Chapter Six

TOURISM PRODUCTS AND TOURIST DESTINATIONS OF KERALA

Kerala is situated between the ever green Western Ghats in the East and deep blue Arabian Sea in the West and it is a beautiful landscape, showing unique geographical diversity distinct from other States of India. The God that made Kerala had green thumbs and is a gift of sea and mountains. It has a coastal belt of about 580 Kms along with the Arabian Sea from South to North. The coastal belt is covered with innumerable backwaters, lagoons and canals. The backwaters are the backbone of tourism of the State. The State is enriched with abundant coconut groves and green rice field. It is rich in minerals and the most important is monazite which is found rich on its coastal belt.

The Western Ghats form almost a continuous mountain wall on the East, separating the State from its neighbors. The highest Peak, Anamalai is situated in Idukki district, which has an elevation of 8837ft. The high range area offer cool, misty mountains, undulating meadows and picturesque valleys. Here, vast areas are under the plantations of coffee, tea and cardamom which attract tourists and Government promoted here plantation tourism. Other places of high range area are covered by dense forests, extensive ridges and deep ravines of the Ghats have sheltered from mainland invaders.

There is a net work of forty four rivers. Forty one West blowing rivers originate from the eastern mountains. In between the sea and mountain, the surface gathers into slopes and clustering hills, with numerous valleys and waterfalls, have also bestowed upon this region an ambience that is completely different from the State’s other scenic locations. In between the mountain and coastal belt, from East to West, there is undulating midland. This area covers rivers and streams and presents a scene of the delightful landscape. The State is surrounded by Arabian Sea in the West, Karnataka State in the North and North-East and Tamil Nadu on the East and the Indian Ocean in the South. Kerala is one of the smallest States in India.

Kerala is a charming State of India because of her arresting natural
beauty and greenery. The World Travel and Tourism Council rated Kerala as the second fastest growing tourism destination in the World.² Recently, Kerala tourism has been gaining more popularity and global attention. This is because of her amazing natural beauty. The Government of Kerala is committed to develop tourism in every respect. Kerala has been recognized as the best tourism brand in the World. This is achieved by introducing variety of tourism products, developing new centers of attraction and updating the existing major centers. Presently, foreigners identify Kathakali alone as the symbol of Kerala culture. It is true that there would be no other place in the World like Kerala in case of art diversity. All these art forms are colourful as well as attractive.³

The beauty of Kerala is admired by many writers and tourists who have experienced and enjoyed the wonderful experience of this land. Conde Nast Traveller declared Kerala “one of the 10 best destinations in the World.” National geographic Traveller selected Kerala as “one of the 50 destinations of a lifetime.” Time featured Kerala in its “Travel Watch” section. The Weekend Financial Times, London celebrated Kerala’s “dreamy lagoons, curving waterways, damp paddy fields, swaying greenery and singular beautiful people.” In a cover story, Geo Saison, Germany, called Kerala “Mecca of the oldest and holistic health system”. Three Sixty Degree, UK, unveiled the delights of a boat trip in Kerala. Travel Agent, USA, featured Kerala in a cover story as “a place unlike anything else that Americans have experienced elsewhere in India.⁴

Bill McKibben, best selling socio-environmental author, National Geographic Traveller opined “Kerala stands out as the Mount Everest of social development; there’s truly no place like it”.⁵

Keith Bellows- Chief Editor, National Geographic Traveller said, “Terrific trip-all too short, Thanks to all in Kerala- and on the boat-for introducing me in person to me of the World’s places of a life time. I’ll be back”.⁶

Sir Paul McCartney, Former Beatle, said, “Many thanks for a wonderful stay in the beautiful State of Kerala. You have helped make our trip
most magical and we thank you for all your efforts. It is truly God’s Own Country”.7

In the words of Heather Mills, ex model, “This has been the best birth day I have ever had in my life. I was mesmerized by the incredible display of jasmine, marigold, roses, carnation and many others. The view under the stars was breathtaking. We saw four shooting stars. I have travelled the World, but never have experienced anything quite like this. This is our first visit to Kerala, a magical experience.”8

Joseph Kennedy, Nephew of John. F. Kennedy opinioned, ‘Thank you so very much for a wonderful and memorable trip to Kerala. We had a fantastic time. And the only things more beautiful than the views were the people who helped us. Thanks again so very much.”9

Salman Rushdie, The Moor’s Last Sigh said the following words about Kerala “The Jeep-road to the Spice Mountains bumps and grinds past rice paddies, red-plantations trees, and roadside carpets of green and red capsicums laid out to try in the sun: through cashew and areca-nut orchards and up, upto the kingdoms of cardmom and cumin, to the shadow of young coffee plants in flower, to the terraces of tea that look like giant green tiled roofs, and to the empire of Malabar pepper above all. Early in the morning the bulbuls sings, working elephants amble past, munching amiably at the vegetation”10

Maqbool Fida Hussain, renowned artist said, “I have got a lot of images of Kerala in my mind since my first visit in the 1960’s. Visually, Kerala is rich. Here as people wear mostly white, you can see the human beings in real form without colours”11All the appreciations are based on the beauty of the State and variety of tourism products available which are not seen elsewhere.

Kerala tourism is built and developed in the strong foundation of attractive natural environment. In addition to this, other attractions made in the natural environment like backwater tourism, Ayurvedic health tourism, wildlife sanctuaries, ecotourism, tourist villages and picnic centres, forest tourism, adventure tourism, farm and plantation tourism etc are some other attractions to the tourist. Moreover, cultural attractions like palaces, museums,
historical and cultural centre, art forms, fairs and festivals, handicrafts, pilgrim centres, amusement parks etc are capable of increasing the density of tourist arrivals in the State. Low cost of living, literate, cultured and polite people, political stability, better law and order, free from terrorism activities etc. are the added advantages of the State for tourism development.

The important tourist destinations and attractions notified by the Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Destinations</th>
<th>Attractions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Thiruvananthapuram</td>
<td>Thiruvananthapuram: Secretariat, Sree Padmanabha Swami Temple, Kuthiramalika, Museum etc.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Kovalam</td>
<td>Crescent-shaped, internationally renowned beaches</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Ponmudi</td>
<td>Beautiful Hill Station</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Poovar</td>
<td>Fishing Harbour</td>
<td></td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Varkala</td>
<td>It has one of the beautiful beaches in Kerala; Sivagiri Mutt, Janardhana Swami Temple etc. are situated here</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kollam</td>
<td>Kollam: One of the famous ancient ports, Kollam is famous for cashew nut factories, Ashtamudi Lake, Historical Temples, and Neendakara Harbour etc.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Thenmala - Palaruvi</td>
<td>India’s First Eco-Tourism Project &amp; Palaruvi Waterfalls</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Pathanamthitta</td>
<td>Aranmula: This backwater tourist destination is the land of Snake Boats, the famous Aranmulakkannadi (Metal Mirror), the Aranmula Village, Vinjana Kala Vedi etc.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Erumeli</td>
<td>Erumeli Petta Thullal (A Religious Dance), Resting Place to Sabarimala</td>
<td></td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Alappuzha</td>
<td>Alappuzha: ‘The Paddy Bowl of Kerala’ Alappuzha is known as The Venice of the East for its spectacular backwaters, coir industries, beaches etc. are other attractions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Kottayam</td>
<td>Kumarakom : Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary, Vembanad Lake</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
13. **Idukki** Munnar: Tea plantations; Thick forests, Neelakkurinji, Rolling hills, Nilgiri Thar etc.

14. Thekkady: Periyar Wild life Sanctury, Famous Boating Centre

15. Wagamon: Beautiful Hills, Tea Plantations


17. Bhothathankettu: Scenic damsite with boating facilities. It is situated in a vast virgin forest.

18. Cherai Beach: A famous beach of Kerala where you can occasionally see Dolphins. Coconut Plantation is another attraction.

19. Fort Kochi: Jewish Synagogue, Dutch Palace, Bolgatty Island etc.

20. Kalady: The Birth place of Aadi Sankaracharya, the ancient saint, famous Sanskrit University.

21. Kochi City: The Queen of the Arabian Sea this is a vibrant city in Kerala, Chinese Fishing Net.

22. Maradu: Backwaters, Convention Centre

23. Paravoor: Heritage Zone


25. Chalakkudi: Amusement Parks

26. Chavakkad: Beach, scenic beauty

27. Guruvayur: Famous Sri Krishna Temple, Punnathoorkotta (The elephant training center), Mammiyoor Temple.

28. **Palakkad** Malampuzha: Malampuzha Dam, Garden, the Famous statue’Yakshi’ (A character in Kerala Mythology), Rock Garden, Rope way etc.

29. Nelliampathy: The hills of Sahyadri (Western Ghats), Forests, Orange Plantations etc.

30. Parambikkulam: Wildlife Sanctuary, Boating Facility, Erumadam (Tree House), Thick Forest

31. **Malappuram** Kodikuthimala: Beautiful Hills

33. Kozhikode: Iringal - Kottakkal: Kunhalimarakkar’s Memorial is situated in Iringal. Kottakkal is famous for Ayurvedic Treatment
34. Kakkayam: Kakkayam Dam, Adventure Tourism Facilities
35. Kadalundi: Bird Sanctuary, Kadalundi River
36. Kozhikode City: Beautiful Beaches, Wildlife sanctuaries, Rivers etc.
37. Kappad: Vasco-da-Gama, the first European came to India, landed here.
38. Peruvannamoozhi: Hills, Dam, Boating Facilities, Historical Plantations
39. Thusharagiri: Waterfalls
41. Kannur: Meenkunnu–Payyambalam: Famous Beaches in Kannur
42. Muzhupilangad: The only Drive-in Beach in Kerala.
43. Parassinikkadavu: Pilgrim Centre, Backwaters.
44. Kasaragod: Bekal: Bekal Fort, Beach

Tourism Products of Kerala

Kerala is famed as God’s own country. The unique geographical features and friendly climate have made it one of the most sought after tourist destinations in Asia. Magnificent waterfalls, endless shoreline with serene beaches, sprawling plantations and paddy fields, Ayurvedic health resorts, tranquil stretches of emerald backwaters, ever green forests, lush hill stations and exotic wildlife, divine cuisine, literate people, enriching art forms, historic and cultural monuments, magical fairs and festivals are the unique features of the State. Most of the tourism products of the State are based on nature. The diversity of tourism products are capable of satisfying all types of tourists, namely; children, youngsters, couples, aged people, pilgrims, illiterate and educated people.

The very unique feature of Kerala as a tourist destination is that almost all the tourism products are available here- an Ayurvedic resort to rejuvenate the body and mind or a house boat cruise through backwaters or getting the
feel of a divine atmosphere by visiting pilgrim centres or simply considering oneself as a part of the eco-system by opting an eco tourist destination- yes everything is available here. There is something for everyone. Whether it is being intrepid treks through tiger reserves, relaxing on the beach, taking a backwater cruise, or relaxing at a hill station, visitors can be certain that they will be captured by the natural beauty. The wide array of tourist products in Kerala makes the choice easier for the tourists. What adds to the glory of her tourism is that all her products are nature’s gift with a serene and rich natural ambience. The tourism products are divided into two; primary tourism products and secondary tourism products.

**Primary Tourism Products of Kerala**

The primary tourism products are the heart line of the tourism of the State. These products are the distinctive feature of Kerala tourism which separates the State from other States of India in connection with tourism development. The land of Kerala is highly potential for tourism development. The primary tourism products of the State are natural environment product, symbiotic environment product, manmade environment product and cultural environment product.

I Natural Environment Products

Natural environment are those features such as air, water, flora, fauna, soil, natural landscape, or geographical features which form tourism product such as beaches, waterfalls, rivers, forest, deserts, hill stations and climate. Products based on natural environment are known as natural environment products. In the present study, natural environment product includes beach tourism, waterfalls, hill stations, rivers, monsoon tourism and climate.

1. Beach Tourism

Kerala is situated in the South-western part of India, on the side of Arabian Sea, covering a coastline of about 600- km. The coastal area has attracted visitors since ancient times. It offers a variety of options to the tourist and invites their attention from all over the World. Most of the finest beaches of the country are in Kerala. The charming beaches of Kerala, particularly,
Kovalam beach attract the attention of foreign tourists from the beginning stage of tourism development of the State.

Beaches in Kerala offer the tourists the unique experience of sunbath and sea bath. There are two dozens of beaches identified as tourist destination, perhaps, no other State of the country can offer this much number of beaches. The identified beach tourism destinations in Kerala are

**Kovalam**

Kerala is known among foreign tourists in the name famous Kovalam beach. So this beach has a top position in the beach tourism destinations. This beautiful beach is situated 16 km away from Thiruvananthapuram, the capital of Kerala. The destination comprises of three crescent-shaped beaches, separated by rocky outcroppings. Among the three small beaches, the lighthouse beach in the southernmost part is most popular.

![Figure 6.1](https://www.keralatourism.org)

**Kovalam Beach**

The destination offers a variety of entertainment activities like catamaran ride, snorkeling, sunset viewing and cycling on the beach. Deep waters, stretching hundreds of meters, are ideal for swimming.
Shankhumugham

This hot spot beach is situated in the immediate vicinity of Thiruvananthapuram city and near to the international airport; hence access to here is very easy. There is a 35 m long huge sculpture of mermaid (*matsya kanyaka*) in the shore of the beach. Moreover, a traffic training park for children and a restaurant shaped like a starfish is in the adjacent to the beach.

Poovar

Poovar, the stunningly beautiful beach is located 12 km South of Kovalam in the Thiruvananthapuram district.

Chowara

This small fishing village is situated 8km South of Kovalam in the Thiruvananthapuram district. This place is also famous for *Ayurvedic* and heritage resorts. This charming white sandy beach attracts tourists from all parts of the World.

*Figure 6.2*

Poovar Source: [www.keralatourism.org](http://www.keralatourism.org)

Here, the sea and tranquil backwaters of Poovar are separated only by a narrow sand bank. This beach is situated very near to the Neyyar wildlife Sanctuary.

Varkala - Papanasham

Varkala beach is known as papanasham beach because it is believed
that a bathe here in the sea redeems all sins. This beach is situated 45 km away from Thiruvananthapuram district. The wide area of fairly high level ground on the top of the sleep cliffs also offers a wonderful view of the sea.

Kollam Beach

This beautiful beach is located 2 km from Kollam. A children’s park is also in the beach. Kollam is famous for backwater tourism also.

Thirumullavaram

This beautiful beach is located 6 km North of Kollam, the most industrialist district in the State. This beach is isolated from other tourist destinations.

Thangassery

This beach is also located 5 km from Kollam. Thangassery means gold village. This historic beach village is important because of Old Portuguese fort and churches built by British during the 18th century. The most outstanding attraction of this beach is the lighthouse constructed by British, in a height of 144 ft. in the year 1519.

Alappuzha Beach

Alappuzha is known as the Venice of the East. Apart from backwaters, Alappuzha beach attracts a number of tourists. Old lighthouse and a 137-year-old pier which extends into the sea are major attractions of here associated with beach tourism.

Fort Kochi Beach

Kochi is known as the ‘Queen of the Arabian Sea.’ The beach is located 21 km away from Ernakulam. Kochi’s attractions are manifold. From the Chinese fishing nets and heritage buildings of Fort Kochi to the old spice markets of Mattancherry and the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Ernakulam, vibrant with hotels, cinema halls, shops and restaurants, the city combines the finest in tradition and modernity. Overlooking the Arabian Sea, it offers a very beautiful view of sunset.
Cherai Beach

This serine beach is situated 23 km away from Ernakulam. This beach bordering Vypeen Island and is a best place for swimming. Sometimes, Dolphins can be found here.

Natika Beach

This picturesque beach is located 24 km from Trissur which is the cultural centre of Kerala. This sandy beach is a hot spot to the tourists.

Vallikunnu Beach

This beach is situated very close to Kadalundi bird sanctuary and 40 kms away from Malappuram. A beautiful beach resort constructed in the middle of a coconut grove is an additional attraction to this place.

Padinjarekkara Beach

This marvellous beach is situated 5 km long from Chemravattom, near Ponnani in Malappuram. A visitor can experience the unusual breathtaking view of the intersection of the Arabian Sea, Bharathapuzha and Tirur Puzha. This place is well-known for bird watching also.

Kozhikode Beach

This beach is situated just 1.5 km away from the city and is a hot spot of sunset viewers. The beach retained her old-World beauty and charm by displaying the ancient lighthouse.

Beypore Beach

Beypore, one of the important trading centres of very old Kerala. This beautiful beach is located in the banks of Chaliar River. The history of Beypore is connected with construction of Arab trading vessels. It has a tradition of 1500 years.

Kappad Beach

Kappad beach is situated 16 km away from Kozhikode. This beach has a place in the trading history of Kerala. Vasco da Gama arrived in this port on
Payyoli Beach

This beach is an ideal place for swimming and situated 40 km North from Kozhikode. The shore of the beach is so quiet.

Vadakara Sandbanks Beach

This beach is located 50 km away from Kozhikode. The beautiful Kottakal River merges into the sea is a major attraction of this place.

Payyambalam Beach

This beach is an important one among the beaches of Northern Kerala. It is situated just 2 km from Kannur. The sculpture of mother and child, beautiful landscape and garden make this beach more attractive.

Meenkunnu Beach

This beach is situated 12 km away from Kannur and is a paradise of tourist. The golden sand and surf make the beach more attractive.

Kizhunna Beach

This beach is an isolated one which covers a distance of 11 km from Kannur. It is a spectacular stretch of sand.

Muzhappilangad Beach

This picturesque beach is the paradise of swimmers. It is the only Kerala’s drive-in-beach. Here, a visitor can experience and enjoy a variety of options and entertainments; adventure sports like paragliding, parasailing, micro-lite flights and a variety of water sport options. This serene beach is located 15 km away from Kannur.

Bekal Fort Beach

Bekal Fort Beach is an important beach in Northern Kerala and attracts many foreign tourists. This marvellous beach is located just 1 km away from
Kasaragod. This scenic shore offers a spectacular view of the great historic Bekal Fort.

**Kappil Beach**

This unpolluted and secluded beach is situated 2 km away from Bekal. The beach is fringed by palms and occasional casuarina groves. Pallikunnam temple offers spiritual salvation, which is situated 2 km away from here and near by Kodi Cliff promises panoramic views of the sea.

**Kanwatheertha**

This beach is located in the North end part of Kerala, and 3 km away from Manjeswaram. It is a paradise of swimmers. On the banks of the beach, there is a large swimming pool like formation of the sea.

**2. Hill Stations**

The Western Ghats of Kerala is really a gift to the State. This area plays an important role in determining the climate of the State. The clouds formed from the Arabian Sea slowly go to the East and then the mountain in the East stops it which results in heavy rain. The Western Ghats of Kerala form almost a continuous mountain wall on the East which makes the land a separate entity from the neighboring State and protect it from the mainland invaders. Due to heavy rain, thick forest are grown, which assist in getting a friendly climate. Moreover, the forest is a heaven of thousands of wild animals and birds.

The hill stations of Kerala are clothed in green all through the year. This place is rich in Plantations of pepper, cloves, cardamom, and cinnamon and nutmeg. A large area of this part is used for cultivation of tea, coffee and spices. Eventhough, the cultivators are interested in the output of these estates, travellers and tourists are attracted by the arresting natural beauty and greenery of these hill stations. The green hills are really unique in Kerala.
All the hill resorts of Kerala offer the most magical experience of nature in all its virgin beauty. The hill stations like Munnar, Peermede and Nelliampathy are steeped in nostalgia with the history of the days of Raj and the British built beautiful bungalows, cottages and churches resemble British style. In the hill stations, so many valleys, rivers and wildlife sanctuaries are located and are a haven for trekkers which offer a variety of trekking trials. The most important hill stations of Kerala are

**Munnar**

This picturesque hill station is situated 60 km away from Idukki. Sandwiched at the confluence of three mountain streams- Nallathanni, Muthirappuzha and Kundala, it has a height of 1600 m above the sea level. This place was the summer resort of the erstwhile British Government in south India. Sprawling tea plantations, winding lines, picture-book towns, undulating valleys, trekking, golfing and boating and holiday facilities make this hill station as a famous resort town. Near to this hill station, India’s highest tea estate, Kolukkumalai and the home of endangered Nilgiri tahr, Eravikulam National Park is located. Munnar and its surrounding environs
abound in waterfalls that are particularly striking just after rains. The area is very famous on account of scenery.

**Mattuppetti**

This picturesque hill station is a favourite place for film shooting. It is located at a height of 1700 m from sea level and 13 km away from Munnar. The lake and a dam situated here is a beautiful picnic centre. Boating through the lake is an ever remembering experience. Moreover, the famous Indo-Swiss Livestock Farm Project is also located here. More than 100 varieties of high-yielding cattle are reared here.

*Figure 6.4*

![Mattuppetti Iddukki](www.keralatourism.org)

**Ponmudi**

This hill station is situated near the capital city of Kerala, Thriuvananthapuram and located 61 km away from here. It has a height of 915 m from sea level
Wonderful trekking trails make this hill station a paradise of trekking enthusiasts. Here there is a deer park and wild orchids grown sufficiently on the hillsides naturally decorated with winding wooded paths.

**Agasthyakoodam**

This hill station is situated 70 km away from Thiruvananthapuram at a height of 1868 m. It is the haven of rare herbs and medical plants. The medical plants seen here have been seen only in Himalaya. The aborigines here are not interested in the presence of strange women as they believe that the mythological sage Agasthya, who is believed to live in the forest, was a chronic bachelor.

