty spread over the islands attracted 35.11% tourists. Fiji is famous, as 'divers paradise.' Snorkelling and diving are very popular among tourists, these activities attracted 20.6% tourists. It has been said that 'Fijian are the friendliest people on earth', for 16.03% tourists this was the reason to visit the country. Rich Fijian culture attracted 19.85% tourists. Other reasons that attracted 8.39% tourists were the climate, shopping, proximity and English speaking etc.

Section II
Mode of transport (within the island)

Boat and Cruise are two popular mode of transport that interests large number of tourists for island hopping to capture the scenic beauty of the island paradise. The data revealed that 31.86% tourist preferred to travel by boat and 7.2% tourists preferred ship (cruises). Fiji has extensive and inexpensive bus network. The local transport on the mainland included buses, taxi and flight. The buses have fairly cheap fare and open unglazed windows that stops at many villages giving opportunity to tourists to mix with locals. Based on the analyzed data it was found out that 25% tourists preferred to
travel by road (local buses). Phone cab and rental taxi are the optional transport to tour around areas on shared bases also. 18.56% tourists preferred taxi as a mode of transport. Fiji islands are well connected by internal air services. This includes airplanes, seaplanes and helicopters. 16.49% tourists chose to travel by flight.

Fig. 29

![Transportation Preferred within the Island](chart)

**Place of Stay**

The data revealed that resorts were the most preferred place of stay with 65.45% of tourists. The places that were fairly reasonable like hotels, motels, inns, paying guest accommodation, friend's house etc catered to 29.1% of tourists. 5.45% of tourists preferred to stay in luxury hotels.

Fig. 30

![Places of Stay](chart)
Activities performed

The underwater topography with vast coral reef makes snorkelling and diving as the single largest tourist attraction. 35.89% tourists performed these activities. The beautiful sandy beaches make the place a beach sports enthusiasts dream locale, contributing 24.79% of tourists. Boating/rafting attracted 23.93% tourists. The activities like nature walk/bird watching, dolphin watching and camping preferred by 9.4%, 3.42% and 2.56% of the tourists respectively.

Duration of stay

It was found out that tourists preferred to stay longer duration in Fiji islands. 23.33% tourists stayed for 7-9 days, followed by 21.66% in the category of more than 12 days with of exceptions of even 23 days. In the category of 4-6 and 10-12 days stay, the tourist's percentage was 20% each, whereas only 15% of tourist stayed for 1-3 days. The average length of stay was calculated as 7-9 days.

Safety

Contrary to the expectations and recent political instability nearly all the tourists interviewed felt safe in the country.

Section-III

This section of the questionnaire was open-ended. The questions that were asked in this section were basically opinion based. Questions asked in this section were particularly about the improvement of the facilities, length of stay and the willingness of tourists to pay higher amount for the quality experience.

Would you spend more days if the area of your interest is provided by more facilities/services?

50% of the tourists responded a desire to stay for a longer duration if the facilities were improved, 26% of the tourists were not ready for a stay longer than their current stay.
25% of the tourists were not able to relate their length of stay with the improved facilities. This indicates that there is a likelihood of increased stay length with improved facilities though this alone might not be a conclusive parameter.

Fig-31

If these facilities/services were developed would you pay higher amount for the quality tourism?

44.68% tourists were ready to pay higher amounts for the quality experiences if the facilities were improved, While 55.32% tourists rejected the idea of paying more for the same. This is an indicator that the destination may not be viewed as value-for-money.

Fig-32

Which facility, if improved, will increase the quality of your experience?
25.9% of tourists wanted improved information signs and centers, while 20.37% desired better restaurant and bar facilities, 16.66% wanted more visitor centers, 16.66% desired better and concise brochures, whereas, 14.81% show the need for improved hiking/trail guides, while 5.55% desired for better picnics. The response was mixed but indicated a marked preference towards better hotel/restaurants to be made available for visitors. Lack of good brochures/guidebooks also appeared as an area of improvement money spot with the current infrastructure.

Fig-33

How much you have spend plan to spend during your stay?

Majority of the tourists i.e., 48% spent between 500-1000F$, followed by 21.67% spending between 1000-1500F$, whereas, 6.67% of the tourists spent between 1500-2000F$, 3.33% of tourists spent between 2000-2500F$, While 5%, 8.33%, 1.67% and 5% of the tourists spent between 2500-3000F$, 3000-3500F$, 3500-4000F$ and >4000F$ respectively. Fiji isn’t an expensive destination for the tourists although the opportunities to spend more are also limited.
Fig-34

Approximate Spending by the Tourists

You have visited the country as-

38.33% of the tourist visited the country as backpackers, 30% visited as non-backpacker, 20% of the tourists came in a group organized by the tour operator. 6.67% of the tourists came in a group without the package tour, 5% of the tourists had other reasons like visiting friends and family, conference, research purpose, time-share owner, family group.

Fig-35

Category of Tourists
Analysis

Tourists category and average spending:

An analysis of the spending pattern reveals that the backpackers typically spend the least on their sojourns. The group tour operators by virtue of bulk booking etc. reduce the spending considerably.

Table-36

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Fig-36