



## RURAL AND HERITAGE TOURISM IN ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS

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### ABSTRACT

*Rural tourism is a multidimensional destination because it has eco, ethnic, farm, cultural, historical tourism with itself. The major challenge in developing rural tourism is to consider environmental and natural conservation of resources and a proper understanding between the tourist and local people to participate in tourism development. Tourism plays an important role in employment generation and economic growth of the country. It is accepted as the potent engine for inclusive social economic progress at universal level through its forward and backward linkages and ability to create employment in the economy. Tourism sector has a very high employment potential with approximately 90 jobs creation per Rupees ten lakhs of investment. There is high scope for profuse employment generation and related activities in the form of accommodation projects, food oriented projects, amusement parks and water sports etc. Tourism sector is one of the largest employment generators in India and inclusive growth of the less-advantaged sections of the society and poverty eradication. The main objective of the tourism policy in India is to position tourism as a major engine of economic growth and harness its direct and multiplier effect on employment and poverty eradication in a sustainable manner by active participation of all segments of the society Tourism could be sustainable revenue generation project for the government and can prevent migration of rural people to urban areas.*

*Andaman & Nicobar Islands is a multi-destination Union Territory of India . It is called a mini India because the people who resides in the islands are from different state from the mainland India except tribal population and leaving very peacefully and harmony being belongs*

*to a different religions. Almost Andaman & Nicobar Island's villages are in rural areas except Port Blair municipal area. It seems that 98 % of the islands are covered with forest and too remote and rural areas in respect of facilities like roads, infrastructure, telecommunications, internet, etc. Even though islands are in a rural areas but it having with a variety of tourist attractions and facilities. As Andaman & Nicobar Islands culture resides in the islands in the form of dense ever green forest, ever green peak mountains, natural beauty beaches, flora and fauna, heritage tourism, tourism in coastal areas, water sports tourism, adventures tourism, trekking, scuba diving, life style of people of tribes of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, traditions, art, handicrafts, traditional art, fairs and festivals and natural heritage etc. Its rich natural heritage has given magnificent mountains, the beautiful beaches, and evergreen forest, were offered and offering . Attracting both domestic and foreign tourist rejuvenate their mind, body & soul. This research paper attempts discusses the concept and development of rural tourism in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. This paper is purely a descriptive nature and aims at providing an overview of Rural Tourism and Heritage tourism in Andaman & Nicobar Islands with special reference to South Andaman District and Port Blair.*

**Key Words :** Rural and Heritage Tourism , Impact of rural and heritage tourism, Brief history of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Heritage tourism in Andaman & Nicobar Islands and conclusion.

### **Introduction of Rural Tourism**

In recent years, the rural world has seen new challenges. Nature and landscape conservation is increasingly regarded as important. Historic buildings and "traditional" rural societies are receiving more attention. In some more accessible rural regions, there has been an influx of population, of people unhappy about big city living conditions a trend known as counter urbanization. Tourism has, until recently, been concentrated into specialist beach, lake and mountain resort areas, and into major cultural centers. It has proved to be a powerful engine for economic growth -- transferring capital, income and employment from industrial, urban and developed areas to non-industrial regions. Rural tourism is a multidimensional destination because it has Eco, Ethnic, Farm, Cultural, Historical tourism within itself. The major challenge in developing rural tourism is to consider conservation of natural resources and environment and a proper understanding between the tourist and local people to participate in tourism development. Tourism is currently the world's largest industry and the fastest growing sector of

the market. Tourism is usually viewed as being multidimensional, possessing physical, social, cultural, economic and political characteristics. Rural Tourism has turned into a leading economic activity and have a positive relationship between developing rural tourism and increase in income. One of the basic concepts of tourism in rural areas is to benefit the local community through the creation of employment opportunities. Tourism has great capacity to generate large scale employment and additional income sources to the skilled and unskilled laborers. Rural Tourism will make at least three important contributions to tourism sector in India. one is employment generator, secondly it generates income and thirdly trading of local resources and produces like handicrafts, agricultural produce and products, wood based products etc.