**Devikulam**

Devikulam is located 7 km from Munnar, in Idukki district, is famous for excellent flora and fauna and cool mountain air. This place is attracted by tourist because of idyllic hill station with its velvet lawns. The highest river in this region, Devikulam Lake is located nearby. According to local folklore, Sita is believed to have taken a dip in the pond nearby. Identified as a holy
place, a small temple has been constructed here in her honour.

**Rajamala**

Rajamala is located 15 km from Munnar. This beautiful hill station is famous for the endangered goat- the Nilgiri Tahr. About half of the World population of mountain goat is here. The rich flora and fauna are the specialty of this area.

**Pattumala**

Pattumala or Silken hill is located 28 km away from west of Thekkady. This place has an ethereal beauty with its lofty peaks, green expansion of tea plantations and little streams. A wonderful and beautiful floor garden is also located near by this hill station.

**Pullumedu**

This marvellous hill station is situated 43 km from Thekkady and 26 km from Periyar. The famous Ayyappan Temple, Sabarimala is located nearby, the temple and the Makarajyothi illuminations at the shrine are seen from here. A journey along the Periyar River is really an experience. The rare flora and fauna and velvet lawns are a stunning view of the rolling hills draped in lush greenery.

**Marayoor**

Marayoor, located 40 km from Munnar, is known to the outside World in the name of its famous natural sandalwood forests. This is the only place in the World where a large area of sandalwood forest is found, which maintains such quality, not found elsewhere in the World. The climate of the region is also something special, cool, misty, and more or less equal to the climate in England. The weather condition of the region is not similar to Munnar, even though, this place is very near to it. The total climate and whether changes are similar to that of Thamil Nadu. A large variety of fruits and vegetables are grown here. This place tells the story of the pre historic rock paintings, the caves (muniyara), dolmenoids and therefore historically important. Dolmenoids were made of four stones placed on edges. It is covered by another stone on the top, called, cap stone. The children’s park, under the
canopy of a big single banyan tree is an important added attraction of this place. This place is anthropologically significant also. The tribes and inhabitants of this area are similar to the Australian aboriginal tribe.

**Peermedu**

This marvelous hill station is situated 35 km away from Thekkady in Idukki district. Abound estates of tea, cardamom, coffee; rubber and eucalyptus surround this charming hill station.

*Figure 6.6*

![Image](source: www.keralatourism.org)

Peermedu is known to the name of the Sufi saint, Peer Mohammed who is believed to be the first trader of spices in the region. This picturesque hill station is an everlasting experience.

**Vagamon**

Vagamon, an ideal holiday destination, dotted with tea gardens, covered with grass hills, velvet lawns and cool mountain air, is located 25 km away from Peermedu in Idukki district. This picturesque hill station is situated 1100 m above the sea level. The exotic flora and fauna, pristine forest and verdant meadows make the significance of the place in the tourism map.
Bhoothathankettu

The name of the place is so called because according to mythology, the natural fortification of forests and hills was built by bhoothams. Bhoothams means spirits or ghosts and Kettu means constructed. It is believed that the forests and hills of that place were constructed by ghosts overnight. This picnic spot is famous for trekking. This dam site is popular for boating also. The famous Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, Thattekkad are located very close to this place. This place is located 50 km away from Ernakulam.

Kodanad

This hill area is situated 20 km away from Ernakulam. This place is popular in India as one of the elephant training centre in India. Elephant is an integral part of Indian mythology and culture.

Nelliyampathy

Nelliyampathy is locally known as the ‘poor man’s Ootty’.

Figure 6.7

Palakkad

It is situated 75 km southeast of Palakkad, is a holiday destination because of attractions of coffee, tea, and cardamom plantations, abundance of flora and fauna, sublime scenery and cooling climate. The picturesque hill station reached by traversing 23 hairpins curves. The dense forests make this place an
ideal house of wild animals.

**Attappady**

Attappady is located 38 km away from Mannarkad, in the Palakkad district. It is a place of mixture of forests, rivers and mountain, situated in the North eastern side of the district. The place is more popular on account of one of the largest tribal settlements in the State. A large number of tribals like the Irulas and Mudugas live here.

**Nilambur**

Nilambur, a notable destination in the Malappuram district, is famous for teak plantation. This region is known among the World in the name of Conolly’s Plot- the World’s oldest teak plantation and bamboo woods. The place is also significant for its tribal settlement. It is the original home of the oldest aboriginal tribe of Kerala, the Cholai Naikars.

**Vythiri**

Vythiri is in Wayanad district and is located 60 km from Kozhikode, is a place of gargling streams, hills and valleys, lakes, gorges and ravines, verdant hills that nudge distant clouds, dreamy dawns and misty evenings are the wonders of the region. Pookot Lake is situated one km away from here. Mist-capped mountains and breathtaking scenery of here are very fantastic experience to the tourist.

**Thusharagiri**

Thusharagiri is a beautiful mist-capped peak, located 50 km away from Kozhikode. This area is surrounded by evergreen forest and plantations of rubber, pepper, arecanut, spices and ginger. The waterfalls of the hills are very marvellous which attract thousands of tourists. The evergreen forest is teeming with exotic wildlife.

**Lakkidi**

Lakkidi is another beautiful hill station in Wayanad, located 5 km South of Vythiri. This hill station is situated 700 m above the sea level.
Gargling streams, valleys, lakes, luxuriant forests and lofty peaks are the added attraction of this place. ‘Apart from the stunning views of the surrounding plains, Lakkidi’s other claim to fame is the chain tree. Local lore has it that when a British engineer was unsuccessful in his efforts to find a passage through the dense forests of Wayanad, a young tribal called Karinthandan guided him. Unwilling to share credit for the discovery, the engineer killed the native. Soon, Karinthandan’s troubled spirit began to hunt travellers on the new route. To pacify the vengeful soul, a priest chained the spirit to a tree. Only then did the hunting cease. A heavy chain anchored to the ground and placed around the stout branches seems to lend credence to the story.’

Pythal Mala

This marvellous hill station is sandwiched between the Kerala and Karnataka border and 65 km away from Kannur. This picturesque hill station is rich in flora and fauna and there is a 6 km trek to the top of the hill.

Kottancherry

This hill station is a dreamy World of ecotourist and nature lovers. Located 30 km North East of Kanhangad in Kasaragod is rich in its rainforests. The famous Kaveri River is flowing very near to this hill station and is famous for trekking.

Ranipuram

In the earlier days, this place is known as Madathumala. This beautiful hill station is located 85 km from Kasaragod district. This place is also popular on account of its trekking trials and different types of vegetation. Gurgling streams, monsoon forest, shoal woods and grasslands are the feast to the eyes.

2. Climate

Climate of the destination is very important factor for attracting tourists. Tourists prefer a particular destination at the time when the climate is most favourable to him. Tourists like to enjoy a climate which is very friendly
to them. Climate of Kerala itself is a prime attraction of tourism in Kerala. The climate of the State is very unique which is very different from the neighbouring State because of the geographical position of the State. The mountains in the Western Ghats play an important role in determining the climate. The eastern part of Kerala is mainly hill stations and always has a cool climate.

Salubrious climate is uniqueness of Kerala. The temperature is neither too high nor too low. Western Ghats have profound influence in maintaining moderate climate region suitable for tourism for the entire Kerala. Sunbath is an important attraction of beach tourists to the State. Monsoon tourism is another tourism product launched recently by Kerala Tourism, in which climate is the ultimate factor.17

In Kerala, tourist arrival is mainly based on climate. The peak season is winter season between October to January. December is perhaps the coolest month with the lowest night temperature. Most of the tourists visiting Kerala are attracted by this climate. June to September is the monsoon season. During this period, the tourist arrival is comparatively low, even though, monsoon tourism is strongly promoted. During summer season, the tourist arrival is greater than monsoon season. Regarding the preference for the four main factors, the tourist choice to visit Kerala was in the order of (1) natural beauty, (2) good beaches, (3) climate condition and (4) historic value and culture. A large proportions of tourists from U.S.A., Germany and France, (in order) showed interest in the factor, favourable climate.18 Overall the climate itself is an essential attraction in the case of tourism in Kerala.19

3. Waterfalls

Forest resource is a major factor of tourism development. The State is rich in ever green forest; perhaps no other States in India possess such speciality. The forests of the Western Ghats are punctuated with large and small waterfalls that roar, gurgle and splash down the mountain side. Almost all these scintillating cascades are the venues for picnics and excursions round the year.20
Waterfalls of Kerala are very attractive and beautiful. The rain in the Western Ghats passes through the forest and rock through which so many wonderful waterfalls are formed. The flowing surf of waterfalls looks like milk and its singing sound are melodious and most attractive to the tourists. The important waterfalls of Kerala are

**Palaruvi Waterfalls**

This marvellous waterfall is located in the Southern region of Kerala, 75 km from Kollam.

*Figure 6.8*

Palaruvi

It flows from rock, a height of 300 ft. Palaruvi means stream of milk. This waterfall resembles flowing of milk.

**Athirappalli Waterfalls**

This picnic spot is located in 63 km away from Thrissur. The waterfall flows from 80 ft. at the entrance to the sholayar ranges.
Vazhachal Waterfalls

Vazhachal waterfall is situated very near to Athirapally waterfalls, just 5 km away. It is a part of Chalakudy River and very close to the evergreen forest. Among the waterfalls of Kerala, Athirapally and Vazhachal waterfalls are famous because of easy access to the tourists.

Attukad

This waterfall is situated between Munnar and Pallivasal in the Idukki district. It is a land of evergreen hills and is a feast for the eyes. This place is famous for trekking also.

Waterfalls of Munnar

Munnar is a beautiful hill station. So many small waterfalls are formed just after rain. Among the waterfalls of Munnar, power house waterfalls, situated on the way to Thekkady from Munnar is spectacular.

Thommankuthu

This famous seven steps waterfall is located in Idukki District, 17 km
away from Thodupuzha. Bathing in waterfalls, forest trekking, night camping and pedal boating are the possible entertainments staging here. This hot spot waterfall is an attraction of thousands of tourists.

**Thusharagiri**

This beautiful waterfall is located 50 km away from Kozhikode and near to Vythiri in Wayanad. In this hilly region excellent trekking tracks are there.

**Meenmutty**

Located 29 km from Kalpatta in Wayanad district is famous for this waterfall from about 1000 ft above in three stages, perhaps this is the most beautiful waterfalls in wayanad district.

**Chethalayam**

This is also located in wayanad district and is the most spectacular one and situated 12 km east of Sulthan Bathery, is a lovely place of trekkers.

**Sentinel Rock Waterfall**

Situated 22 km away from Kalpatta in Wayanad, is a wonderful waterfall of Wayand. This waterfall is locally known as Soochipara. So many tourists visit here because of slow and beautiful flowing of it. The pool at the foot of the falls is ideal for a quick dip.

4. **Rivers of Kerala**

There are forty four rivers in Kerala, out of which forty one are westwards flowing and the other three are flowing eastwards. All rivers other than Kabani, Bhavani and Pambar are westwards flowing. The westwards flowing rivers ultimately reach into the backwaters of Kerala or into the Arabian Sea

1. **East Flowing Rivers**

The three eastwards flowing rivers; Kabani, Bhavani and Pambar rise in Kerala and flow eastwards, Kabini into Karnataka and the other two into Tamil Nadu
Kabani

Kabani River originates from Wayanad Hills of Kerala and flows to Karnataka. It has a distance of 56 km. The main tributaries of this river are Noolppuzha, Panamarampuzha and Mananthavadi River.

Figure 6.10

Source: www.wikipedia.org

A view of Kabani River from Kabanigiri, Kerala

Before entering into the State of Kerala, this river is separated into two and forms an island which is called Kuruva Island. This island has a width of 1920 sq. km. It flows eastward to join the Kaveri River at Tirumakudalu Narasipura in Karnataka, which empties into the Bay of Bengal.

Bhavani River

This river originates from Western Ghats of Kerala and which has a length of 29 km. It is the only river in Kerala and the flow starts from Tamil Nadu and ends at Tamil Nadu. Varakayar and shishuvani are its tributaries.

Pampar

113
This river originates from Devikulam Taluk of Edukki district and travels a distance of 29 km and becomes empty in Kaveri River. This river is also known as Amaravathy River when it enters into Tamil Nadu. Eravikulam River, Thenaar and Myladippuzha are its tributaries.

2. West Flowing Rivers

The westwards flowing rivers in Kerala and their length in the order in km are Periyar River (244), Bharatapuzha River (209), Pamba River (176), Chaliyar River (169), Chalakudy River (169), Parambikulam River, Kadalundy River (130), Achankoil River (128), Kallada River (121), Muvattupuzha River (121), Valapattanam River (110), Chandragiri River (105), Manimala River (90), Vamanapuram River (88), Kuppam River (88), Meenachil River (78), Kuttiyadi River (74), Karamana River (68), Shiriya River (68), Karingode River (64), Ithikkara River (56), Neyyar River (56), Mahé River (54), Keecheri River (51), Perumba River (51), Uppala River (50), Karuvanoor River (48), Kurumali River, Anjarakkandi River (48), Tirur River (48), Neeleshwaram River (46), Pallikkal River (42), Kallayi River (40), Korapuzha River (40), Mogral River (34), Kaveripuzha River (31), Thanikkudam River (29), Manam River (27), Thalassery River (28), Chittary River (25), Ramapuram River (19), Ayiroor River (17) and Bangra Manjeswara River (16)

The important westwards blowing rivers and their tributaries in Kerala are

Periyar

Periyar has a distance of 244 Km which is the longest river in the State of Kerala and originated from the Sivagiri hills of the Western Ghats range and it flows through the village of Neeleshwaram into Vembanad Lake and empties to the Arabian Sea. Its tributaries are Edamala River, Cheruthoni River, Mullayar River, Muthirapuzha River and Perinjankutti River. This
river is a major source of water for drinking, irrigation and for producing electricity.

**Cheruthoni River**

Cheruthoni River is a hamlet on the Cheruthoni River: a major tributary of the Periyar River. Cheruthoni is part of Vazhathope Panchayat, in the Idukki district and the area is known for its dams, which provides hydroelectric power to the region.

**Mullayar River**

This river is a major tributary of the Periyar River and the Peryar River is the longest river in Kerala State South India.

**Edamala River**

Edamala River is a tributary of the Periyar River. The main attraction of this river is that Idamalayar Dam is situated in this river.

**Muthirapuzha River**

Muthirapuzha River is the major tributaries of the Periyar River and the Periyar River is the longest river in the State.

**Perinjankutti River**

Perinjankutti River is one of the tributaries of the Periyar River and located in the Cental Kerala.

**Bharathappuzha**

Bharathappuzha is the second largest river in Kerala which has a length of 209 km. This river is also known as Nila River which indicates the culture and life of South Malabar part of Kerala. It originated from the Anamalai hills and passes through Palakkad, Trissur and Malappuram districts and ultimately reached into the Arabian Sea. In fact, in the summer months, there is almost no flow in most parts of the river. The tributaries of Bharathapuzha are Thuthapuzha, Kunthippuzha, Kanjirappuzha,

**Pamba River**

This river is the third longest river in Kerala which has a length of 176 km and originate from the Western Ghats. This river is the Holly river of Kerala as the *Dakshina Ganga* (Southern Ganges) due to its relation with Sabarimala, Kerala's Largest Pilgrim Centre. It flows through Ranni, Thiruvalla, Kozhenchery, Chengannur, Kuttanad and Ambalappuzha Taluks and finally empties into the Vembanad Lake and this river enriches the Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha districts of Kerala State.

The Pamba River has been known as *Dakshina Ganga* and devotees of Lord Ayyappa believe that immersing oneself in the Pamba is the same to bathing in the Holy Gangas River. Bathing in the river, believed to redeems one's sins.

**Thuthapuzha River**

Thuthapuzha is one of the main tributaries of the Bharathapuzha River. Its tributaries are Kunthipuzha, Kanjirappuzha, Ambankadavu and Thuppanadupuzha. It flows through the Silent Valley.

**Thuppanadupuzha River**

Thuppanadupuzha River is one of the tributaries of Thuthapuzha.

**Gayathripuzha River**

Gayathripuzha River is one of the main tributaries of the Bharathapuzha River and it originates from Anaimalai hills, passes through Kollengode, Nanmara, Alathur, Wadakanchery and Pazhayannur before joining the Bharathapuzha at Mayannur. The tributaries of Gayathripuzha River are Mangalam River, Ayalurpuzha, Vandazhippuzha, Meenkarappuzha and Chulliyar.
Kalpathipuzha

Kalpathipuzha River is one of the tributaries of Bharathapuzha which originates in the upper slopes of the Western Ghats deep inside Palakkad district from the place called Chenthamarakulam, in the hills, North of Walayar. The tributaries of this river are Malampuzha, Walayar, Korayar and Varattar.

Kannadipuzha

Kannadipuzha River originates from Anamalai hills which are a major source of irrigation in Palakkad district. This river is one of the main tributaries of the Bharathapuzha River. Palar, Aliyar and uppar are the tributaries of this river.

Chalippuzha (Chaliyar River)

This river has a length of 169 km. This river is a feast to the eyes of tourist as this river form the famous Thusharagiri waterfall. Many of the rivers in Kerala get dried during summer season. But Chalippuzha is one of the rivers which don’t get dried up in the drought season. Its tributaries are Cherupuzha (Mavoor), Engappuzha, Iruthullippuzha, Kadungampuzha, Iruvanjippuzha, Pulingappuzha, Chalippuzha, Muthappanpuzha, Cherupuzha (Areekode) Kuthirappuzha, Kottappuzha, Kuruvanpuzha, Kanjirappuzha, Karimpuza, Cherupuzha (Karulai), Punnappuzha or Pandiyar, Maruthappuzha or Kalakkanpuzha, Karakkodan puzha, Pandippuzha and Neerppuzha (www.wikipedia.org).

Chalakudy River

Chalakudy River is the forth longest river in Kerala which has a length of 169 km and runs through Chalakudy town which is in the Trissur district. The river passes through Thrissur, Ernakulam and Palakkad districts of Kerala. It is originated from the Anamalai hills in the Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu region. The river is actually a collection of some major tributaries originated from Parambikulam, Kuriyarkutti, Sholayar, Karapara and Anakayam in Kerala. There are 85 species of fresh water fishes, among these, 35 are endemic species in this river.22
Figure 6.11

Chalakkudy River Source: www.wikipedia.org

Parambikulam River

Parambikulam River originated from Tamil Nadu, in the Coimbatore district, which is a tributary of Chalakkudy River. A dam is constructed across the river which the biggest one in India.

Kadalundi River

Kadalundi River has a length of 120 km which originates from Cherakomban Mala, the Western Ghats at the Western border of the Silent Valley. This river flows through the district of Malappuram. Olipuzha and Veliyar are the main tributaries of this river.

Achankovil Aar

Achankovil Aar has a length of 128 km which flows through the Pathanamthitta district. The catchment area of this river is achankovil forest. The river joins with the Pamba River at Veeyapuram, in the Alappuzha district.
**Kallada River**

Two rivers are flowing through Kollam district; Kallada River and Ithikkara River. Kallada River has a length of 121 km and originates from Kulathupuzha hills and empties at Ashtamudi Lake near Kollam. This river forms the famous waterfalls of Pallaruvi.

**Valapattanam River**

This river and the nearest city called Valapattanam are major attractions to the tourists. This river is situated in Kannur district and the famous Muthappan temple, one of the main attractions to the pilgrim tourists, is also on the bank of the river.

**Chandragiri River or Payaswini River**

This river originates from Karnataka State which has a length of 105 km. This river is also known as Chandragiri River. It flows West to Kasaragod district and join with the Arabian Sea.

**Manimala River**

This river has a length of 92 km and originates from Muthavara hills of Idukki district. It passes through the places of Erumeli, Manimala, Mallappally, Thuruthicad, Vennikkulam, Kaviyoor, Kalloppara, Thalavadi, Kozhimukku, Mundakayam, Kanjirappally and Champakkulam in Kottayam and Pathanamthitta districts. The river joins with Pamba River at Muttar in Alappuzha district. The river offers a beautiful view at Manimala and flows swifty striking against the many rocks in the river.

**Meenachil River**

This river has a length of 78 km which passes through the central part of Kottayam district and originating from the Western Ghats in the form of several streams. The river flows through Poonjar, Teekoy, Erattupetta, Palai, Ettumanoor and Kottayam. It ends into the Vembanad Lake at Kumarakom.
Karamana River

This river has a length of 68 km which is running through Thiruvananthapuzaram district and flows westward and joins with the Arabian Sea. It originates from the southern tip of the Western Ghats at Agastyar Koodam. Killiyar is the tributary of Karamana River.

Ithikkara River

Ithikara River is one of the important rivers in South Kerala. This has a length of 56 km. This river originates from Western Ghats of Kulathhoopuzha hills and runs through Kollam district and ultimately reached into Paravur Kayal. It passes through a village called ithikkara, hence it is known to this name.

Neyyar River

The Neyyar River has a length of 56 km and flows through Neyyattinkara thaluk into the Arabian Sea near Poovar. It is originated from the Agastya Mala, in the Western Ghats, in the Thiruvananthapuzaram district. Kallar River, Mullayar River and the Karavaliyar River are its tributaries.

Kallayi River

Kallayi River has a distance of forty km and originates from Cherikkulathur in the Western Ghats. A manmade canal linked this river with Chaliyar River. The popular timber village, Kallayi is in the bank of this river.

Mahe River (Mayyazhipuzha)

This river originates from Wayanad hills in the Western Ghats which has a length of 54 kms. This river passes through Mahe, Azhiyoor, Kunnunakkara, Naripetta, Vanimel, Iyyancode, Iringanoor, Tripangathur, Peringalam, Edachery, Kacheri, Eramala, Kariyad, Olavilam, before it join with the Arabian Sea.
**Tirur River**

This river begins in the Tirur *thaluk* village of Athvanad in the Malappuram district, which has a length of 48 km and flows West to Thiruvnavaya and then North-West to Elamkulam, where it turns South-West, joining the Bharathapuzha River which flows into the Arabian Sea, near Ponnani. The river is navigable and forms part of West coast water transport system.

**Korapuzha River**

Korapuzha River has a length of 40 km. It is formed by the confluence of two streams, Agalapuzha and Punnoorpuzha which originate in the mountains of Wayanad district and the river is passing through Kozhikode district and becomes empties into the Arabian Sea. This river ends at Elathur.

**Ambankadavu River**

Ambankadavu River is one of the tributaries of Bharathapuzha River and also tributaries of the river Thuthapuzha. Bharathapuzha is the second largest river in Kerala.

**Iruvanjippuzha**

Iruvanjippuzha or Iruvazhinjipuzha has a length of 50 kms. It is a major tributary of River Chaliyar. Chalippuzh, Muthappanpuzha, Pulingappuzha and Karamoola Rivers are the tributaries of Iruvanjippuzha. The river passes near to the town Thiruvambady. Thusharagiri waterfall is formed in Chalipuzha River which is the tributary of this river.

**Kanjirappuzha**

Kanjirappuzha River runs through Mannarkkad. It is one of the tributaries of the river Thuthapuzha. The tributaries of Kanjirappuzha are Kunthipuzha, Kanjirappuzha, Ambankadavu and Thuppanadippuzha. The
origin of all these rivers are Bharathapuzha as Thodupuzha is one of the tributaries of Bharathappuzha.

**Chulliyar River**

Chulliyar River is one of the tributaries of the river Gayathripuzha and at the mean time Gayathripuzha is one of the main tributaries of the Bharathapuzha River.

**Karimpuzha (Malappuram)**

Karimpuzha (Malappuram) Karimpuzha originates from the Western Ghats in Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu. It is passing very near to Nilambur and is the largest tributary of Chaliyar River

**Karimpuzha (Palakkad)**

Karimpuzha is a famous handloom weaving village. Karimpuzha River is passing through this village, which is a tributary of Bharathapuzha. This river is located 15 km away from Ottappalam town. The sailent valley national park and the famous Nalussery Bhagavathy Temple are located near to this river.

**Ayalurpuzha**

Ayalurpuzha River is one of the tributaries of the river Gayathripuzha which is one of the main tributaries of Bharathapuzha. Ayalurpuzha is located in Central Kerala

**Cherukunnnapuzha**

Cherukunnnapuzha is a tributary of the river Mangalam River which is one of the tributaries of the river Gayathripuzha but at the mean time Gayathripuzha is one of the main tributaries of the river Bharathapuzha, the second-longest river in Kerala, South India.
Cherupuzha (Karulai)

Cherupuzha is originated from Karimpuzha which is a tributary of Chaliyar River in Kerala, Cherupuzha originate from the South-Western slopes of Mukurthi National Park in Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu which is a major water source for Nilambur and it join with Karimpuzha near Karulai town.

Kunthipuzha River

*Kunthipuzha* River flows through the Silent Valley which is one of the tributaries of the river *Thuthapuzha* and *Thuthapuzha* is one of the main tributaries of the Bharathapuzha River.

Korayar River

*Korayar* River is originated from *Kalathipuzha* and *Kalathipuzha* is a tributary of *Bharathapuzha*. All these rivers are located in the Central part of Kerala.

Kottappuzha

*Kottappuzha* is originated from Western Ghats in Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu and is a tributary of *Kuthirappuzha*. *Kuthirappuzha* is tributary of Chaliyar River

Kunthipuzha

*Kunthipuzha* flows through silent Vally which is one of the tributaries of *Thuthapuzha* which is one of the main tributaries of Bharathappuzha.

Kurumali River

*Kurumali* River originates from the Western Ghats. It flows through the Thrissur district which is a tributary of Karuannur River. This river is formed in Elikode.
**Kuthirappuzha**

*Kuthirappuzha* is originating from the forest in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu and is a tributary of *Chaliyar* River. The river joins with *Chaliyar* River near Nilambur. *Kottupuzha* joins with this river at Koorad.

**Madatharuvi**

This stream forms a serious of waterfalls passes through pristine tropical forest and seen so many varities of specious of fresh water fish. Ranny is situated very near to this aruvi. After passing through the forest area, it joins with Pamba River.

**Malampuzha River**

Malampuzha River is located in Palakkad district which is a tributary of Kalpathipuzha. Kalpathipuzha is a tributary of Bharathapuzha. Malampuzha dam is constructed across the river.

**Mangalam River**

This river is located in Palakkad district which is one of the tributaries of Gayathripuzha and Gayathripuzha is one of the main tributaries of *Bharathapuzha*. *Mangalam* Dam is constructed across this river. *Cherukunnappuzha* is the tributary of *Mangalam* River.

**Maruttappuzha**

*Maruthappuzha* originates as two separate streams from Devala (Eastern branch) and Pandalur (Northern branch) areas of Nilagiri district of Tamil Nadu which a tributary of Punnappuzha. Punnappuzha merges with *Karimpuzha* and ultimately merges into *Chaliyar* River. Because of the muddy colour of its water, *Maruthappuzha* is also known as *Kalakkappuzha* and in the belt of *Punnappuzha* of this river, is famous for gold deposit.

**Meenkarappuzha River**
This river is one of the tributaries of the river Gayathripuzha which is one of the main tributaries of the Bharathapuzha River. Bharathapuzha is the second-longest river in the State.

**Neerppuzha**

This river is originating from the forests in Pothukal Panchayath of Malappuram district. It joins with Chaliyar at Kambippalam. It is the first noted tributary of Chaliyar.

**Pallikkelaru River**

This river begins at the Southern cliffs of Kalaritharakunnu in Adoor, which passes through South Kerala. It becomes empties by merging with the Kozhikode canal, through Kannety Kayal, near Karunagappally

**Punnappuza**

Punnappuzha is also known as Pandiyar when it flows through Tamilnadu. The major towns on the banks of this river are Nilambur, Vazhikkadavu, Chungathara and Edakkara. This river is a tributary of Karimpuzha.

**Vandazhippuzha River**

This river is one of the tributaries of the river Gayathripuzha and Gayathripuzha is one of the main tributaries of Bharathapuzha River. (www.wikipedia.org).

5. **Monsoon Tourism**

Monsoon tourism is purely based on climate. Kerala is the land of forests and mountains. The clouds moving from the Arabian Sea are stopped by the mountains of the Western Ghats in the East which results in heavy rain in the State, an average of 126 days per year. The State has generally two rainy seasons. June to September, the Southwest monsoon, is the heavy rain season, which is called Edavappathy and the Northwest monsoon during the month of October is called Thulavarsham, which is lighter. The mountains are the generator of heavy rainfall in the State and maintain cool climate in the State.
Monsoon tourism is a new tourism product which is purely based on climate. During the monsoon season, the seashore, sky and the mountains present a spectacle of awe and grandeur and the whole State drapes in refreshing green. It is the ideal time to rejuvenating the body, to relax and unwind. ‘The beauty of monsoon in Kerala has been prized by many writers and “Chasing the monsoon,” the famous book written by Alexander Frater who narrates the high influence of rain over the lives and culture of the people in Kerala and India. Now, monsoon tourism is being highlighted as a best tourism product of Kerala in abroad.

II. Symbiotic environment products

Symbiotic environment products means the tourism products which are combination of products created by blending natural attractions and built attractions. These products are made in the background of natural environment. The resources are provided by nature, which are converted into tourism products by humans. In the present study symbiotic environment products are backwater tourism, wildlife sanctuaries, ecotourism, Ayurvedic health tourism, forest tourism, green farm or plantation tourism, tourist villages and picnic centres and adventure tourism.

1. Backwater Tourism

Kerala is enriched with rainfalls. June to September is monsoon season. The State is getting an average annual rainfall of 2900 mm. Once the earth is saturated with rainfall, the overflows runs into canals and streams, rolling water surging ceaselessly through hills and mountains passes into the rivers in the State and finally joins with the Arabian Sea.

Figure 6.12
The State has a wide network of interconnected canals, lakes, rivers, streams and estuaries. The backwaters are parallel to the Arabian Sea and sometimes separated from the sea only by narrow sand banks. This labyrinthine network of rivers, lagoons, streams and canals forms the backwaters of Kerala which is the main attraction of tourists; both domestic and foreign.

Kerala’s Coastal belt is relatively flat, teeming with paddy fields, groves of coconut trees and heavily crisscrossed by a network of interconnected canals and rivers. The Kerala backwaters region is particularly well-recognized feature of Kerala; it is an interconnected system of brackish water lakes and river estuaries that lies inland from the coast and runs virtually the length of the State. These highly facilitate inland travel throughout a region roughly bounded by Thiruvananthapuram in the South and Vadakara (which lies some 450 km) to the North. The comparative water-richness of the coastal belt can be partly gauged by the fact that Kuttanad, with its backwaters, canals and rivers, itself comprises more than 20% of India’s waterways by length.23

Backwaters of Kerala are the backbone of Kerala Tourism. It is unique
in Kerala and not seen elsewhere in other States of India. Kerala is the land of canals, lagoons, lakes and rivers. These backwaters with their peculiar landscape have had a direct impact on the lifestyle of people who live along its banks. Kerala’s uniqueness lies in these backwaters found nowhere else in the World. This forms beautiful and economically viable features of Kerala. The 41 West-flowing rivers of Kerala form the backbone to this magnificent gift of nature. The backwaters are a gateway for the visitor to see first hand the unhurried village life of rural Kerala. Some of the rivers and backwaters in Kerala are a great attraction to tourists who are particularly interested in ‘Regatta’.25

Vembanad and Ashtamudi lakes are the main backwaters of Kerala. National way from Kollam to Kottapuram covers a distance of 205 km which facilitates both cargo movement and backwater tourism. A house boat journey along the backwaters of Kerala is the most memorable experience of a tourist who passes through Kerala.

Figure 6.13

House boat Source: www.keralatourism.org

Some of the important backwater tourism destinations in Kerala are Veli
Veli is located 8 km away from Tiruvananthapuram city. The backwaters of Veli provide an opportunity for backwater cruise in the capital city of Kerala. There are facilities for boating and water sports.

**Akkulam**

Akkulam is located 10 km from the capital city of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram. The Akkulam Lake is a wonderful backwater tourism spot, which is an extension of Veli Lake. There are so many facilities for entertainments. Boating facilities, children’s park, swimming pool for adults and a paddle pool are here.

**Thiruvallam**

This beautiful backwater stretch is located in the route of Kovalam, in Thiruvananthapuram district. The place is famous for its canoe rides, kayaking, and cruises in *Kettuvallams*. The boating facilities are available from here to nearby island Pozhikara and Edayar.

**Thiruvallam**

Thiruvallam is situated 10 km away from Thiruvananthapuram. This serene backwater stretch, enroute to Kovalam, is famous for its 2000-year-old temple on the banks of river Karamana, canoe rides, kayaking and cruises in traditional houseboats.

**Kappil**

Kappil is located 53 km away from Thiruvananthapuram. There is a wide area of backwater. A confluence of the sea, river and the backwater, this secluded, picturesque spot is famous for backwater cruising. A visitor can enjoy cluster of beauty of river, backwater and sea at a time.

**Kollam**

This place is located 71 km to the North of Thiruvananthapuram. It is
one of the trading capitals of the old World. The place is famous for cashew processing and fisheries. More than 2000 industries related to minerals, seafood processing, coir, chemicals, cashew, ceramics, tiles, handlooms are functioning in this area. This place is famous for backwater tourism also. It is the gateway to the marvellous backwaters of Kerala. About thirty percent of Kollam is covered by Ashtamudi Lake, the famous backwaters of Kerala. 130 km long system of interlinked lakes and canals connect the area with the Northern parts of Kerala. The longest backwater cruise in Kerala is operated from Kollam to Alappuzha which covers an eight hour journey, is the most enchanting backwater experience, offering charming picture-postcard scenes of the interaction between the earth and water. The most important halt in the journey is Alumkadavu, near Karunagappally. This picturesque small village is the home of skilled artisans who craft the enormous Kettuvallams.

Kettuvallam is a chief mode of transport used for carrying passengers and goods through backwaters. It has a length of about 100 ft. The roof is covered with wooden hulls. Now, for promoting tourism, modern facilities are added to make it fit as a veritable floating cottage. These Kettuvallams are known as House boats. A house boat provided with the facilities of bed rooms, kitchen, bath rooms and toilet, site out etc. Just 5 km North to Alumkadave, on the way through backwaters, Vallikkavu is located. Mata Amritanandamayi Ashram is situated here. This is the birth place of the famous spiritual Guru, Mata Amritanandamayi.

Sasthamkotta

The place is known in the name of Sastha Temple. Surrounded by hills on three sides is the vast fresh water lake of Sasthamkotta, the largest of fresh water lake in Kerala. Monkeys are settled in the very tall trees. It is believed that these monkeys are the loyal followers of the ruling deity, Dharma Sastha.

Alappuzha
Alappuzha is situated at the South-western tip of India’s longest lake, the vembanad Kayal. It has a large network of canals which cut through the town. It is sandwiched between the lake and the Arabian Sea. Due to the presence of numerous canals and backwaters, Alappuzha is known as “the Venice of the East.” It attracts tourists because of this geographical diversity and potentialities of backwater tourism. It is the only geography where amid the backwaters floats a man-made island called pathiramanal/ Midnight Dunes. This island is lying between the backwaters of Thaneermukkom and Kumarakom and reachable only by boats. Moreover, this is the only place under the sun where the long-touring birds migrate to a man-made bird sanctuary. The vast network of Alappuzha Canal and its promenades lined with eateries, shops selling ethnic artifacts and so on are a major tourist attraction.

Alappuzha is very famous for boat races. These races are organized during harvest and onam season. The popular races are Nehru Trophy Boat Races at Punamada, Pulinkunnu Rajiv Gandhi Boat races, Payippad Jalotsavam, Neerettupuram Boat Races, Champakulam Moolam Boat Races at Haripad and Uthurattadi Vallamkali at Aranmula. These backwater festivals are attracted by so many tourists from all over the World. So as to attract more tourists, these races are backed by ceremonial water procession, spectacular water floats and vanchipattu.

Kuttanad

Kuttanad is known as the heart of backwaters. The singular experience of backwater cruising, particularly in Kuttanad region, covered in emerald green fields and separated from dikes from waters. Kuttanad is known as the Rice Bowl of Kerala because of its wealth of paddy crops and covered an area of 777 sq. km. During rainy season the whole area looks as one sheet of water. It is one of the places in the World where farming is done below sea level.

Pathiramanal
This picturesque green small island is located in the Vembanad Lake. It is surrounded by Vembanad Lake and stretching from Alappuzha to Kochi and the Kayamkulam Lake. This is a paradise for hundreds of rare migratory birds from all over the World and is an ideal place for backwater cruise.

**QST&R Block Kayals**

The location of this region is in Kuttanad. QST and R Block Kayals are wonders of the indigenous agricultural engineering know-how of Kerala and remind the visitor of the famous dikes of Holland. Extensive areas of land have been reclaimed from the backwaters and are protected by dikes built around, a process that started 100 years ago. Here, cultivation and habitation are made possible four to ten feet below sea level. R Block, at nearly 850 acres, is the largest reclaimed area. A leisurely cruise along the canals that surround these Kayals is a memorable experience.\(^2\) The place can be accessible by a two hours boat journey through backwaters from Alappuzha.

**Kumarakam**

Kumarakam is situated 15 km West of Kottayam. It is a cluster of small islands which is located on the banks of the second largest freshwater lake in the Asian continent. This place is a small water World and famous for houseboat cruises, *Ayurvedic* massage, yoga, meditation, boating, angling, swimming and fishing. Sandwiched between a lake, it looks more like sea and almost parallel to the great backwaters of Kuttanad region. Another important attraction of this region is the Kumarakam Bird Sanctuary. It is located on the banks of Vembanad Lake. It is an ornithologist’s paradise and is a favorite hunt of migratory birds. Set against the backdrop of rich green paddy fields and still grey waters, Kumarakam was for years, just another sleepy town, resplendent in scenic beauty. However, when Kerala became a popular tourist destination, Kumarakam’s charms were soon unveiled. Today plush resorts scattered around a large lake and delightful backwaters have transformed this
once quiet settlement into a sought after destination – Sir Paul Mccartney, the former Beatle, wrote in his hotel register, ‘truly, this is God’s own country.’

**Kochi**

Kochi is known as the Queen of the Arabian Sea. Its charms are many fold. The great flood of the Periyar River in 1341 created a natural harbour in the heart of Kochi. This harbour is one of the finest natural harbours in the World. The Chinese and the Arabs are the first visitors of this port and they were followed by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British. It is a cluster of island which is situated on the vast bank of Vembanad Lake. There are a lot of ferries which connect with local boat services. Cruise through the winding water ways to the beautiful islands of Bolgatty, Vypeen, Vallarpadam and Gundu will be an ever memberable experience to the tourists. This wonderful water body is an asset to backwater tourism of Kerala.

*Figure 6.14*

![Backwaters](Source: www.keralatourism.org)

**Bolgatty Island**
This island is known in the name of Bolgatty Palace, surrounded by backwaters, is a riches for backwater tourism. The palace was constructed by the Duch in 1744. Now; it is used as hotel run by KTDC.

**Willingdon Island**

Willingdon Island named after a former British Viceroy of India, the Lord Willingdon. It is amazing man-made island surrounded by beautiful backwaters. It is a good backwater spot. The island located in the heart of the city and surrounded by best hotels, trading centres, port trust and headquarters of the Southern naval command.

**Kozhikode**

The name of Kozhikode came to the World map by the arrival of Vasco da Gama in 1498. Backwaters of Kozhikode are unexplored and unspoilt. It offers delightful holiday options to the tourists. Boating through the favorite places like Kallai River, Elathur and Canoli Canal are refreshing the mind of tourists. Kadalundi Bird sanctuary is a beautiful attraction to the backwater tourists. Moreover, the venue of the Karapuzha Jalotsavam (water fiesta) is a popular tourist destination.

**Valiyaparamba**

Valiyaparamba is an important backwater resource of Northern Kerala. It is the most scenic backwater stretch in Kerala. This backwater stretch is fed by four rivers. There are a lot of little island. A backwater cruise in a house boat along the Tejaswini River –from Kottapuram in Nileswaram to Kannur, through the Valiyaparamba backwaters is delightful experience to the tourists.

**2. Wildlife Sanctuaries**

Kerala is famous due to her evergreen scenery. The State consists of 10,81,509 hectares of forest area. The Western Ghats are enriched with thick forest. This forest is the happy mingling place of thousands of wild animals and birds. Hence, a number of wildlife sanctuaries are set up here to protect
the wild animals and birds and sustain the rare specious for the awareness of future generation.

Nestled in the luxuriant forests of the Western Ghats in Kerala are fourteen wildlife sanctuaries. And skirting these exotic destinations are some of the most delightful trekking trials in the country. All wash in the spice-scented air of endless acres of plantations ranging from cardamom, vanilla and pepper to tea and coffee. The wildlife sanctuaries in Kerala are

**Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary**

This sanctuary is located 30 km away from Thiruvananthapuram. It spread over an area of 12000 hectares. It was declared as sanctuary as early as in 1958. However, a separate wildlife wing was set up in 1985 and as a result, conservation results have gathered quickly. It is a haven of exotic flora and fauna. The Agasthyamala is the highest peak of here which has an elevation of 1868 m. The Agasthyamala region consists of a wide variety of flora and fauna. Elephants, gaur, sambar, barking deer and the endangered Nilgiri tahr are seen here. The sanctuary is also the nest of different types of birds hence it is a hot point of bird watching.

**Idukki Wildlife Sanctuary**

This magnificent wildlife sanctuary is located 55 km away from Thodupuzha, in Idukki. It covers a total area of 105 sq. km, out of this, 33 sq.km Scenic lakes formed by three dams-Kulamavu, Idukki and Cheruthoni. A charming canopy of dense tropical evergreen forest, and moist deciduous forests make this region a paradise of many types of animals such as elephants, tiger, barking deer, bear, wild boar, sambar, wild dogs, jungle cats, and a large concentration of various spices of snakes, including cobra, viper, python, krait, and numerous non-poisonous ones. It is also nestle of different types of birds. Visitors can experience boat journey through the lake.

**Shenduruney Wildlife Sanctuary**
This area was declared as sanctuary in 1984. This sanctuary is unique for its bio-diversity and a true reminder of the stone civilization and culture. It is an important resource of the popular ecotourism destination, Thenmala or honey mala, located in the Western Ghats, the sanctuary spread over an area of 100 sq. km. Thick forest, variety of flora and fauna are found here. The area is generally hilly and the highest peak is Alvarkurichi, which has an elevation of 1550 m. A lot of animal species are found here.

**Peppara Wild Life Sanctuary**

This sanctuary was set up in 1983, mainly to provide water supply to Thiruvananthapuram. For this purpose, a dam was constructed across the Karramana River. The sanctuary spread over an area of 53 sq. km on the Western Ghats. A variety of flora and fauna are seen in the hill side. Elephants, sambar, tigers, panthers, barking deer, guar, wild boar are found here.

**Periyar Tiger Reserve, Thekkady**

This sanctuary is situated in Thekkady, about 4 km from Kumily in Idukki, is one of the World’s richest bio-diversity spots, nestled in the Western Ghats. It is spread over a forest area of 777 sq. km. It is also the home of Asiatic elephant. A repository of rare and endangered flora and fauna is here. The valley of the reserve is a major water resource for the two important rivers-the Periyar and the Pumba. Wild forest, rich flora and fauna make this sanctuary more attracting. There are facilities to watch wild animals. For facilitating this, two watch towers inside the forest are there. The natural habituating of wild animals can be seen very close from here. This reserve is the home for 62 species of mammals, 45 species of reptiles and 320 species of birds. Tropical, deciduous and evergreen forest and grasslands make this forest area a haven to the habitats.

*Figure 6.15*
A boat journey through the lake is really an experience to watch very close to the animals including tigers. Drinking of water from the river side by the wild animals is a usual scene in the boat journey. The famous *Sabarimala Ayyappan* temple and the *Mangala Devi* Temple are located nearby.

*Figure 6.16*
This beautiful national park is also situated in Idukki; 15 km away from Munnar, spread over an area of 97 sq.-km Park of green grasslands and wooded valleys is nestled between the marvellous Kannan Devan hills and Anamudi. The main specialties of this area are the Nilgiri Tahr and Neelakurinji flowers that bloom just once in 12 years. The Anamudi peak, the highest peak in South India, which has an elevation of 2695 meters, is situated here. Thick forest, beautiful tea plantations and a variety of flora and fauna are found here and make the park more attractive. It is the paradise of the scarce Nilgiri tahr that freely thrives here. Elephants, sambar, gaur, macaque, tiger, leopard, small-clawed otter, ruddy mongoose, the dusky striped squirrel and the small Indian civet are found here. The park is also found with about 120 species of birds. Nilgiri pipit, Nilgiri wood pigeon, black and orange flycatcher are also seen here.

Silent Valley National Park

Silent Valley National Park is located 40 km northwest of Mannarkad in Palakkad district and covered an area of 90 sq. km. It is one of
the most magnificent gifts of nature to humanity. It is seldom silent but it has an inexplicably unique character. Due to immense biological and genetic wealth, the environmentalists call it as an ecological island. The silent valley is known by this name because of the presence of the undisturbed tropical evergreen rainforest. This region is truly unique in Kerala because of its rich ecological diversity. The evergreen forest consists of different varieties of vegetation and the Kuntipuzha River traverses the total length of the park’s valley. It is the home of different kinds of birds, flowers and butterflies. The lion-tailed macaque, a number of rare birds, 95 species of butterflies, 35 species of reptiles, 25 species of mammals are found here. Apart from this, orchids and 960 species of other flowers bloom here.

**Thattekkad Bird Sanctuary**

This bird sanctuary is known in the name of the renowned ornithologist, Dr. Salim Ali and officially recognized as the first bird sanctuary in Kerala. It is the haven of bird watchers and spread over an area of 25 sq. km, nestled between the two branches of the Periyar River. It is surrounded by the scenery of Anamalai hills. It is declared as a bird sanctuary in 1984. About 320 species of birds are inhabited here. Nightjars, scores of crow pheasants, woodpeckers, drongos, babblers, robins and darters colonise the towering trees. Some rare birds are also found here. They are bee-eater, crimson-throated barbet, grey-headed fishing eagle, fairly blue bird, night heron, peninsular bay owl; night heron and Malabar grey hornbill are found here.

**Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary**

Sandwiched between Muthanga and Tholpetty, Wayanad wildlife sanctuary is covered an area of 344.44 sq. km, one of the largest sanctuaries in Kerala, situated 18 km. West of Sulthan Bathery. It was established in the year 1973. 110 sq km. of the park is covered with teak, silver oak, rosewood and eucalyptus plantations. The remaining area is covered with semi-evergreen
trees and bamboos. There are 216 elephants, 4 tigers and 6 leopards are found in the Muthanga sanctuary as per the Censes of 2004. Some other animals such as sambar, bison and spotted deer are also seen here.

**Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary**

This picturesque wildlife sanctuary is located 60 km away from Munnar, in Idukki, near to Tamil Nadu border. This sanctuary is unique in the Western Ghats because of its ecological, geological and cultural significance. The grizzly giant squirrel and white bison are the main attractions of here. The place is also rich in medical plants, sandalwood and richest reptilian fauna. About 1000 species of flowering plants and 225 species of birds are found here. The sanctuary is renowned for trekking options also. Elephants, spotted deer, wild boar, bonnet macaque, wild dog, rusty spotted cat, sambar, and gaur are also found here.

**Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary**

This sanctuary is located in the northernmost part of Kerala and spread over a small area of 55 sq. km, which is one of the smallest wildlife sanctuaries in Kerala. It was established in the year 1984. The heavy rainfall of the area, about 3000 mm annually, keeps the forest evergreen. Nature walks, bamboo rafting, stay at tree houses, soft trekking and coracle boating are the main entertainment facilities available here. Near to this sanctuary, the Aralam River flows. Teak and eucalyptus plantations are also abundant in the forest area. Different varieties of flora and fauna are also found here. Elephants, deer, boar, jungle cat, leopards, bison are viewed frequently.

**Chimmini Wildlife Sanctuary**

This sanctuary was established in 1984 and spreads over an area of 85 sq.km, in the Western slopes of Nelliyampathy. It is the haven of nature enthusiasts, located 35 km from Trissur. There are a number of options to the nature enthusiast in the form of innumerable trekking trials, viewing of variety
of birds and butterflies. Dense forest, extensive lake, grasslands etc make this place more attractive. The dense foliage and rivers make an ideal habitant for a number of varieties of flowering plants and epiphytes. Pundimudi is the highest peak, which has an elevation of 1116 m. The animals habitats here include, elephant, tiger, endangered lion-tailed macaque, leopard, wild dog, mongoose, jackal, gaur, sloth bear, sambar, guar, barking deer, porcupine, wild boar, macaque, bonnet, slender loris and Nilgiri langur.

**Peechi-Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary**

This sanctuary was established in the year 1958 and spread over an area of 125 sq. km. It is one of the oldest wildlife sanctuaries of Kerala, sandwiched between forest area of Nelliyaamathy and Palappilly reserves, in the Trissur district. It is formed around the two reservoirs of Peechi and Vazhani. The sanctuary is enriched with repository of bio-diversity with several endangered herbs, rare medical plants, shrubs and much variety of orchids. Large part of the sanctuary is covered by deciduous forests, evergreen and semi-ever green trees. So many species of birds are colonising here. In this sanctuary, we can view elephants, gaur, wild boar, wild dogs, sloth beer, common palm civet, small Indian civet, porcupine, Malabar giant squirrel, mouse deer, barking deer, sambar, leopard, tiger, Nilgiri langur and bonnet macaque. So many entertainments options are available to a visitor here such as overnight stay in tent, trekking, butterfly safaris, bamboo rafting and bird watching.

**Parambikulam Wildlife Sanctuary**

This sanctuary is located 110 km from Palakkad, covered an area of 285 sq. km. It is the place of first ever scientifically managed teak plantation in the World. Moreover, the World’s oldest and tallest teak tree is here. This park is also famous for bird watching. In addition to the astounding array of flora and fauna, it offers varities of entertainments options like challenging treks in the hills and boating in the vast lakes. A number of species of birds
and animals are here. A tourist can view Ceylon frogmouth roam, white deer, sambar, gaur, the lion-tailed macaque, king cobra, pangolin, civet cat, leopared, tiger, jungle cat, and porcupine and cane turtle.

3. Ecotourism

Ecotourism means responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and sustains the livelihood of local people. In other words, it is ecologically sustainable nature based tourism. It is gaining much significance in the present World because of environmental degradation due to rapid development of tourism. It is a tourism product which respects nature and environment. It minimizes the environmental damage, maximize the entertainment and education, share the benefits of tourism directly to the local community, preserve and protect the flora and fauna and respect the local customs and traditions. Ecotourism combines the three main aspects of tourism, namely; education, entertainment and adventure. Nature based tourism and ecotourism are synonymously used. Ecotourism or nature tourism is related to the direct enjoyment of relatively undisturbed phenomenon of nature and it should not results no permanent damage to the environment.

According to Lucas ‘nature tourism is based on the enjoyment of natural areas and the observation of nature’29 Boo stated that ecotourism as travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of admiring and enjoying the scenery and wild plants and animals as well as any cultural manifestation.30

There are four types of eco-tourists; dedicated eco-tourist, general eco tourist, casual eco-tourist and recreation eco-tourist. Dedicated eco-tourists are highly sincere, dedicated and visited for specialized purposes; animal, bird and butterfly watching. They don’t want much facility but require expert tour guides with the natural history and knowledge to educate them. General eco-tourists are interested in the attraction of unaltered nature. They like trekking, rafting, diving etc. Casual eco-tourists are not concerned about the quality of
the places but just visit a place to spend a part of their holidays. Recreational eco-tourists are visiting a natural area to relax and they prefer to get better infrastructure and superstructure facilities in the place visited.

Kerala is the only State in India which is really gifted with natural beauty, biodiversity and rich in flora and fauna. The evergreen forest in the Western Ghats, cardamom, tea and teak plantations, innumerable wildlife sanctuaries and bird sanctuaries, hill stations, rivers, valleys and backwaters make this small piece of land as a paradise of eco-tourists. The only planned eco tourism destination in India is in Kerala, Thenmala ecotourism destination.

Thenmala

Thenmala is the combination of two words; ‘then and mala’. In Malayalam literature, then means honey and mala means hills. So, literally Thenmala means ‘honey hills’. Honey from Thenmala was sought after because it was mistakenly believed to have medical properties. Now, Thenmala is known among the World as India’s first planned eco tourism destination. This centre is located in the hilly areas of three Southern districts of Kerala; Kollam, Thiruvananthapuram and Pathanamthitta and is the Central point of 10 satellite eco tourism attractions spread over in these three districts. It is one of the best eco-friendly projects of the World.

Thenmala eco tourism centre is attracted by naturalists, conservationists and adventure seekers. This place is gifted with diverse flora and fauna, harbors a fragile ecosystem. There are so many options of entertainments, leisure area with winding pathways, a musical fountain, a nursery of trees considered sacred to the 27 constellations, a sway bridge, a sculpture garden and a boardwalk. The rugged terrains of the land offers a lot of adventure activities like trekking, mountain biking, rock claiming, bird watching, rappelling and river crossing. Another major attraction of this place is the boating in the Shenduruney Reservoir. A deer rehabilitation centre, rock shelters and the riverfront leisure zones, the Palarivi falls are the other major
attractions of Thenmala.

Due to ecological significance, all of the wildlife sanctuaries and most of the hill stations, waterfalls and backwaters of the State are declared as ecotourism destinations. These ecotourism destinations are Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary, Peppara Wild Life Sanctuary, Shenduruney Wildlife Sanctuary, Shenduruney Wildlife Sanctuary, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Thekkady, Idukki Wildlife Sanctuary, Eravikulam National Park, Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary, Chimmmini Wildlife Sanctuary, Thattekkad Bird Sanctuary, Peechi-Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary, Parambikulam Wildlife Sanctuary, Silent Valley National Park, Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary, Kumarakom, Bhoothaiaankettu, Athirappilly- Vazhachal Waterfalls, Munnar, Nelliampathi, Nilampur, Peruvannamuzhy, Kuruva Island, Tirunelli and Pythelmala.

4. Ayurvedic Health Tourism

*Ayurveda* is a branch of *Atharva Veda*. It is the science of life. It is the oldest and most holistic system of medicine. Even though it is practised all over India, Kerala is the only State in India where this branch of medicine is practised still as per traditional laws. The State has rich forest resources and the Western area is enriched with mountains. Being situated in the tropical region, the State has abundant supply of herbs and natural vegetation. So, *Ayurveda* can be practised in Kerala in its original form without duplication of medicine as it has an unparalleled wealth of herbs and natural vegetation. *Agasthyakoodam* is the legendary herbal mountain is a treasure trove of medical herbs. Due to thick forests and humid climate make the land fertile for growth of medical plants. Moreover, the hot and humid climate condition of Kerala is regarded as specialy favourable for *Ayurvedic* treatment.

The Indian Philosophy of *Ayurveda* is divided into two; *Astika* and *Nasitka*. The Astika concept has six philosophies. They are *Nyaya, Vaiseashika, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimamsa* and *Vedanta*. The *Sankhya* philosophy is related to *Ayurveda* which states the basic theory of humoral pathology. As
per the basic theory of *Ayurveda*, the human body comprised of five elements; earth, space, water, air and fire. The combination of these five elements in the human body forms three somatic humors. They are *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha*. When these three humors are in symmetry, the human body enjoys ideal health otherwise, leads to ill health.

*Vata* is responsible for the motor and sensory activities and mainly comprised of space and air and has the power of mobility and also helpful to keep the other two humors in motion. The five *Vatas* are *Prana vata, Udana Vata, Vyana Vata, Samana Vata* and *Apana Vata*. *Prana Vata* is responsible for all vital functions in the human body. It is related to the functioning of heart, respiration etc. *Udana Vata* is related to the act of speech, where as *Vyana Vata* is related to the circulation of blood in the human body and regulate the involuntary movements of the body. The *samana Vata* is related to the digestive system of the human body and *Apana Vata* is related to the downward movement. It accelerates the excretion of urine and faeces and ejection of semen.31

The main function of *Pitta* is generation of heat and digestion of food. There are five *Pitta* in a human body; *Panchaka Pitta, Ranjaka Pitta, Sadhaka Pitta, Alochaka Pitta* and *Bhrajaka Pitta*. All the stages of digestion are controlled by *Panchka Pitta* where as *Ranjaka Pitta* helps in the formation of blood. *Sadhaka* is responsible for intelligence. However, *Alochaka Pitta* is responsible for the insight, the form and colour of an object. The *Bhrajaka* is responsible for perspiration and maintenance of temperature of the body.32

The components of *Kapha* are the elements of water and earth. The major function of *Kapha* is to maintain stability, strength and resistance to disease in a human body. There are five types of *Kapha* in a human body; *Avalambaka Kapha, Kledaka Kapha, Tarpaka Kapha, Bodhaka Kapha* and *Sleshaka Kapha*. *Avalambaka Kapha* acts as a protector and strength provider of chest and is located in the chest. The *Kledaka Kapha* moistens the food in
the stomach to break it up. The *Tarpaka Kapha* is located in the brain which assures the functioning of sense organs. *Bodhaka Kapha* moistens with saliva and *Sleshaka Kapha* lubricates the joints.\(^3^3\)

The *Ayurvedic* medicines are prepared from three sources; namely, animal source, mineral source and vegetable source including creepers. All *Ayurvedic* medicines are prepared from the substance taken from natural sources and therefore it does not bear any side effects. In *Ayurveda*, no antibiotic is used for treatment. The diseases are caused by bacteria or fungi. Antibiotic are obtained from the substance of microorganisms to destroy the diseases causing bacteria. However, some herbs used for the preparation of medicine give the same effect of antibiotic. The basic principle of *Ayurvedic* treatment is not to treat the diseases affected part only but to treat the patient as a whole. Illness is due to an imbalance of *Doshas* (humors). By correcting this imbalance, diseases can be cured. Since it is a system of treatment of the whole body, it gives more immunity and reduces the chances of diseases.

*Figure 6.18*

![Oil massaging](source: www.keralatourism.org)
Rejuvenation and revitalization are the major areas of Ayurveda in connection with health tourism. Rejuvenation means to make young again. Here, Resayana Chikilsa is resorted to attain long life. Panchakarma is used for Rasayana Chikilsa. Panchakarma means a five-fold therapy used for elimination of the basic cause of disease called Shodhana and it revitalizes the tissues.

Monsoon season is the best time for rejuvenation therapy programme. Making it the natural way to refresh you, eliminate all toxic imbalances from the body and thus regain resistance and Kerala’s Ayurvedic resorts, the heavenly destinations with nature at its best, offer perfect holiday with a healthy difference. Kerala has a special type of Ayurvedic treatment. These special Kerala treatments, including Pizhichil (oil bath), Illakizhi (leaf bundle massage), Navarakkizhi (Rice bundle massage), Vasthi, Abhyangam, Nasyam, Medicated Steam bath, General Massage, Rejuvination Massage etc. are widely and effectively used in treatment of chronic severe illness such as rheumatoid arthritis, hdara treatment is for paralysis, facial palsy, spondylitis etc.  

\[\text{147}\]
When contemporary lifestyle take its toll on you, journey to a land where nature is still an integral part of everyday life, where you will discover the amazing healing power of natural health care system, 3000 years old. Discover the power of Ayurveda, in Kerala, the only place on earth, where it is practised with absolute authenticity and dedication. Instead of treating the symptoms of a disease, it treats the individual. Curing not just the affected part but for the entire body. Not surprisingly, Ayurveda has the answer to almost every ailment known to man. Purely natural, its regimens are absolutely free from side effects. More and more people are turning to Ayurveda invariably, Kerala is their destination. There are many hotels, spas and Ayurvedic centres across the State offering rejuvenation packages.\textsuperscript{35}

There are so many Ayurvedic health centres and health resorts in Kerala for treatment. Government of Kerala has brought out a scheme for the approval of Ayurvedic centres. There are two types of classification, namely, The Green Leaf and The Olive Leaf. There are 101 classified Ayurvedic Health Care Centres in the State. The classification is made by the Tourism Department on the basis of facilities and quality of service. However, approved health centres in Kerala as on December, 2008 is only 76.\textsuperscript{36}

5. \textbf{Plantation Tourism / Green Farm Tourism}

The forest of Kerala consists of a dynamic repository of a wide range of invariable timber resources. The plantations occupy a major part of forest area. There are different arrays of timbers like, teak, rose wood, medical and aromatic plants, bamboos etc. In Idukki and Wayanad, the plantation sector organises tourism promoting activities in plantation sector. Teak plantations, tea plantations, coffee plantations and spice plantation are amazing and very beautiful. This product is tapped as a new area of Kerala Tourism. It is a novel idea of promoting tourism along with the traditional agricultural or farm activities.
In the farm tourism, tourists are permitted to take part daily activities of farm, offering visitors a taste of the local cuisine and selling farm products to them etc. The tourists are allowed to all types of entertainment activities and farm activities. A number of tourists are attracted in farm tourism. This product is totally based on environment.

6. Tourist Villages, Picnic Centres etc

Tourist villages and picnic centres are created in beautiful natural areas of the State which attract thousands of tourists. Here also nature is the main attraction. In addition to this, some facilities are created for entertainment. The important places of this category are veli tourist village, akkulam tourist village, ashramam tourist village, and aranmula heritage village etc.

Veli Tourist Village

Veli is located 8 km. from Tiruvananthapuram city. Now, Veli is popular as a tourist village. The backwaters of Veli provide an opportunity for backwater cruise in the capital city of Kerala. There are facilities for boating and water sports. Now, Veli took place in the tourism map as Veli tourist
Village. The Veli Tourist Village is built where the Veli lagoon meets the Arabian Sea. A fish ponds, wading pools and landscaped gardens are located there. A floating bridge connects the village to the beach. A children’s park is also there.

**Akkulam Tourist Village**

Akkulam is situated near to Thiruvananthapuram, 10 km away. So many entertainment facilities including boating facilities, swimming pool, and children’s park are available here.

**Ashramam Tourist Village**

This picnic village is located in the shore of Ashtamudi backwaters, one km away from Kollam town. Boating facilities are available here in addition to a children’s park and Adventure Park.

**Aranmula Heritage Village**

The place ‘Aranmula’ is World famous for the metal mirrors with no reflection, called ‘Armula Kannadi’. The technology used for making Aranmula Kannadi is not found elsewhere in the World. So this technology shows the richness of indigenous artistic technology of Kerala. This place is also famous for boating, Aranmula boat race and the Parthaswarathy temple festival.

7. **Adventure Tourism**

Adventure tourism is another tourism product based on natural environment. In Kerala, adventure tourism can be developed along with eco-tourism. Trekking, wild animal watching, halting on tree tops etc. which can be successfully marketed now.

8. **Forest Tourism**

Forest tourism is purely based on natural environment of the country. As far as our State is concerned, it consists of 10, 81,509 hectares of forest area. The forest of the State is the haven of different types of wild
animals, birds. Thousands of plants species are also seen in the forest. Therefore, forest itself is an attraction of tourism in Kerala. A tourist can see a new World, which had not ever seen earlier. It is really an experience, a novel one, enthusiastic and enhancing the knowledge. The concept of forest tourism lies in marketing the serene natural habitats as tourism products with an interest element of nature education. This aims at making the user aware of the productive and regulatory facilities. This also aims at creating employment opportunities at local level. It is targeted towards specialized nature interest groups and eco-conscious tourists. Forest tourism activities include wildlife observation, bird watching, trekking, mountaineering, staying in the tree top huts and environmental studies and in the State, adventure tourism, eco-tourism and forest tourism can be successfully combined together and offer to the tourist as a combination of tourism product.

III. Manmade environment products

Products created by people like architecture, museums, fairs, festivals, cuisine, monuments, amusement park; medical tourism etc. are known as manmade tourism products. For the present study, human made attractions mainly or purposefully created to attract tourist is termed manmade environment products. For the purpose of the study, manmade environment products include cuisine tourism, medical tourism and amusement park.

1. Food Tourism (Cuisine)

Kerala is the land enriched with spices, fruits, vegetables, coconut and sea foods. So many tourists are attracted in the tasty cuisine of Kerala. The different varieties of vegetarian and non-vegetarian cuisine are very delicious. Kerala has a cuisine as distinctive as its cultural life. Influenced by its long coastline and flavored by the all-pervasive coconut, it is enriched by exotic fruits, vegetables and sea food, and garnished to perfection with the distinctive aroma of spices.

Kerala is known to be the best place where the most delicious breakfast
is available. The popular menu in the breakfast include *Puttu*, made of rice flour and coconut and *kadala* (gram) *curry*, *idiappam* (noodle like rice cakes) and egg or vegetable *curry* and *appam* (soft centered lacy pancakes) and mutton or vegetable stew. All these breakfast are rich in nutrient value and taste. Another World famous Kerala’s launch menu is *Sumptuous Sadya*. It is a three course meal served on a plantain leaf. In all houses of Kerala, on the day of *Thiruvonam*, all Keralies prepare compulsorily *Sumptuous sadya* as their launch. It has variety of up to 40 vegetarian delights. The main item is boiled rice. It is also accompanied by Crispy *pappadam* and different types of pickles. Different types of *Payasams* are also served. The order serving of different menu is also very important.

The State is also renowned for non-vegetarian cuisine also. It has abundant coastal belt, rivers, lagoons and lakes which provide a lot of marine products. Among marine products, most delicacies are *Karimeen* or pearl spot, crabs, prawns, mussels and lobsters. The seafood preparations fresh from the Arabian Sea and lakes are very famous. The Arabian influenced *Moplah* cuisine and Syrian, Portuguese, Dutch and British influenced Syrian Christian cuisine of Kerala are very attractive in its rich flavor and taste. All the cuisine of Kerala is based on the natural and marine resources of Kerala.

2. Amusment Parks

Kerala has different options of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. There are so many choices to the tourist like boating, swimming pool, sports, tennis court, music enjoyment, cinema, recreation clubs and amusement park for all age groups. Now, in Kerala, there are five amusement parks; *Veegaland*, *Fantacy Park*, *Silver Storm*, *Happy Land* and *Vismaya*.

**Veegaland**

This amusement park is the first amusement park in Kerala and situated in Kochi, in the Ernakulam district. The rides available here are space gun, wintagetornado, splash, balarama cave, crazy cars, wave pool, frog, lazer
show, musical fountain, simi magic, family pool, family rider, V ride, vertical ride, horizontal ride, net climbing and kids park.

**Fantacy Park**

Fantacy Park is located in Malamppuzha, in Palakkad district. The popular rides of here are wave pool, crazy car, water splash, wonder thumbola, lazar show, dancing car, pool rider, sky wheel, pool side race, family ride, water safari and kids park.

**Silver Storm**

This wonderful amusement park is constructed in Athirappally, in the Trissur district. The entertainments are flying Dutchman, swinging roller, coaster, tea cup, aqua dance, master blaster, wave pool, sky jet, hara-kiri, swing chair, striking cars, Jurassic splash, wild rife ride, kids pool and dragon coaster.

**Happy Land**

The amusement park, happy land, is situated in Vembayam, in the Thiruvananthapuram district. The entertainment facilities of here are wave pool, sky boat, sky, wheel, space gun, water splash, family pool, and Kids Park.

**Vismaya**

This amusement park is started very recently in Parassinikkadavu, in Kannur district. All most all types of ride like water splash, family pool, wave pool etc are here. Kids Park is a major attraction of here.

### 3. Health Tourism

The State of Kerala is maintaining the international standard of health care and medical facilities. The State is also known to have India’s highest life expectancy and lowest infant mortality rate. To the present time, our State is gaining much attention among the World, in the area of Ayurvedic medical treatment related to rejuvenation and treatment related to neurological...
disorders. Health tourism or medical tourism is also getting much attention here now. The main driving force behind the interest in and growth of healthcare tourism is the cost difference between developed nations and India. For example, the cost of a coronary bypass surgery is estimated at US$ 28,000 plus ancillary expenses in the United States. The same procedure can be performed in India for US$ 18,000 and this figure includes the cost of recuperative stay and a holiday for the patient’s family with all five star facilities. Another factor that drives the demand for healthcare tourism is the long waiting times experienced by patients who need to see a doctor. For example, the waiting time to see a doctor in the National Health Service of the UK is anything between 3 weeks and 1 year.38

Kerala offers highly specialised departments and expert surgeons. Dental treatments are also a priority of tourists to Kerala as even the most complex jaw replacement surgeries cost 50% less than international rates. Access to state-of-the-art technology and specialised orthodontic clinics are also easier in Kerala. While a hip replacement surgery cost up to US$ 12,000 outside India, the procedure would be completed in less than one third of the cost here in Kerala. Generally, estimates show that most surgeries in India cost just 1/10th of the costs in Western countries.39

Kerala, with its unique tourist experience and quality healthcare facilities will be a significant beneficiary of this growth in healthcare tourism. Kerala is already a renowned destination for Ayurvedic healthcare tourism. The challenge is to build on this reputation, improve infrastructure, connectivity, service levels, and to aggressively market destination for healthcare tourism in Western medicine as well. In the public sector, Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala has identified healthcare tourism as a thrust area and is in the process of preparing to aggressively market Kerala as a healthcare tourism destination at international tourism marts. In the private sector, the Great India Tour Company and the Kerala
Institute of Medical Sciences Hospital in Thiruvananthapuram, have teamed up to provide healthcare tourism packages to the international market.

Now, Kerala is a notable destination in the area of western health tourism. The State is equipped with expert doctors and para-medical staff with international standard and most modern equipments. There are a number of medical colleges and hospitals competitive with international level. Some of them are KIMS, MIMS, Medical Trust, Amrita Medical College, Sree Chithra Institute of Medical Science, Lakeshore Hospital etc. Non resident Keralities from all parts of the World are coming to Kerala for treatment of chronic deceases. All modern equipments for diagnosis at a cheaper rate are also available here. Best medical treatment at very low rate in comparison of international cost is available here related to the chronic ailment like heart deceases, kidney, neurological and such other complicated deceases. So many patients are coming from Mali deep, Sri Lenka, USA, South Africa, and Middle East and even from European countries and America for such treatment.

IV. Cultural environment Products

Manmade attractions which are not mainly or purposefully created to attract tourists but form part of culture of the State but which also attract the tourist is known as cultural environment products. Cultural environment of tourism is a greater interest of tourists. Tourists may have paid more interest and meaningful attention to the art forms of the country visited than the interest of the people of the host country. Cultural factors have a magnetic power to attract tourists. Many tourists showed interest to visit the birth place of famous men, architecture and historical monuments. The cultural environment of tourism is related to literature, music, drama, poetry, painting, sculpture, folklore, engraving, handicrafts, arts, fairs and festivals, monuments, architecture, historical sites, museums, religious building, cultural centres, archeological sites and centres of contemporary life. Sustaining the age old tradition, culture and custom of every country is very essential for
successful development of tourism since it is gaining much attention among tourist in the present time.

The cultural heritage of Kerala is very interesting to the tourist because it shows vast spectrum of several unique factors. Rich culture and heritage of the State improve the quality of experience of the tourist. The art forms, handicrafts, fairs and festivals, memento, folklore, architecture, religious places are very impressive to the tourists who are visiting the State. The handicrafts can provide as a best momento of an occasion for the visiting tourists to take home in remembrance of their visit to Kerala.

Kerala is the birth place of a variety of unique martial art forms. Of these, Kalaripayattu is the forerunner of the famous kungfu. Many tourists show interest in practicing this art of self defiance. Traditional performing arts like Kathakali, Mohiniattam, Theyyam, Koodiattom, and Ottamthullal, Thiruvathirakali and Chakiarkoothu and folk songs practiced traditionally render attention to the tourist. Monumental edifices like temples, churches, mosques and synagogues make the land specially attractive and unique to the tourists. The harvest and legendary festivals like Onam, Vishu, Thrissur Pooram and Aranmula Vallamkali reflect the cultural heritage of Kerala. The State is famous for handicrafts like Aranmula mirror, woodcraft and ivory work, and every tourist visiting Kerala gets attracted to them. The handloom fabrics and coir products of Kerala also reflect the traditional skills of Keralites. 41

Pilgrim centres of the State are also World famous. Even though, pilgrim centres of Kerala are visited by tourists from all over the World, particularly famous for domestic tourism. Lakhs of tourists from Kerala and outside Kerala are visiting in the pilgrim centres of the State. The famous pilgrim centres of Kerala are Sabarimala sree Ayyappan temple, Guruvayoor Sri Krishna temple, Sri Padmanabha Swamy Temple, Potta Divine Retreat Centre, Malayattoor Church, Parassurama temple, Parassinikkadavu
Muthappan Temple, and Jewish synagogue at Mattancherry.

The fairs and festivals are unique in Kerala. Thousands of tourists showed their interest in the Onam festivals, boat races, Thissur Pooram and our performing arts such as Theyyam, Kaliyattam, and Padayani etc. Tourists are coming from all over the World during the festival season to enjoy the fairs and festivals of the State. The style of our architecture is distinctive and the symbol of it is seen in the traditional houses, palaces, temple, churches and mosques of Kerala. Wood is used extensively on doors and windows, even to solid carved walls. All most all churches, temples, palaces, mosques dotting the State showcase this traditional architecture style which is very impressive. We have our own science of architecture based on the forces of nature and geo-magnetic influence of earth, which is know as “Vaasthu”. The spectacular art of the folk and classical performing art shows hundreds of years of our cultural heritage. The classical dances include Kathakali, Mohiniattam and Koodiyattam. Solo dance is also staged and is very popular. Ottamthullal, a solo dance used as a weapon to ridicule and social criticism. The ritual arts include Padayani and Theyyam. Padayani is more popular in South-Central Kerala where as Theyyam and traditional martial arts form, Kalarippayattu is more popular in Northern Kerala. An important dance among the Syrian Christians is Margamkali. It is similar to Thiruvathirakali and celebrates the legend of St. Thomas in Kerala.

Kerala is also a land with a variety of celebrations that transcend regional and religious boundaries. What stands out is the thread of harmony that runs through the different ceremonies and rituals. The most spectacular event of all, Onam, epitomises a newfound vigour and optimism about life. The festival celebrates the return of King Mahabali, who is believed to visit his subjects every year. To convince their beloved king that Kerala is still the land of milk and honey; people decorate their homes and celebrate to the fullest, sometimes even faking prosperity, to present a happy façade for their king.
Kerala is the land of backwaters and therefore the place is famous for boat races also. The boat races are mainly conducted in Alappuzha district in the water logged area of Kuttanad region. The boat races are arranged during the festival season of Onam.

1. Palaces, Museums, Monuments, Architecture, Historical and Cultural Centres

The style of our architecture is distinctive and the symbol of it is seen in the traditional houses, palaces, temples, churches and mosques in Kerala. Wood was used extensively on doors and windows, even to solid curved walls. Almost all churches, temples, palaces, mosques dotting the State showcase this traditional architecture style which is very impressive.

The State was divided into different regions and ruled by many rulers. There are so many spectacular palaces, heirlooms, art forms, architecture as a remembrance and they are kept as such. Now, Department of Tourism of the State highlights these historical, archeological, artistic palaces and places as a strong tourism product and many tourists are attracted in it. The most important cultural centres, museums, palaces, monuments, historical centres, and other cultural centres and places in the State in which tourists attracted are

Sree Chithra Art Gallery

This art gallery is located near Napier Museum and open by Sree Chithira Thirunal, Maharaja of Travancore in the year 1935. A lot of paintings of famous artists are displayed in this gallery. It includes the original paintings of Raja Ravi Varma, Svetlova and Nicholas Roerich; beautiful works from the Rajput, Mughal and Tanjore schools of art in India and Indian mural paintings from prehistoric times down to the 18th century. In addition to this, paintings from foreign countries such as Japan, Tibet, China and Bali are also in the gallery.

Napier Museum

This museum is located near zoological park in the heart of the city, built
in the 19th century is a treasure of collections of historic ornaments, ivory carving and chariots and with its eclectic collections of bronze pieces. The *Pushpaka-Vimanam* built in 1847 with its intricate carving depicting the mythological figures.

**Kuthiramalika (Puthenmalika) Palace Museum**

This palace is located very close to sree padmanabhaswamy temple at East Fort, Thiruvananthapuram; depict the traditional Travancore style of architecture. It was built by the great ruler of Travancore, Swathi Thirunal Balarama Varma. In this palace museum, there are collections of paintings. The palace is called Kuthiramalika because the roof beams of the palace are carved in the shape of horse’s heads.

**Koyikkal Palace**

This beautiful palace was built by Umayamma Rani, who ruled Venad between 1677 and 1684 and located in Nedumangad, 18 km away from Thiruvananthapuram. Now, there are two museums; Numismatics museum and Folklore museum.

**Padmanabhapuram Palace**

Located 52 km away from Thiruvananthapuram, on the way to Kanyakumari, was the palace of ex-rulers of Travancore. This wooden palace exhibits the traditional school of architecture.

**Indian School of Martial Arts**

This school of martial art is located in Vazhuthakaud, in the immediate vicinity of Thiruvananthapuram city. It is working as a recognized training centre of *Kalaripayattu*.

**CVN Kalari, Thiruvananthapuram**

This Martial art form training centre is located in the heart of Thiruvananthapuram city. This centre was established in the year 1956 for
popularising and giving training for *Kalaripayattu*. By using traditional *Ayurvedic* system of massage and herbs, *Kalarichikilsa* is also done here.

**Lighthouse, Thangasseri**

This lighthouse building is located at Thangasseri, 5 km from Kollam town. The lighthouse, built in the year 1519 by the British, has a height of 144 ft. A church built in 18th century is also here. These two monuments stand as testimonies to the years of European presence. The place is known as Thangasseri which means gold village, because in local parlance, this was the centre of activity of a flourishing trade that used gold as currency.

**Krishnapuram Palace**

This palace is located in the Southern end of Alappuzha district, Krishnapuram, just three km South of Kayamkulam. It was the erstwhile residence of the rulers of Kayamkulam Kingdom. It is a true symbol of Kerala style of architecture. The palace has collections of rare antique bronze sculptures and paintings. It is also the house of Kerala’s largest mural panels, depicting the story of *Gajendramoksham*-the largest single band of mural paintings in Kerala.

**Bolghatty Palace**

Bolghatty palace was built in 1744 by the Dutch and located in the Bolghatty Island, a scenic island in the Ernakulam city, reachable by a few minutes boat journey. Originally, the palace was the residence of the British Resident of Cochin. Now, this palace is used as a hotel run by KTDC.

**Hill Palace Museum, Thripunithura**

This marvellous Hill Palace is located 10 kms away from Ernakulam town, was used as the official residence of the Cochin royal family built in 1865. It is the first heritage museum and biggest archaeological museum in the State. The palace complex consist of 49 buildings sprawled over 52 acres of terraced land. In the compound of the palace, there is a deer park and hourse
riding facilities. The museum is also a gallery of contemporary art.

**Dutch Palace, Mattancherry**

This typical Kerala style mansion palace is located 10 km from Ernakulam city and accessible either by bus or boat services. The palace was built by the Portuguese in the year 1557 and presented to Raja Veera Kerala Varma of Cochin. It has a lot of collections of murals and display of royal paraphernalia like robes, weapons etc.

**The Synagogue, Fort Kochi**

The 500 year old Synagogue in Kochi, the oldest in the commonwealth countries, originally constructed in 1568 and destroyed in a shelling during the Portuguese raid in 1662. The Dutch rebuilt in the year 1664. The Synagogue is adorned with mid 18th century hand-painted Cantonese tiles, Hebrew inscriptions on stone slabs, old Testament scrolls, ancient scripts on copper plates in which the grants of privilege made by the erstwhile Kochi rulers were recorded and ancient scrolls of the old Testament are preserved here.

**Jew Street, Fort Kochi**

This trade centre is renowned for sale of bronze and brass sculptures, carved wooden furniture, curios, antique pieces of crockery, remnants of traditional houses and jewellers. In 52 AD, a lot of Jews settled here. The Jewish Synagogue attracts hundreds of tourist daily and is a mark of exceptional architecture and history.

**Museum of Kerala History, Edappally**

This museum of Kerala history is located 8 km from Ernakulam town is a showcase of Kerala history, from the Neolithic to the modern era through life-size figures. More than 200 original sculptures and paintings work of contemporary artists are displayed in the gallery.
Paliam Palace, Chennamangalam

This palace is located 42 km from Ernakulam town and is an example of architectural spender of Kerala. It was the residence of Paliath Achans, the Prime Ministers of the Maharajas of Cochin and has collections of historic documents and relics.

Elephant Training Centre, Kodanad

This largest elephant training centre in India is located 30 km away from Ernakulam town. Elephant is a part of Indian culture. It is the most auspicious animal in Kerala. It is an integral part of Indian mythology. In most of the events, festivals and celebrations, elephants are adorned with colourful silken parasols arranged in rows is very spectacular. This beautiful high ranges is the centre for giving training to elephants.

St. Angelo’s Fort

This fort is also called Kannur fort and was built by the first Portuguese Viceroy, Don Francisco De Almeda in 1505. Underground jail, secret tunnels to the sea, ammunition dumps, stables and an old dilapidated chapel is seen there.

Thalasseri Fort

This historic monument located 22 km away from Kannur was constructed by the East India Company in the year 1683 and used as a military centre of the British Government. It is a testimonial of European presence in the country.

Malayala Kalagramam

Malayala Kalagramam is a specialized centre for conducting courses in dance, painting, yoga, Sanskrit, sculpture, and music and art pottery. It is a centre to practise and perform all type of fine arts.
Bekal Fort

This is the most and best preserved Forts in Kerala. This 300 year old Fort is a circular structure of laterite rises 130 ft above sea level and stands on a 35 acre headland that runs into the Arabian Sea. There is an observation tower which offers an excellent view of the Arabian Sea. Now Bekal Fort is an international tourist destination surrounded with backwaters, hill stations and water sport facilities.

Chandragiri Fort

This Fort was built in 17th century by Sivappa Naik of Bedanore on the banks of Chandrigiri River. It offers a marvellous breathtaking view of the Chandrigiri River and the Arabian Sea. Here, tourists are provided with the facility of boating also.

Poonjar Palace

Poonjar palace is located at Poonjar in the Kottayam district. It is a splendid testimony to the royal remembrance of a past era. There is a special royal collection of antiques and exquisite furniture. A unique shellfish with a large spiral shell is preserved here and taken out once a year for ritualistic purposes.

Archaeological Museum

This museum is located in Thrissur. This was the summer palace of Raja of Kollengode. It is an architectural miracle and a picture gallery of mural paintings from all over Kerala. It has a collection of rare veerakallu, megaliths and temple models. Excellent temple models in plaster of paris exhibits the ancient temples in the State.

Kerala Kalamandalam

Kerala Kalamandalam, the most revered places for the traditional art forms of Kerala, is located at Cheruthuruthy, 35 km from Thrissur. It is the cradle of Kathakali training in India. When Kathakali was under the threat of
extinction, the renowned Malayalam poet Vallathol Narayana Menon established Kalamandalam in 1930. A number of courses of traditional art forms of Kerala have been conducting here. The ancient Gurukula system of education is followed.

**Beypore**

Beypore is an important fishing harbor and marine trading centre of ancient Kerala. Now this place is famous on account of boat building yard. It has a tradition of 1500 years for the construction of the ‘Uru’, the Arabian trading vessel.

**Pazhassiraja Museum and Art Gallery**

This art gallery is located at East Hill; 5 km away from Kozhikode town is a veritable treasure trove for historians and expert evaluators of art. So many historical and fine arts such as copies of ancient murals, old coins, antique bronzes, models of temple, excavated earthenware, megalithic monuments like dolmonoid cysts and umbrella stones. The art gallery exhibits paintings of Raja Ravi Varma and his uncle Raja Raja Varma.

**CVN Kalari, Nadakkavu**

This training centre of *Kalaripayattu* is located very near to Kozhikode railway station and started in the year 1955. The training in *Kalarippayattu* and *Kalari* way of ayurvedic treatment for muscular, neuro and orthopedic disorders and body massaging for general health are also done here. So many tourists are visiting here to attend lecture, demonstrations, workshop and for short term duration courses.

**Palakkad Fort**

This fort is also known as Tipu’s Fort. It was built by the father of Tipu Sulthan, Hyder Ali, in 1766 AD, the ruler of Mysore Kingdom to facilitate communication between both sides of the Western Ghats. Now, this fort is one of the best preserved forts in Kerala.
Ambalavayal Heritage Museum

This heritage museum is located 10 km from Sulthan Bathery, in the Wayanad district is one of the best heritage museums in Kerala. It is the house of belongings of various tribes of the land. The collections are remnants of an era dating back to the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century AD.

Edakkal Caves

Located at a height of 1000 m on Ambukuthy Mala near Ambalavayal are the Edakkal Caves. Nature representations on these cave walls made by Neolithic Celts were first identified by a British on a hunting trip. The New Stone age pictorial writings on the walls are evidence of the prehistoric civilization that existed in these regions and have the distinction of being the first specimen of abraded drawings found in India. Ancient stone scripts, symbol and cave drawings of wheels, bows, pictorial wall inscriptions of human and animal figures, knives are found in the cave. It exhibits 7000 year old symbol of human habitation.

Punnathoorkotta

In Kerala, elephants have been considered auspicious symbol and elephant-faced Lord Ganapathy is worshiped by millions of people in India. Punnathoorkotta is a unique hostel for elephants. In this centre, we can see every activity related to elephant such as training, traditional way of treatment etc.

2. Art Forms of Kerala

The spectacular art of the folk and classical performing art shows hundreds of years of our cultural heritage. The classical dances include Kathakali, Mohiniyattam and Koodiyattam. Solo dance is also staged and is very popular. Ottamthullal, a solo dance used as a weapon to ridicule and criticize the society. The ritual arts include Padayani and Theyyam. Padayani is more popular among South-Central Kerala, where as Theyyam and
traditional martial art form, Kalarippayattu are more popular in Northern Kerala. An important dance among Syrian Christians is Margamkali. It similar to Thiruvathirakali and celebrates the legend of St. Thomas in Kerala. The most important dance popular among Malabar Muslims is Oppana, staged as an entertainment at wedding ceremonies and festivals, often teasing comments and innuendoes about the bride’s anticipated nuptial bliss. All these dances have their distinctive styles of performance, mudras, attires and techniques of expression and mark the celebrations of certain occasions, traditions and customs and religious ceremonies and a bright pattern of the colourful Kerala culture that has cascaded down the generation. Many legends are related with the dances of Kerala. Some of these dances are colourful expressions of the events noted in the great Indian epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana.

The art forms of Kerala are mainly classified into three; Ritual arts, Performing Arts and Martial art form. The ritual art forms are Theyyam, Padayani, Poothanumthirayum, Mudiyettu, Koothu, Arjunanritham, Kannyarkali, Velakali, Kalamezhuthu, Margom Kali and Theeyattu. The performing art forms are Kathakali, Mohiniyattam, Thullal, Koodiyattam, Thiruvathirakali, Oppana, Kolkkali, Duffmuttu and Krishnanattom and Kalaripayattu is the martial art form. For the purpose giving training to children and youngsters, a stage or Kalari is functioning at New Mahe, 29 km away from Kannur. The Kalari is known as Malayala Kalagramam. Here all forms of fine arts are practised such as painting, sculpture, music and dance and art pottery. Yoga is also practised in the Kalari. Kerala Kalamandalam near Thrissur is one and only institute in India

A. Ritual Art Forms

Kerala has a rich repertoire of folk performing arts, folk songs and folk drama reflecting man’s overpowering rapport with nature and his constant desire for communication with unknown. The tribals of Kerala, adivasis (the first native people), keep alive a folklore tradition in the eco-friendly life they
lead and the natural pharmacy they practice. Theyyam, Thira, Mudiyettu, Kaduvakali, Velakali, Kakkarissi, Natakam, Chavittunatakam, Margamkali, Kolkali, Parichamuttukali, Bhadrakalipattu, Pulluvanpattu, Thiruvathirakali and so on are only a few of Kerala’s folk art forms, some of them being ritual arts. Theyyam exists in four hundred different forms. The brilliantly painted masks worn by the artist of Theyyam, Padayani, and so on are fine examples of the crafts of Kerala. The masks and headgear of Theyyam symbolize social consciousness and a sense of morality. The best time to enjoy the performing arts of Kerala is during January and February, the time of temple festivals. 44

**Theyyam**

Theyyam is a ritual dance form of the State performed by men only. However, female characters are also staged by wearing perfect make up and colourful costumes. Themes revolve around the victories of the goddess over the devil and other evil characters. It is usually performed by people belonging to the castes of Malayan and Vannan. The most popular forms of Theyyam are Kari Chamundi, Raktha Chamundi, Wayanadu Kulaveni, Muchilottu Bhagavathi, pattan and Gulikan. This ritual art form is popular in Northern Kerala.

**Padayani**

This ritual art form is more popular in Southern part of Kerala staged in Kaali temples. The characters of this ritual dance are called Kolam. Kolam will vary according to the difference in characters. It is a week-long dance programmed in the Malayalam months of Meenam and Medam in temples on the banks of Pamba River. The instruments used for the performance are Chendas and Thappu. Othara in Pathanamthitta district, Kadalimangalam and Kadammanitta are very popular for this ritual art form.

**Arjuna Nritham**

Arjuna is the hero of the five heroic brothers – the pandavas in the epic
Mahabharatha. Arjuna Nritham is a major ritual art form of Kerala staged in the Bhagavathy temples throughout the night. It is a tribute to the renowned dancer and singer, Arjuna and is said to have propitiated goddess Bhadrakaali by a devotional presentation. This dance form is also known as Mayilppeeli nritham because the costume used is made out of mayilppeeli, which are peacock feathers. The dancers have painted their faces green and distinctive headgears. The songs sung are called kavithangal which are rhythmic. The themes are based on the stories of puranas (ancient Hindu scriptures). Chenda, maddalam, ilathalam and talachenda are used as musical percussion background.

Koothu

It is a socio-religious art in the form of social satire related to customs of the time. Koothu is staged in the Koothambalam or Koothuthara of temples. The theme and stories are from the epics of Ramayana and Mahabharatha. It is a one man narrative performance interspersed with mime and comic interludes. Any person can be ridiculed in this art form. This dance is frequently accompanied by the percussion instrument Mzhavu. Koothu is performed by the people of Chakkair community. The Chakkair acts as Vidushka or the wise jester. One more form of Koothu is also staged, called, Nangiar Koothu. It is performed by female members of the Chakkair community. This dance drama is related to the legends of Sree Krishna. This art form is performed on the stages of Sri Krishna temple at Ambalappuzha, Koodalmanikyam temple at Erinjalakkuda and Vadakkumnatha temple at Thrissur etc.

Poothanumthirayum

This ritual art form is not performed in temples, but from house to house in the South Malabar area between November and May every year. It is an offering to Goddess Kaali. A group of actors dress up as Kaali. They are accompanied by another group called spirits or Poothams. Kaali wears masks
the spirits wear semi-circular wooden crowns.

**Kannyarkali**

This folk art form is performed by people belonging to *Nair* community in Palakkad region, staged in temples and *thara*, comprising of six to twenty dancers, lasting for a period of four days. The first day’s performance is known as *Iravakali*, second day’s is named *Anadikoothu*, third day’s is known as *Vallon* and last day’s is known as *Malama*. The last day’s performance is staged by hill tribes in which women also participate. This art form brings together the quick movements of martial arts with the rhythmic grace of folk dance performed around a *nilavilakku*. The folk dance is backed by devotional folk songs. Percussion instruments like *chenda, edakka, udukku* and *maddalam* are also used as background of the songs.

**Kalamezhuthu**

It is a ritual to worship and praise gods like *Ayyappan, Kaali* etc. The artist uses floor as the canvas and different colour powder are used for the drawing. It is a beautiful drawing of pictures of different goddess. It is also called *Dhulee chithram* and drawn in front of temples and noble householders. The pictures drawn show the expressions of anger, and other emotions. It is a festival of *Ayyappan* temples of the State and lasting for a period of forty one days begins with the first day of the Malayalam month of *Vrischikam* every year.

**Velakali**

This art form originated in Ampalappuzha, in the Alappuzha district, when the Mathoor Panicker was the chief of Champakasseri army and still staged at the Ampalappuzha Sree Krishna temple in the annual festivals. The dancers clothed in the traditional clothes and colourful headgear of the medieval Nair soldiers, engage in strong and active movements and showing sword play. *Maddalam, Kuzhal, Ilathalam* and *Kombu* are used as percussion instruments.
Mudiyettu

This ritual art form is staged in the Kaali temples of Central Kerala, particularly Ernakulam and Kottayam districts by Kurup or Marar community. Before starting the performance, a ritual drawing of the goddess Kaali is made on the floor with dyed powders called Kalamemezhuthu. After that the dancer erases the Kolam with tender palm fronds. The dance is backed by chorus singing hymns in praise of the goddess. The dancer or Kaali wear a wooden headgear mask, gorgeous attire with conventional facial painting and tall headgears to make a touch of supernatural power.

Theeyattu

It is a solo dance drama performed by a small group of temple bound community called Unni, in front of the Kolam or Dhooli Chitram. Dhooli Chitram is just like Kalamezhuthu, a ritual drawing with coloured powders. The dance starts with the prayer to Lord Ganapathy, Lord Siva and goddess Saraswathy. After that a smaller crown is worn by the performer. Some stories are narrated through this ritual, the most popular story being the duel between goddess Kaali and the demon Daarikan. It is usually staged in some Bhagavathy temples of Central Kerala; Kottayam, Thripunithura, Thiruvalla etc.

Margom Kali

This ritual is popular among the Syrian Christians of Thrissur and Kottayam Districts. It mixes singing and dancing. A group of women comprising of twelve members sing and dance around a lighted wick lamp wearing with white traditional Dhothi. The performance has two stages; the first stage begins with songs and dances explaining the life of St. Thomas, the apostle. The second stage is a turning point which takes a striking turn with a martial play of artificial swords and shields. The singing of song is very melodious. Now this ritual art form is staged in churches and is an item in the competition of school youth festival.
B. Performing Arts of Kerala

The tradition of classical arts in Kerala dates back to thousand years. *Koodiyattam*, a dance drama associated with temple rituals is perhaps the oldest of these. *Kathakali*, popular as the art form of Kerala has been referred to as ‘the first theatre of imagination’ of the World owing to its elaborate costumes, ornaments and facial make-up. *Mohiniyattam*, the dance of the enchantress, reflects the graceful nature of the land. The movements of the dancer have been compared to the palms swaying in the gentle breeze and sweeping waves which are so much a part of Kerala’s lush landscape. *Thullal*, another classical art form is social satire at its best, and keeps the audience in a constant state of merriment. *Ottamthullal*, *parayanthullal* and *seethanganthullal* are the three different forms of *Thullal*.45

*Kathakali*

This art form is unparalleled to any other types of art forms of Kerala and riches of a happy blending of expressions, drama, dance, music and colour. It is evolved about four hundred years back from other performing arts like *Koodiyattam, Kalarippayattu* and *Krishnanattam*.

*Figure 6.21*
Kathakali narrates the stories from the Indian epics and Puranas. It begins with beating of drums. Chengila (gong) is also used as percussion. Only talented artists can perform this art form. It requires long and rigorous training to attain complete control of body and sensitivity to emotion so as to be enabling to render all its nuances through facial expressions and hand, limb and body movement.

Thullal

Thullal is a classical satiric solo dance form, introduced by the renowned poet Kunchan Nambiar in the 18th century and staged during temple festivals in Kerala. There are three forms of Thullal; Ottamthullal, Parayanthullal and Seethanthullal. However, Ottamthullal is more popular and usually staged in temples during festivals, is an entertainment to many people who gather at these events. The theme of this art form is based on mythology and very closely related to contemporary life, notable for its simplicity, humor and wit.

Mohiniyattam

This dance form was very popular in the Chera region during the period of 9th to 12th century and also known as ‘Dasattam’ because it was performed by temple dancers called Devadasees. This solo dance is very lyrical in its performance and has a touch of Bharathanatyam and the classical and folk dances of Kerala. Slow, graceful, swaying gestures of the body and limbs and highly arousing emotion of eye and hand movements are peculiar to this dance form. This classical dance form is originated from Hindu mythology. Once, the ocean of milk was churned by the gods and devils to extract the elixir of life and immorality. The devils made away with this divine brew. Lord Vishnu came to help the panicky gods and assumed the female form of an amorous celestial dame Mohini. Captivating the devils with her charms, Mohini stole the elixir from them and resort it to be the Gods.
Krishnanattom

Krishnanattom narrates the story of whole span of life of Lord Krishnana, from his birth to ascension to the heavens. The traditional performance of this dance extended a period of eight days. It is performed by a group of artists, some of them bear varied and colourful facial make-up with larger-than-life-masks, made with light wood and cloth padding and the others have specific facial colours applied within the frame of a white chutti. This form of art is backed by orchestra like Maddalam, Chenda and Ilathalam.

Koodiyattom

Koodiyattom is Kathkali’s 2000 year old predecessor form of classical dramatic art staged in temples and evolved in 9th century AD. The theme of of Koodiyattom is based on Hindu mythology. There are two or more characters on the stage at the same time; the Chakkiars and the Nangiars. Chakkiars represented the male characters and the Nangiars act the role of female characters. The background Nambiars play a large copper drum called Mizhavu and the Nangiars beat the cymbals and recite poem in Sanskrit. This
classical dramatic art form is now performed in Vadakkumnatha temple at Thrissur and Koodal Manickyam temple at Irinjalakuda.

**Thiruvathirakali**

It is the most popular dance form of Kerala, performed by a group of women around a *nilavilakku* usually on the *Thiruvathira* day in the Malayalam month of Dhanu to attain everlasting marital bliss. The peculiarity of this dance is that no orchestra is used, but only singing of songs accompanied by clapping of the hands. The myth states that the dance is a celebration of marital fidelity and the female energy, for this is what brought Kamadeva (the god of love) back to life after he was reduced to ashes by the ire of Lord Siva. The sinuous movements executed by a group of dancers around a *nilavilakku* embody ‘*lasya*’ or the amorous charm and grace of the feminine.

**Oppana**

This dance form is very popular among Malabar Muslims and is an entertainment during wedding occasions. Now it is staged as a usual item of stage dance. Maidens sat on a chair and her young female relatives dance and sing around the bride, clapping their hands. The songs of *Mappilapattu* are first sung by a leader among them and are repeated by the others. The themes are penetrating and teasing comments and indirect suggestions about the bride’s anticipated nuptial bliss.

**Kolkkali**

This folk art form is popular among Malabar Muslim men and is a highly rhythmic with the dancers wielding short sticks. Here, harmonious synchronization of the tapping of the feet to the striking of the stick by the dancers in accordance with the rhythm of the dance. The artists sing as they dance and strike the sticks unanimously in a circular form. The dancers often break away to different patterns; however, they never miss a beat.
Daffmuttu

*Daffmuttu* is also popular among Malabar Muslims and a usual art performance during marriage ceremonies and festivals. It is also known as *Aravanamuttu* because the percussion used for the performance *Aravana* or *Daffu*. The leader sings and beats on *Daffu* and the others form the chorus and move in a circle.

C. Martial art forms

This martial art form originated from the war field. In Kerala, the country was ruled by small rulers and the rulers maintain a militant force. Actually, each ruler maintains a *Kalari* for practising the soldiers. The most important, oldest and scientific martial art form of Kerala is *Kalarippayattu*. Training in fight is given at *Kalari* or training school. It begins with an oil massage of body which is continued until the body is quick moving and supple. The next step is practising of jumping, running, somersault etc. Finally the combat is given the training for using weapons such as swords, daggers, maces, spears, the bow and arrow and so on. *Kalari* is considered as a place of religious worship.

*Figure 6.23*

![Kalaripayattu](Source: www.keralatourism.org)
3. Fairs and Festivals

Fairs and festivals are unique in Kerala. Thousands of tourists showed their interest in Onam festivals, boat races, Thrissur pooram and performing art like, Theyyam, Kathakali, and Padayani etc. Kerala is famous for boat races also. The boat races are mainly conducted in Alappuzha district in the water logged area of Kuttanad region. The boat races are arranged during the festival season of Onam. Tourists are coming from all over the World during the festival season to enjoy the fairs and festivals of Kerala.

There are more than three thousand temples in the State and each temple celebrates annual festival. The important festivals are Arattupuzha Pooram, Nenmara Vallangivela, Thrissur Pooram, Uthralikkavu Pooram, Chinakkathoor Pooram, Pariyanampetta Bhagavathy Temple Pooram, Onam Festival, Gajamela at Adoor Parthasarathy Temple, Thripunithura Athchamayam, Pulikkal (Tiger Dance), Tourism Week Celebrations, Thirunakkara Arattu, Vaikathashtami Festival, Kodungalloor Bharani, Chettikulangara Bharani, Thaipooya Maholsavam, Machattu Mamankam, Kalpathy Chariot Festival or Ratholsavam, Malanada Kettukazhcha, Armula Boat Races, Nehru Trophy Boat Races, Champakulam Boat Races, Payippad Boat Races, Manarkadu Perunal, Kottayam, Parumala Perunal, Malayattoor Perunal, Vettukadu perunal, Arthunkaln Perunal etc. 46

Onam Festival

Kerala is the land of fairs and festivals. The festivals of Kerala form an unbreakable thread that co-ordinates the religious traditions of the past with the present. Onam is an important harvest festival of Kerala which is an ideal reflection of the culture of the State. It is celebrated in the Malayalam month of Chingam, every year. Every house of Kerala is cleaned and decorated, children sport new dress and women wear traditional dress called Kasavmund. They celebrate Onam with great enthusiasm and pomp. Women dance around brass lamps called Nilavilakku in exultation to welcome the legendary King Mahabali.
There are so many legends connected with the celebration of Onam Festival. The most popular among them is related to the great King Mahabali. The King Mahabali was a great ruler of Kerala. People loved him so much because, he was very just and religious. His descendants were demons. During his reign, people enjoyed very much freedom, prosperity, enthusiasm and happiness. There were no poor people. All are equal. All resources are equally shared.

The unparalleled attachment, love and affection of people with the ruler creates jealous even among gods. To overcome this situation, all the gods prayed to the Lord Vishnu to do something immediately to solve the drastic problem. Then Lord Vishnu appeared on earth, disguised as a poor Brahmin. He went begging for alms to the great King Mahabali. King Mahabali asked to the poor Brahmin ‘What do you want’? The Brahmin said ‘I want all the land that could cover in my three steps.’ The kind Mahabali accepted the demand without any hesitation. Lord Vishnu covered the whole land and sea with his first step. He covered the heaven in his second step. Then, King Mahabali identified Lord Vishnu and offered the Lord his head for the third and final step. Then King Mahabali was sent to the gangland. However, Lord Vishnu permitted King Mahabali to come and meet his favorite subjects once in a year. The people of Kerala believed that King Mahabali visits Kerala on the day of Thiruvonam, in the Malayalam Month of Chingam, every year. Hence the people of Kerala prepare to welcome their most respectable and beloved ruler every year and celebrate Onam.

Thrissur Pooram

Thrissur is known as the cultural capital of Kerala. The important art institutions of the State are situated here. The place is mainly known among outside due to the prestigious festival celebrated in every year called ‘Thrissur Pooram’. Spectacular procession of decorated elephants, dance and music competitions, cultural shows, percussion performances, prayer, worship, and
other colourful fiestas brightens up the Trissur Pooram festival. It is a special religious event celebrated during the month of April or May. This festival is a common man’s festival. People of different religions come together to enjoy this mega event and Gaja Mela and most wonderful pooram or Vedikett (display of fireworks).

Figure 6.24

Boat Races

Kerala has a wide stretch of backwaters. Alappuzha is the main venue of the races. Boat Races are the occasions of great excitement and entertainment and an expression of the unified force that binds the people of Kerala into one big happy family. Team spirit of oarsmen, joyous celebrations, enthusiasm, happiness and healthy competitions are the most important part of boat races. Among boat races, Nehru Trophy Boat Race is very popular. There is a story behind this race. In 1952, Jawaharlal Nehru visited Kerala. Four chundan vallams went to receive him. A sample snake boat race was also organized and Nehru was very much attracted in it and in a mood of excitement he got into one of the boats. When he returned to Delhi, he sent a silver trophy for giving to the winners of snake boat races, there after the snake boat race is duly
named in the name Nehru. It is conducted during the festival season in the month of August across the Punnamada Lake in Alappuzha. Besides this race, there are some other boat races also. They are Aranmula Uthrattadi Boat Race, Chambakulam Moolam Boat Race, Karuvatta Boat Race, Kumaranasan Smaraka Jalotsavam, Neerettupuram Boat Race, Kottayam Mahatma Boat Race, Kumarakom Arpookara Vanitha jalamela, Rajeev Gandhi Boat Race and Kavanattinkara Boat Race.

**Grand Kerala Shopping Festival**

Tourism may be accompanied by shopping also. Sometimes, tour may be arranged solely for the purpose of shopping. For example, people from all over the World visite Dubai during Dubai Shopping Festival. The government of Kerala, in association with Department of Tourism and various business firms of the State have been conducting Grand Kerala Shopping since 2007 during the peak season of tourism from December 1\textsuperscript{st} to January 15\textsuperscript{th} to enable the tourists to purchase the traditional products, handicrafts, spices and other products of Kerala. Now, thousands of tourists are attracted in the shopping festival. Kerala celebrates the fifth edition of the Grand Kerala Shopping Festival in 2011-12.

4. Pilgrim Tourism

Kerala has a number of pilgrimages of importance to Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Jains. Pilgrim centres of the State are also World famous. Even though, pilgrim centres of Kerala are visited by tourists from all over the World, domestic tourists show more interest in it. Thousands of tourists from Kerala and outside the State are visiting in the pilgrim centres of the State. There are more than 3000 temples in the State. The famous temples, churches and mosques of the State are

**Sabarimala**

Among the pilgrim centres, the most important one is Sabarimala Sri
Ayyappan Temple. It is situated 65 km from Pathanamthitta. It is dedicated to Lord Ayyappa, located on the mountain ranges of the Western Ghats at a height of 914 m above sea level. This place is accessible only by foot from Pamba, 4 km away. It is a major pilgrim centre of India. Millions of devotees are visiting the shrine every year. Except women in the fertility age group, people of all caste and creed are allowed into the precincts of the shrine of the Lord Ayyappa who is believed to be an eternal bachelor. The main pilgrim season is November to mid-January. The two main festivals are Mandalapooja and Makaravilakku which are during the pilgrim season.

Guruvayoor Temple

This temple is situated 29 km West of Thrissur, and is famous in the history of Kerala because it was the main centre of an historic non-violent struggle for temple entry rights to the common man. The Sree Krishna Temple here is considered as the Dwaraka of the South. People believed that the temple is the creation of Guru and Vayu. Guru is the preceptor of God and Vayu is the God of wind. The main attraction of the temple is there is a gold plated flag post of 33.5 meter height and 7 meter height of pillar of lamps. It is a spectacular view when these pillar lamps lighted. The most important worship is Thulabharam, where a devotee is weighted against coconut, bananas and sugar equivalent to his weight. There are restrictions relating to dress code also and only Hindus are permitted to enter inside the temple.

Padmanabha Swamy Temple

This temple is located in the capital city of the State. Now this temple has captured the attention of people around the World due to collection of unbelievable treasure of ornaments of gold and other precious metals. More than ₹ 1, 00,000 crores have been accounted so far but it still remains that a lot of ornaments of gold and other precious metals are unaccounted. The Dravidian style of architecture, mural paintings and stone carving are the peculiarities of this temple and it is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The idol is
made with rare composition of metals and gold plated. There is restriction relating to dress code and only Hindus are permitted to enter inside the temple.

**Beemapalli**

Beemapalli is located 12 km South West of Thirunananthapuram and is a famous Muslim pilgrim centre. Beemapalli Dargghah is dedicated to a Muslim woman Bee Umma. It is believed that she had some spiritual powers. The most important tourist attraction of this mosque is that the festival called Chandanakudam which lasts for 10 days.

**Parasurama Temple, Thruvallam**

This 2000 year old temple is dedicated to the mythological creator of the State, Sree Parasurama and is situated 7 km from Thiruvananthapuram, on the banks of Karamana River.

**Janardhana Swamy Temple**

This 2000 year old Vishnu temple is located near Varkala. The Hindu pilgrims come here to pay final rites for the deceased relatives.

**Attukal Bhagavathy Temple**

This temple is located near Thiruvananthapuram. The main festival of this temple is ‘pongala’ lasting for a period of 10 days. Lakhs of women participate in this festival. It is an offering of sweet porridge to the goddess. The devotees cook it in a clay pot by using open fire. The Attukal Bhagavathy Temple got entry in the Guinness book of World Records several times because of a large multitude of women are participating in it every year in the Pongala Festival.

**Malanada Duryodhana Temple**

This temple is located in Kollam district and is dedicated to the anti-hero in the epic Mahabharatha, Duryodhana. It was believed that after a pursuit of Duryodhana by the Pandavas, the former was tired, at that time food and shelter was given to him by the local community of people called
Kuravas. The priest of the temple is belonging to Kurava community.

**St. Mary’s Orthodox Church**

This church is a symbol of communal harmony and located at Kallada, 30 km away from Kollam. Here we can see 700 years old wooden beam which has a Muslim crescent, symbol of cross and sign of Hindu.

**Parabrahma Temple, Ochira**

This temple is a famous one in the Kollam district and located in the Northern end of the district and 5 km away from Matha Amrithananthapuri Ashramam, the residence and headquarters of the World famous and recognized extraordinary spiritual leader, Matha Amrithanandamayi. The important specialty of this temple is that there is no deity or idol in the temple. The main offering of this temple is colourfully decorated Ochira bulls which is the symbol of Nandi-Siva’s vehicle. The main festivals are Panthrandu Vilakku, Ochirakkali and 28th onam.

**Cherizheekal Temple.**

This is a twin temple of both Siva and Vishnu. The house of temple was built about 2000 years back and was dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The temple celebrates 10 days festival during Sree Krishna Jayanthi.

**Achankovil**

The temple is similar to that of the famous shrine at Sabarimala. It is believed that the idol of lord Ayyappa here was set apart by the Lord Parassurama himself.

**Aranmula Parthasarathy Temple**

This Sree Krishna temple is located on the banks of the holy River Pumba and is attracted by thousands of devotees. It is believed that the idol was brought here in a raft made with aru (six) pieces of mula (bamboo).
Sree Vallabha Temple, Thiruvalla

This temple is dedicated to Sree Vallabha and is famous for Kathakali performance. The Garuda Stambha of here is very attractive. It was constructed by the great architect Perunthachan. A ten days festival is celebrated here.

Thekkekudi Cave Temple

This temple is a symbol of Pallava style of architecture, believed to be the earliest specimen of stone sculpture in Kerala. This Siva Temple exhibits the great archaeological significance prevailed in the State during the 8th century AD.

Mannadi

This ancient temple is very much important in the history of Kerala. The renowned freedom fighter of Travancore, Veluthampi Dalawa, spent his last days here. It is more popular on account of outstanding stone sculptures.

Niranam St Thomas Church

This church was one of the churches in India, believed to have been originally constructed in 52 AD by the apostle St. Thomas. Later on in 1912, it was reconstructed. The main attraction of here to a tourist is the St. Thomas Art Gallery.

Pandalam Valiya Koikkal Temple

This temple is very significant in connection with the festival of Sabarimala Sree Ayyappan Temple. People visiting Sabarimala visits first here then only they proceed to Sabarimala. It is situated near Pandalam Palace on the banks of Achankovil River. At the time of Makaravilakku festival, the sacred ornaments of Sree Ayyappan are taken from here to Sabarimala in a procession.
Ampalappuzha Sree Krishna Temple

This temple is located 15 km South of Alappuzha and renowned all over India for its daily offering of a milk and rice pudding called *Ampalappuzha Palpayasam*. It is the temple in which the renowned poet Kunchan Nambiar staged his satiric art form, *Ottanthullal* at the first time. Here we can see the paintings of the *Dasavatharam*, the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu, on the inner walls of the *Chuttambalam*. *Pallipana* is performed in this temple by *Velans* once in every twelve years.

Edathua Church

This church is located 24 km away from Alappuzha and is a major pilgrim centre of Christians. Thousands of pilgrims are participating in the annual festival called *Edathua Perunal* held on 5th, 6th and 7th May. People believe that offerings and prayers at the church has the power to cure mental diseases and curing other deceases.

Parumala

This sacred church is 2000 year old and is one of the oldest churches in India. The *Ormaperunal* (commemoration) of Mar Gregorios Metropolitan celebrated on 1st and 2nd November every year is very important and many Christian pilgrims participate in the occasion.

Mannarasala Sree Nagaraja Temple

This famous temple is located near Haripad in the Alappuzha district. Hundreds of snakes are living around the temple and it has about 30000 images of snake gods. Childless women come here for blessing for getting children. It is believed that special turmeric paste at shrine has the power to cure all diseases even leprosy and the first priestess of the temple gave birth to a five headed snake which is still there to protect the family.
Chettikulangara Bhagavathy Temple

This temple is located at Mavelikara in the Alappuzha district and is famous for *Kettukazhcha* in the festival, processions of decorated effigies of bullocks, horses, tall decorated structures on chariots and other cultural performance make the annual *Bharani* festival more beautiful event.

St. Mary’s Orthodox Church, Cheriapalli

This church was built by Thekkumkoor Maharaj in the Kerala and Portuguese architectural style. Beautiful murals on walls in Western and oriental style made the church more attractive to the visitors.

Juma Masjid, Thazhathangadi

This 1000 year old Masjid is located 2 km from Kottayam is one of the oldest Masjids in India. The mosque is extensively covered by wooden gabled roof and beautiful windows look the mosque like a palace.

Thirunakkara Mahadevar Temple

This temple is in the immediate vicinity of Kottayam town and was built by Thekkumkoor Maharaj about 500 years back. Colourful murals on the walls exhibit Kerala Style of architecture.

Mahadevar Temple, Ettumanoor

This temple is famous for painting. The main attraction of this temple is the painting of *Nataraja* in the gopuram and *ezharaponnana* (the 7 ½ elephants finished in gold). *Ezharonnana ezhunnulath*, a ten days festival is another attraction to pilgrims.

St. Mary’s Church, Manarcaad

This Malankara Jacobite Syrian Christian Church is situated 8 km away from Kottayam. The main religious festival of this church is the *Ettunompe* (8 days fasting) in which a lot of devotees from the State are participated.
Siva Temple, Vaikom

This temple is famous in the name annual festival called *Vaikathashtami*. This temple is known as the Kasi of the South and exhibits the traditional style of Kerala’s temple architecture and also famous for traditional art performance.

Vavarambalam, Erumeli

This temple is a symbol of communal harmony of the State. Every pilgrim going to *Sabarimala Ayyappan* temple, first pay a visit to *Vavarambalam*. *Pettathullal* is the main festival held here.

St. Mary’s Church, Kudamaloor

This church was constructed by *Chempakasser* Maharajah about 800 years back and the main ritual offering followed here is a traditional water bag and rope used to take water from the well.

Pazhayapalli, Changanacherry

This 950 years mosque is located 21 km away from Kottayam. The main festival of this mosque is *Thangal adiyantbiram* and *chandanakuddam*. A community feast is arranged with two tones of rice and meat offered by the devotees.

Magala Devi Temple

This temple is located 15 km from Thekkady in the top of a peak. It has 2000 years old and exhibits traditional Kerala style of architecture. The main festival of the temple is the *chithra pournamni* festival.

Karikodu Bhagavathy Temple

This 460 years old temple is situated opposite of *Annamalai* temple in the Idduki district and is famous for its festival *Kumbba Bharani*. Thousands of devotees are participating in this event.
Chottanikkara Temple

This temple was built in the 10th century and located 16 km from Ernakulam. This temple enshrines the Goddess Bhagavathy in three forms namely, Saraswathy, Durga and Bhadrakali. It is believed that the goddesses have the power to cure mental illness.

Kanjiramattom Mosque

This important Muslim pilgrim centre is located 18 km away from Kochi and is famous on account of its Mazbars and Dargabs. The annual festival of this mosque is the Chandanakudam in which the devotees honour the saint Sheikh Fariduddin by carrying pots covered with sandalwood paste.

St. Francis Church

This oldest European church was built in 1503 by Portuguese Franciscan friars in wood. Later on the church was reconstructed in stone masonry. Vasco da Gama was buried here in 1524.

Thrikkakara Vamanamoorthy Temple

This temple has great importance in the history of Kerala. Thrikkakara is considered as the capital of Mahabali’s kingdom. This beautiful temple is located near Ernakulam. This is the only temple in Kerala dedicated to Vamana. Ten days Onam festival is held in this temple.

Cheraman Juma Masjid, Kodungalloor

It is the oldest mosque in India and second oldest in the World where Friday prayers are held. It built just seven years after the migration of Prophet Mohammed from Mecca to Medina, in 628 AD and is open to people belonging all caste and creed.

Marthoma Mariyam Chaldean Church

This church is called Valiyapalli because it is the one of the oldest churches in India. During the 18th century, Sakthan Thampuran settled 64
Syrian Christians in Thrissur. The church is the headquarters of the Chaldean Syrian Church (Church of the East) in India.

**Vadakkumnathan Temple**

This is an important temple in Thrissur district where the *pooram* festival is held every year. This temple is a true example of the Kerala style of architecture. It has many decorative murals and art work. The most spectacular event of the temple is the fireworks at *Thrissur pooram*.

**Thiruvalathoor Temple**

This temple is located 8 km away from Palakkad. The stone sculptures work and woodwork appearing in the ancient temple are very attractive. The outer wall of the temple is still incomplete. The legend is that the outer wall of the temple was constructed by an army of gods who worked at it the whole night but left it unfinished when begin to grow light because they did not want to be seen by humans. People believed that it cannot be completed by human beings.

**Irinjalakuda Koodal Manikyam Temple**

This temple is perhaps the only temple in India with *Bharatha* as the deity. The colourful eleven days annual festival makes the end of the Hindu temple festival season in the State.

**Basilica of our Lady of Dolores**

This Roman Catholic Church is the biggest and tallest church in Asia built in 1875. This church is also called *Valiyapalli* because of with its three-storied façade and even higher steeples that tower above the town’s skyline. The other attractions of this church are beautiful mural paintings of the Holy Trinity, architectural marvel, an array of 15 altars and musical church bells.
St. Mary’s Forane Church, Koratty

This church was built in 1381. As a pilgrim centre, this church is second only to Velankanni. During the annual festival, the statue of Koratty Muthy is taken out in a procession from the church. It is believed that all persons visiting the shrine are blessed with Koratty Muthy.

Kumarapuram Temple

This is an important temple in Palakkad district and a popular centre of Vedic learning. The deity at the temple is Lord Prasanna Venkatachalapathy. The rituals performed in this temple are the rituals performed in the great Thirupathi temple.

Thirumandhamkunnu Temple

This Durga temple is an important pilgrim centre in Malappuram. The origin of the temple is shown through the mural paintings and the epic Ramayana is depicted through sculptures. In the annual pooram festival hundreds of devotees participate.

Jama-Ath Mosque, Ponnani

This mosque is an important pilgrim centre of Muslims of Kerala, the place Ponnani is known as the Mecca of the East and was constructed before 600 years. The Nercha, a four day annual festival is very important in which people from the entire neighboring mosques participate.

Navamukunda Temple, Thirunavaya

This 6000 year old temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu is known as the Kasi of the South. The main event take part at the temple is pithrkriya, the people gather to the banks of the Bharathapuzha, to perform pooja for the departed soul of relatives.

Vettakkorumakan Temple, Nilambur

This temple is dedicated to Lord Siva is famous for its mural
painting. The mural paintings are classified into garland of birds and garland of flowers. The main festival is *Vankattathevar Utsavam.*

**Tali Temple**

This is an important temple of Kozhikode built in 14th century for the Zamorin. It was made as per the Kerala style of architecture. Elaborate brass curving on the wooden roof is very marvellous. *Revathy Pattathanam* is the main annual festival celebrated here.

**Korome Mosque**

This 300 year old mosque is a symbol of communal harmony of the State. The wooden structure of the masjid depicts the traditional architecture of Kerala, which was built by the *Nair* community. *Uroos* is the annual festival celebrated in the mosque in which people from all communities participate.

**Varakkal Devi Temple**

This is the last temple built by the legendary founder of Kerala, *Sree Parasurama.* The legend states that *Parasurama* ploughed this area inorder to make the goddess appear before him. The main event celebrated here is the *Vavu Bali,* the people flock to the banks of the sea to perform ancestral rites. It is very interesting to note that on that day the sea is found to be calm so as to facilitate the religious observances.

**Mishkal Masjid, Kuttichira**

This masjid is a miracle of 700 years old architecture of the State. It is a four-storied building fully supported by wooden pillars which has forty seven doors. The Portuguese burnt down some part of the mosque in 1510, still the charred portion remain.

**Thirunelly Temple**

This temple is located 32 km Northeast of Mananthavady. It is
surrounded by Karimala, Kumbamala and Varadiga peaks. It is dedicated to Lord Vishnu and constructed as per Kerala’s traditional architectural style. This river side temple is very close to the mountain spring Papanashini and people believed that a dip in the river side washes away all sins.

**Parassinikadavu Temple**

This shrine is located 18 km northeast of Kannur and situated on the banks of Valapattanam River. Every morning and evening Muthappan Theyyam is performed and Kathakali is performed at the request of the visitors. The main offering to the deity is dried fish and toddy.

**Raja Rajeswara Temple**

This temple is located in Thaliparambu, 25 km from Kannur. Even though the temple is dedicated to Lord Raja Rajeswara, Lord Siva worshiped as the presiding power. For fulfilling wishes of women, they are permitted to enter inside of the temple only after 8 pm.

**Ananthapura Lake Temple**

This is the only Lake Temple in Kerala; located 30 km away from Bekal in the Kasargod district. 150 year’s old crocodile at the temple pond is the major attraction of this temple.

**Madhur Temple**

Madhur Temple is located 8 km Northeast of Kasargod, on the banks of the Madhuvahini River. The unique three-tiered dome and copper plated roofing are the main attraction of the temple. The devotees believed that a dip in the river banks washed away all the sins.

**Malik Ibn Deenar Mosque**

This important mosque is located in Thalankara, 1 km from Kasargod. This typical Kerala style architectural masjid was constructed by Malik Ibn Deenar who propounded Islam religion in the Malabar area.
5. Handicrafts.

Most of the tourists visiting Kerala are very much interested in the handicrafts, handloom, spices, coir products and gold ornaments. They are buying these items as the best of souvenirs of an ever memorable experience of their visit in Kerala. Almost all these shopping products are based on the rich natural resources and skill of artisans of the country. The handicrafts of Kerala are unique and World famous in design, style and perfection of form. The main shopping articles are Coir products of Alappuzha, traditional handloom products of Balaramapuram, Aranmula Kannadi, Kasavu Mundu, Nettur Petti, Spices and Traditional Gold Jewellery. The Aranmula mirror is made upon copper and tin and is in oval shape and 6 inches by 4 inches in size, till the manufacturing secrecy is kept secret. Nettur petti is a symbol of aristocracy and it is an ethnic jewel box. Kasavu mundu is the handloom sarees of Kerala with light weight and laced with gold Kasavu. Spices include cinnamon, clove, pepper, cardamom etc. Traditional Gold Jewellery is another memento of an occasion of Kerala’s experience. Different varieties of traditional jewellery items like necklaces, ear rings, bangles of different design and style are best memento. All these shopping items are available even in small towns of Kerala.

6. My Village, Tourism Friendly Village.—Village Tourism

The Department of Tourism introduced a new tourism product in association with local self government to innovate activities like adventure tourism right with in the village. It is aimed at enhancing the ethnic experience of God’s own country and enabling tourists to enjoy the authentic experience of Kerala in its hamlets, enjoy rural Kerala as such and enjoy the environment without duplication.

Secondary Tourism Products of Kerala

All tourism products other than primary products are known as secondary or auxiliary tourism products. Secondary tourism products are
facilitating and supporting the demand and consumption of primary tourism products. These products are equally important for tourism development. These products are also contributing to the total satisfaction of the tourists and attract them to the destination. Secondary tourism products are built environment products, human environment products, economic environment products, social and political environment products.

I. Built environment product

Built environment of tourism is an important prerequisite for tourism development. Natural attraction of a place attracts tourists to a destination. However, there must have adequate facilities to cater to the needs of the tourists. Since the tourist is totally away from home, everything must be made available to him. All of his wants and needs must be satisfied. If a tourist is facing any problem in his travel and stay or any auxiliary services, he may not be satisfied, that will in turn adversely affect the growth of tourism.

Built environment product means the infrastructure and superstructure facilities at the destination. Infrastructure environment products include roads, railways, air ports, water ways, service of travel agents, general and tourist information facilities, sign board showing tourist destination, communication facilities, health care facilities, drinking water facilities, banking facilities, recreation facilities, power supply, public sanitation, sewage and drainage facilities, measures of safety and security of tourist, locker facilities and street light. These facilities are usually used by the tourists. Superstructure is meant for meeting the food and accommodation requirements of tourist at the destination such as hotels and resorts, restaurant etc. In the broader concept, tourism infrastructure means all the basic and supportive facilities required to cater to the needs of the tourist in the destination.

Tourism infrastructure is a broader concept, which encompasses basic as well as supportive facilities required to cater to the needs of the tourists. In
fact, tourism infrastructure is the foundation for healthy growth of the tourism. Technically, tourism infrastructure includes accommodation, transportation, communication, drinking water and civic amenities such as parking, health, sanitation, power, toilets, parks, amusement and entertainment facilities. All these basic facilities influence the tourism industry in terms of tourist inflow in the region particularly at any destination.48

1. Superstructure Environment Products

Attractions and facilities are not accessible to tourists use until basic infrastructural and superstructure needs in the destination have been met. To promote tourism, sufficient number of accommodation must be provided in the destination which will range from different categories like star hotels, resorts, heritage hotels and others, to meet the varied needs of the tourists, matching with their income and taste.

A. Accommodation Facilities

Accommodation facilities to the tourists are an important problem in front of the tourism planners. Sufficient accommodation facilities must be provided in the immediate vicinity of the tourism centres so as to facilitate easy accessibility to the tourist. Natural attractions are the main infrastructure of tourism, but they are not sufficient to satisfy the tourist of different tastes. These need to be supplemented by other man made tourist facilities like accommodation, food and infrastructure. The resort and other type of accommodation must integrate with natural environment. In connection with accommodation facilities of Kerala, the study conducted by AIDE indicated that insufficient number of hotel beds, about 8500 in 1990 49. But, now, the position has been completely changed. Only in peak season, some hotels may come across difficulty. The accommodation requirements of tourists in the state is now covered by a wide range of accommodation facilities like classified hotels and resorts, home stay facilities, Grihashthali units and
Ayurvedic health centres, unclassified hotels etc., covering different ranges of price pattern and facilities. At present, house boats are also providing accommodation facilities to the tourists.

The Kerala Tourism Development Corporation, owned and managed by Government of Kerala, operates star hotels and budget hotels in all the important tourist destinations in the state which plays an important role for providing accommodation to tourists so as to strengthen tourism development of the State. It has a chain of different types of hotels to the requirements of the different class of tourist.

Private sector investments have also been playing a vital role in providing accommodation to the tourists in hotels and resorts. Non-resident Keralites have also since identified tourism as a high growth sector for investment. The State government has initiated steps for developing infrastructure with private sector investment for better management. 50

The Tourism Department provides accommodation facilities directly in the government guest houses maintained all over India to the state guests including VVIP’s and VIP’s. In the absence of VVIP and VIP’s government guest house can be used by government employees on tour by paying a very nominal rent. There are 31 guest houses all over India for providing such accommodation. 51 The various accommodation facilities in the State are classified hotels, approved home stay, approved Ghihasthali, Ayurvedic health resorts and unclassified hotels.

**Classified Hotels in Kerala**

The total number of classified hotels (provisional) as on March 2007 is 266. The total number of rooms available is 7654. It consist of 5 Star Deluxe Hotel 1, 5 Star 8, 4 Star 12, 3 Star 154, 2 Star 67, 1 Star 4 and Heritage/Resort 20. The number of rooms available are respectively 100, 903, 416, 4252, 1195, 115, 673. In the annual report of Continuous Tourist Survey for the year 2006-07, it is stated that the accommodation for nearly 72% of the foreign tourists is
in star hotels and resorts, while 23% of the tourists stayed at non-classified hotels. But in the case of domestic tourists, almost 93% of tourists stayed at star or other type of hotels.\textsuperscript{52}

In the case of accommodation facilities, Ernakulam district come first. It has 56 hotels, out of which one 5 star deluxe four 5 star, thirty three 3 star, fourteen 2 stars and two heritage/resort. The total number of rooms is 1919, out of which, 100 five star deluxe, 567 five star, 121 four star, 896 three star, 208 two star and 25 heritage/resort rooms. It is followed by Thiruvananthapuram district. It has 41 hotels; 3 five star, 4 four star, 23 three star, 8 two star, 1 one star and 2 heritage/resort. The total rooms are 1319; out of which 294 five star, 215 four star, 730 three star, 124 two star, 44 one star and 12 heritage/resort. The lowest number of room facility is in Wayanad district. It has only 119 rooms which is provided by five hotels; 2 three star and 3 two star.\textsuperscript{53}

**Home Stay Facilities**

In recent times, the Government of Kerala promoted tourism development by public participation. For the purpose of solving the accommodation problem of tourists, people are willing to come forward to accommodate the guests in their houses, tourism department grants certificate of home stay. The certificate is given on the basis of facilities. Home stay facilities are categorized into three; Diamond, Gold and Silver. As on 24-10-2008, the number of approved and recommended applications for home stay new scheme is 429 which consist of the classification; Diamond 100, Gold 141 and Silver 188.\textsuperscript{54}

**Ghīnasthali Units in Kerala**

The approved Ghīnasthali Units in Kerala as on June 2008 is 40, which is 2 in Thiruvananthapuram, 11 in Alappuzha, 13 in Kottayam, 9 in Ernakulam, 2 in Palakkad and 1 each in Malappuram, Kozhikode and Kasaragode districts.\textsuperscript{55}
Classified *Ayurvedic* Health Centres

There are 101 classified *Ayurvedic* healthcare centres in Kerala. There are two types of classification; Green Leaf and Olive Leaf. The classification is made by the tourism department on the basis of facilities and quality of service. However, approved health centres in Kerala as on December, 2008 is only 76.

Unclassified Hotels

In all tourist centres, towns and cities, a number of unclassified hotels are available which provide accommodation facilities to tourists. Low budget tourists can invariably make use of these accommodation facilities within their budget.

Others (House Boats)

House boats are floating cottages which are not only used for boating but also used as accommodation units. All facilities of modern house are available in a house boat such as well furnished bed rooms, site out, living room, dining hall, bath rooms etc. During night, house boats anchor in the backwaters and used by tourists as accommodation units.

B. Food

Hotels, restaurants and motels are functioning all over the State for providing food to the tourists. Motels and restaurants are essential for tourism development. All tourism centres must be provided with the facility of restaurants and motels which will supply good quality food. This facility must be provided throughout the State. As most of the tourists are from outside of Kerala and India, all types of Continental, South and North Indians food must be provided, even though, traditional Kerala food is a major attraction to the tourists. All classified hotels maintain restaurants also. Kerala food is available in all hotels. Continental, South and North Indian food are available in a large
number of star hotels and heritage homes.

Kerala Tourism Development Corporation is operating wayside amenity centres throughout the State like motel Aram, Yatri Nivas, restaurants and bear parlors for the use of tourists. In all towns and tourism centres, standard restaurants are available.

2. Infrastructure Environment Products

Kerala is a big city. The total area consists of 38,863 sq km which is only 1.18% of India’s landmass. Its coast runs some 580 km in length, while the State itself varies in between 35-120 km in width. It is one of the smallest States in India. Unlike other States of India, its specialty is that there is no wide distance between rural and urban area. Facilities available in cities are also available even in rural areas. All places of the State are well connected with good roads and other facilities are available.

Roads

Roads are playing an important role in promotion of tourism. The modern mechanized roads have made connectivity between places and plays very significant role where railways cannot be constructed to tourist destinations. In order to attract tourists to a particular destination, it must have sufficient roads which are capable of handling the traffic volume safely and comfortably. The facilities of restaurants, motels, petrol pumps and automobile service centres should be provided on road side to make easy access to the tourist. The non-availability of these facilities in the time of need, create strong discontent among the tourist about the destination.

Transport has at once a cause and effect of the growth of tourism: improved transport facilities have stimulated tourism: the expansion of tourism has stimulated transport. The transport is to tourism what veins and arteries are to body system. With out transportation, there is simply no
tourism. Even at an early stage in a tourism survey, therefore, it is important to look at transportation situations and requirements with some breadth and depth.\textsuperscript{58}

The State of Kerala has well connected with good roads. The State has 1,73,592 kms of roads, out of which 1,22,232 kms of panchayath roads, 28,203 kms of PWD roads, 4,580 kms of corporation roads, 8,477 kms of forest roads, 3,478 kms of irrigation roads, 1,524 kms of PWD (NH) roads, 267 kms of KSEB roads and 97 kms of railways roads. The roads under PWD in Kerala consist of 5\% national highway, 14\% State highway and remaining 81\% covering major district roads.\textsuperscript{59} The density of vehicles on the roads in Kerala is very high. Over a period of seventeen years between 1990 and 2007, road length in Kerala was increased by 29 per cent whereas number of vehicle was increased by 605 per cent.\textsuperscript{60}

Kerala State Road Transport Corporation, the second largest public sector undertaking in the State is providing round the clock services throughout the state. The number of buses operated as on 31-08-2008 is 4900.\textsuperscript{61} Private bus services are also available in all parts of the State. In addition to this, inter State services from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are also operating.

**Ports and Waterways**

The inland water transportation possesses a rich potential because it can be developed as a recreation transport. It not only promotes tourism development but also avoids the increasing load on roads and traffic congestion. The water transport along the coastal belt of Kerala from South to North can prove the great boom to the tourist and local people as a sightseeing and pleasure trip. Along its coast line of 585 kms, the State has one major port at Cochin and seventeen minor ports. The State of Kerala, with numerous backwaters, is one of the States in India, where waterways are
successfully used for commercial inland water transport. There are 41 navigable rivers in Kerala. The total length of inland waterways in the State is 1687 kms.  

The important attractions of backwater tourism in Kerala are house boats and boat races. Both these attractions are attracted by a number of foreign and domestic tourists. House boat facilities are available round the year whereas boat race are found on special occasions like Onam Season.

**Railways**

The development of railways and the development of tourism are highly correlated. It is a well recognized fact that without the assistance of railways, tourism cannot properly function. The main advantage of railway is that it is speedy, cheap, safe and comfortable, in comparison with road transport. Long distance can be travelled comfortably by train.

The congestion on road is increasing rapidly day-by-day as a result of growing population, increase in the number of vehicles ranging from light to heavy, and urban expansion. Additionally, the rapid increase in the oil prices has added to the expense of the tourist travelling by road, especially those travelling by private owned transport. Therefore, most of the tourist have diverted to railways.

The Indian Railway, the largest public utility concern in India is effectively functioning in the State. There are 200 railway stations in Kerala. The entire length of rail route is around 1148 kms and covers 13 railway routes within its fold. Most of the districts of Kerala are connected with trains. A number of long distance trains operating in the State. These trains connect the State with major Indian cities. Domestic tourists and foreign tourists are using railway as their means of travel for visiting various tourist destinations of Kerala and for visiting other States also.
Air Transport

The development of air transport has contributed highly to the growth of international tourism. It is the speedy means of transport. For many tourists, the domestic destination is longer than international destinations because of the fact that air travel has reduced the geographical distance and also helped in saving time through the improved and speedy means. Now with the improved capacity of aircraft, like Boeing plane 747 carrying 300 or more passengers at a time, the cost of the air travel has some what declined because the cost per seat per km goes down with the increase of number of passengers.65

The State of Kerala has three international air ports; Thiruvanathapuram, Kochi (Cochin) and Kozhikode (Calicut) Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode air ports are owned by government of India while, Kochi (Nedumbassery) air port is owned by International Air port Ltd, a company set up by government of Kerala with private participation. A number of domestic and international flights are operating from these air ports and connection flights are available from other air ports of India to the whole World.

Air Connections in Kerala

So many airlines are operating domestic and international services from the air ports of Kerala. The airlines are Air India, Indian airlines, Jet Airlines, Sri Lenkan Airlines, Gulf Air, Oman Airways, Kuwait Airways, Saudi Arabian Airlines, Silk Air, Qatar Airways, Paramount, Kingfisher, Emirates, Air Deccan and Jetlite.

Thiruvananthapuram International Air port

From this air port, domestic flights are operating to Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Bangalore. International flights are operating to Colombo, Maldives, Dubai, Sharjah, Bahrain, Doha, Ras-al-Khaimah, Kuwait, Riyadh, Fujairah and Singapore.
Cochin International Air port

This air port is gaining much attention even though it started very recently. It is located more or less in the Central part of Kerala and therefore, the number of passengers using this air port is increasing day by day. From this air port, domestic flights are available to Mumbai, Chennai, Goa, Agathi and Bangalore. Moreover, international flights are available to Sharjah, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Riyadh and Muscat.

Calicut International Air port

This air port is located in the Northern part of Kerala. From this air port, domestic services are available to Mumbai, Chennai and Coimbatore and international flights are available to Sharjah, Bahrain, Dubai, Doha, Ras-al-Khaimah, Kuwait, Riyadh and Fujairah.

Travel Agents and Tourist Services

Travel agents act as a right intermediary in the tourism promotion activities. For promoting tourism and providing quality services to tourist, the government of Kerala has given recognition to a number of travel agents, tour operators and tourist transport operators all over India. Accordingly, 327 travel agencies, 433 tour operators, 169 tourist transport operators, 17 adventure tour operators and 13 domestic tour operators are working as travel service intermediaries.

Communication Facilities

Communications in India is mainly through postal services and telecommunications. Postal service of India has the largest network in the World. Now the country has about 1.6 lakhs post offices spread all over the country. In Kerala there are 5070 post offices functioning in the State. In Kerala, there a wide network of over 127369 public telephones. There are 63.86 BSNL connections throughout the State. Out of it 35.40 lakh are land
line, 5.6 lakh are wireless line and 22.83 are mobile connections. There are 463850 internet connections and 150742 broad band customers in this circle as on 30-09-08.\textsuperscript{68} In addition to this, Idea mobile; Vodafone, TATA Indicom and Reliance are providing mobile phone services throughout the State. Internet café are available in all places even in small towns. Tourists can easily make use of all postal and telecommunication services.

**Drinking Water**

Drinking water facilities are available in all areas of the State because the State has abundant supply of water resources. Ground water is the main source of drinking water. In almost all houses of Kerala, ring well is installed for the use of getting good drinking water and those who have no such facilities, public pipe line is provided by Kerala Water Authority which is accessible at all times. Public places like air port, railway station, bus stations, hotels, restaurant, public offices, and tourist destinations separate provision is provided for maintains free supply of cold drinking water at all times. Moreover, bottled mineral water is available in almost all shops, restaurants and hotels.

**Power Supply**

Uninterrupted power supply is an essential requirement for the production and distribution of goods and services and economic development of every country. For the purpose of tourism development also, maintenance of round the clock electricity for the use of tourist is inevitable. The electrification on the roads to the destination is also essential for providing services to the tourists in the night at the places of their stay in the transit camps. As without electricity there would be no light, and hence no life in the places of stay of the tourists or on their way to the destination, electric supply should be uninterrupted\textsuperscript{69}.

Power sector in Kerala plays a vital role in developmental activities in
Kerala. KSEB has been responsible for the generation, transmission and supply of electricity in the State of Kerala. The board has set up adequate generation capacity and transmission network and Kerala is one of the few states in the country having availability of power to meet the demand.

Tourist Information Centre

A tourist is a quite stranger in the country he is visiting. Facility of giving proper information is therefore gaining greater attention for tourism development. A tourist is visiting a particular place for a short period. He should get proper information relating to the destination and range of services offered. Since he is a stranger, the host community has the liability to give proper information about what to do, what to see, where to eat, what to buy, how to keep safe etc. He must be given proper information relating to the laws of the country so as to control his behavior. Tourist information centres must be opened in important places mainly in air ports, bus stands, ports and in all tourist destinations. It must be staffed by multilingual well trained and pleasing personalities, properly dressed and well behaved. Tourist guide book and other important information can be had from there at free of charge.

In Kerala, tourist information centres are functioning in air ports, bus stations, railway stations, ports, boat jetty, and all tourist destinations where the tourist is in contact with. District Tourism promotion council is functioning in all districts. DTPC will give all information relating to the tourist destinations in the district. In addition to this, the government of Kerala has opened tourist information centres in important places in Kerala and outside Kerala. The important tourist information centres of Kerala in the important places are New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Goa, Kovalam, Thiruvananthapuram, Thekkady, Ernakulum, Kozhikode, Wayanad etc.

Tourist Safety and Security Services

In the present era safety and security of tourists have become global
concerns. Lack of personal safety is considered as a major problem to the international travel. The host country must take initiative to the safety and security of the visitors. Tourists have no knowledge about the probable risk involved in the destination. Therefore, they must be properly educated. For this purpose, persons knowing different languages must be employed to communicate them and then only they can take better precaution.

The destination country is responsible for providing all safety measures. Unfortunately, our State has witnessed three boat tragedies in recent times; Kumarakom boat tragedy, Thattekade boat tragedy and Thekkady boat tragedy. The heart breaking and the biggest one is the Thekkady boat tragedy which resulted in death of 45 domestic tourists from outside the State of Kerala. This is a clear example of our State in respect of failure to provide proper safety to tourists that will in turn affect adversely the growth of tourism in the State, particularly backwater tourism.

Visitors may be in the threat of politically motivated crime like kidnapping, terrorism etc. Moreover, they may sometimes face common crimes in the form of robbery, assault, mugging etc. For this purpose, separate tourist police units must be functioned to give round the clock service to the tourists. The tourist must not feel any insecurity. If visitors are more anxious, their enthusiasm, happiness and free enjoyment may be lost. Hence police must give proper information, guidance and take immediate action on criminal cases involving tourists so as to promote tourism. Moreover, assistance of police must be assured in case of accidents, theft and loss of documents like passport and other important documents.

Perceptions of safety may become increasingly important to tourism as the World becomes more dangerous. Every State should access and monitor the scope and degree of threat to the life and health, property and economic interest of tourists within its territory and should develop a national policy on tourism safety commensurate with the prevention of tourist risks. Ensure
adequate protection by law enforcement bodies of tourism sites and facilities so as to detect and prevent offences directed against tourists.\textsuperscript{70}

Kerala is the most literate State in India. Therefore, the attitude of host to the guest is very polite and the number of crimes against tourist is negligible. Almost all tourist centres are equipped with the service of police round the clock. The facility of service of police is available in air ports, railway stations, bus stands and all other important places. Police has been given special training and guidance to deal with the cases connected with tourist. Any tourist can freely approach the police at any time to get assistance, information and other kind of help.

**Healthcare Facilities**

Kerala is the State in India which gives more importance to health and healthcare activities. High quality health and healthcare activities are done by both government and private sector. Five government medical colleges, two medical colleges in co-operative sector and more than ten private medical colleges are functioning in the State. In addition to this, so many Dental colleges and Nursing colleges, *Ayurveda* colleges, Homeo colleges are also functioning. Its total healthcare system spread across villages and communities consists of institutions in Government sector, co-operative sector, and in private sector with systems of treatment in allopathic, *Ayurveda*, homeopathy, *Sidha*, and naturopathy. There are 1274 institutions and 36642 beds under the Directorate of Health services.\textsuperscript{71}

The private hospitals in Kerala are also well organized. Hundreds of multi and super specialty private hospitals with most modern facilities are spread over throughout the State. All medical treatment available in the World is available in these hospitals at comparatively very lower rate. *Ayurvedic* medical colleges, hospitals and health resorts provide various type of medical and rejuvenation treatment.
Public Toilet, Comfort Station and Bathroom Facilities

In Kerala, all public places like air ports, railway stations, bus stands, public places, offices, tourist centres, hotels, restaurants, parks, entertainment centres and other places where the public and tourists are clustered, well maintained facilities of toilet, comfort station and bathroom are provided. In bus stations and tourist centres, the Department of Tourism provides such facilities for the benefit of tourist by charging nominal fees.

Banking facilities

The banking helps a lot to develop tourism and therefore, it has also flourished in the tourist area. Adequate banking facility is essential for tourism development. A tourist requires money for his various requirements in the course of travel and stay but at the mean time he cannot carry hard cash so as to avoid the risk of robbery. In this situation, banks assist a lot and can do more for tourism development. They help the foreign tourists in exchanging the currency of their own country. Traveller’s cheque and credit card are issued to the tourists for serving their needs in the destination.

The state of Kerala has a wide net work of banking sector. Out of the total branches of bank of 86764 spread over all over India, 3836 branches are in Kerala, as on 31st March, 2008. Banking facilities is available in all tourist destinations, towns and even in rural areas. ATM facility is also available in all most all places, big hotels, hospitals, air ports, railway stations, even within the vicinity of small towns and tourist centres. Moreover, the facility of exchanging foreign currency is provided in big hotels and business establishments also.

Sewage and drainage facilities

Tourism development creates construction of building for providing accommodation facilities to the tourist. There must have proper provision for
treated the omissions from these buildings. So, proper drainage facilities must be provided in the destination to sustain the attraction of the destination, unless visitor satisfaction became worse. Wherever a proper sewage disposal system is not installed there may be pollution of ground water from the sewage of places like hotels, resorts and tourist’s lodges. Also if sewage has not been adequately treated, before its outfall in a nearby river or lake, it would pollute the water of the area.  

**Sign board showing tourist destination**

Proper sign boards must be installed in all important places, town, and cities which enable the tourist to locate the place without much difficulty. The sign board must also be showed in the roadside frequently to avoid confusion on the way of journey. English and other regional languages of the country shall be used to communicate the information. The destination of buses must be written in English in addition to Malayalam. It is advisable to mention the distance to be travelled to reach the destination at frequent intervals in the sign board. This will enable the tourist to make a calculation of the probable reaching time at the destination. A tension free mind can be set which enable him a leisurely enjoyment of the place he visits.

**Parking facilities**

The density of vehicles is very high in the State. Road facilities are inadequate. Parking facilities is a major concern as the number of vehicle is increasing drastically. Sufficient facilities must be provided in the destination for parking the vehicles of tourists.

**Street light**

Street light facilities must be provided in all roads to facilitate the tourist to travel round the clock. The State of Kerala is not much developed in the area of infrastructure. However, street light is provided in all cities, destinations, and on the roads sides.
Locker facilities

Locker facilities are an important infrastructure facility required for tourism development. Tourists cannot carry their languages in the destination as it creates inconvenience to them. Therefore, locker facilities must be provided in the destinations. In almost all destinations of Kerala, locker facilities are provided.

Recreation facilities

There may have so many free times to the tourist during their visit in the destination country. For making maximum enjoyment, additional entertainment and recreation facilities must be available in the destination. Kerala has different varieties of recreation and entertainment facilities. The important recreation facilities available in the State are amusement park for kids, teenagers, married and single tourists, boating, indoor and outdoor sports, theaters, music program etc.

II. Human Environment Product

Human environment of tourism is perhaps the most important factor for tourism development as it depends greatly the involvement of people in every phase of the industry. Now, tourism is an important sector which provides maximum employment to the World population. For sustainable growth of tourism, human environment is significant and has to play a key role in the galaxy of tourism. To satisfy tourists, the strongest means of publicity about any destination, is the cordial and hospitable attitude of people. If a tourist finds that the people are very charming and hospitable; he develops a close contact and even mutual understanding. Further, this enhances the image as well as the intensity of attractiveness.

Human environment products are literacy and education of people of the host country, attitude of local people towards tourist and hospitality of people working directly or indirectly in the tourism sector. Literacy plays a
very significant role in giving proper answers. At every step there is always a chance to give the required or additional information to the visitors from time to time which can only be performed by an educated and alert person who keeps himself aware with the day-to-day happening in and around the city and even in general.75

Human environment is also an attraction to the tourist which gives satisfaction to them. The human environment products in the present study are literacy of people, behavior and attitude of local people, attitude of police, behavior of tourist guides, behavior of taxi drivers, communicative skill of people, hospitality of people working in hotels and cleanliness of people.

III. Economic Environment Product

Tourism development depends on many factors other than attractions. Cost of living of the destination and cost of travel from place of origin are some other factors affecting tourism development. If cost of travel from place of origin and cost of living in the destination is very high, only rich people can have accesses with the destination, even though the destination is very attractive. The low cost of living contribute to the total satisfaction of a tourist related to a destination.

Kerala is a place with a low cost of living in comparison with other popular destinations in India. Now thousands of foreign tourists are coming to this land for medical treatment as the cost of treatment in the State are many fold times less as compared to the Westerns countries. It is evident that low cost of living in the State attracts many tourists and in that way also tourists are more satisfied. The economic environment products are rent of accommodations, charges of food, price of shopping articles and other goods, cost of beverages, cost of travel from place of origin to Kerala and cost of travel within Kerala.
IV. Social and Political Environment Product

Social and political environment is a major concern at the present time. It is an important criterion for travel. Political and social environment means the overall situation of international peace, the relationship between home country and destination country, political stability of the destination country and general law and order situation of the destination country. Social conditions like natural calamities, epidemic diseases etc. will also influence the volume of tourist. Political and social environment products are the effect of these social and political conditions which affect the flow of tourist and their total level of satisfaction in relation to a destination.

Kerala has the highest literate State in India. Being a literate State and excellent quality of life, people are more sensitive. Political sensitiveness of people leads to reaction even for silly matters. Now, Harthal is very common in Kerala. A tourist is a quite stranger in the destination country. He is visiting in the country for a few days. He has specific plan of tour. The sudden Harthals restrict his movement. Sometimes, while declaring a Harthal, he may be in a bus stand or railway station or hotel or even on the road side or like that. He has no friends or relatives there. His personal liberty or freedom to move is restricted. He cannot have food. He cannot go to toilet or go to hotel to take rest. If a tourist had to face such a situation, the image about the destination is totally destroyed and it will adversely affect the growth of tourism.
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