The concept of Rural Tourism is definitely useful for a country like India, where almost 70% of the population resides its 60 lakhs villages. Tourism has great capacity to generate large scale employment and additional income sources to the skilled and unskilled. It can also develop social, cultural and educational values. India has diverse culture and geography which provides ample and unlimited scope for the growth of tourism business. India has diverse Agro-climatic conditions, diverse crops, people, culture, deserts, mountains, coastal, systems and islands which provides scope for promotion of all season, multi-location tourism products WTO has estimated that there will be 1.6 billion international tourists by the year 2020 and Asia will emerge as the second region to be the most visited in the world. India being rich in cultural and natural heritage is likely to experience its share in global tourism. Tourism is usually viewed as being multidimensional, possessing physical, social, cultural, economic and political characteristics. Rural Tourism has turned into a leading economic activity and have a positive relationship between developing rural tourism and increase in income. One of the basic concepts of tourism in rural areas is to benefit the local community through the creation of employment opportunities. Tourism has great capacity to generate large scale employment and additional income sources to the skilled and unskilled laborers. Rural Tourism will make at least three important contributions to tourism sector in India. One is employment generator, secondly it generates income and thirdly trading of local resources and produces like handicrafts, agricultural produce and products, wood based products etc,

### **Definition and Meaning of Rural Tourism**

Rural tourism is a complex multi-faceted activity. It is not just farm-based tourism. It includes farm-based holidays but also comprises special interest nature holidays and ecotourism,

walking, climbing and riding holidays, adventure, sports and health tourism, hunting and angling, educational travel, arts and heritage tourism, and in some areas, ethnic tourism also. There is also a large general interest market for less specialised forms of rural tourism.

Rural Markets are defined as those segments of overall market of any economy, which are distinct from the other types of markets like stock market, commodity markets or Labor economics. Rural Markets constitute an important segment of overall economy

As per Gannon, 'Rural Tourism' covers "a range of activities provided by farmers and rural people to attract tourists to their area in order to generate extra income for their business." Any form of tourism that showcases the rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching tourism experience can be termed as rural tourism.

## **HERITAGE TOURISM**

Heritage and cultural Tourism in rural areas comes in a wide range of forms most of which are unique to an individual local and a valuable component of the rural tourism product. Heritage and cultural tourism includes temples, rural buildings but may be extended to local features of interest including war remnants, monuments to famous literary, artistic or scientific people, historic remains, archeological sites, traditional parkland etc.

## **IMPACT OF RURAL AND HERITAGE TOURISM**

Rural tourism has both positive and negative impact. Few points are related to the impact are explained below

### **I) Positive impact of Rural Tourism :The affirmative impact of rural tourism are as under**

1. Generating employment for the rural youths and educated unemployment youths.
2. Level of income of rural populace may increase.
3. Rural tourism may also generate foreign exchange and contribute to India's GDP
4. It may increased the demand for other local goods and services.
5. Public services may improved like transport, hotel and lodging, medical, restaurant, telecommunication, internet etc.
6. It may generate revenue for the local or State Government.
7. Modernization of agriculture and other rural activities.

8. Local small businessman will be benefited.

## **II) Negative impact of Rural Tourism: Pessimistic of rural tourism are as under Rural Tourism in Andaman & Nicobar Islands and its services**

- 1) The rural people may be exploited.
- 2) The rural people have to depend on the urban entrepreneur for goods and services which are not available at rural areas, so the benefit may not reach them.
- 3) The urban investor will take away most of the profit.
- 4) Food, drink and necessary products will be imported from outside and not produced locally.
- 5) Rural people may be under paid.
- 6) Local artisan may not get benefited.
- 7) Due to competition the local handicraft and farm produce products will be sold at lower prices.
- 8) Increase or prices of the products may rise of local agro products.
- 9) Sanitation and drinking water problem may raised due to increase in tourists.

### **Introduction of Andaman & Nicobar Islands**

Andaman & Nicobar Islands is a Union Territory of India since 1956. It is under the administration of the Central government of India. Presently, it does not have its own legislature. The East India company developed Andaman Islands in the eighteenth century for providing safe harbor to its ships during the monsoons. Subsequently in 1858, the Indian British government founded a penal settlement here. In 1874, the Andaman & Nicobar Regulations placed the settlement under the Government of India with the Chief Commissioner as its judicial administrator. This Pre-Independence administrative structure continued till 1982 when Lieutenant Governor replaced the Chief Commissioner.

Since prehistoric times these islands have been the home of aboriginal tribes namely, the Great Andamanese, Onges, Jarwas and Sentinelese all of Negrito origin, in the Andaman group of islands, while the tribes in the Nicobar islands are Nicobarese and the Shompen both of mongoloid stock. The areas inhabited by tribal population are notified as Tribal Reserve and this area constitutes 34 per cent of the reserved forest area and declared a buffer zone and any trading and ill legal activities are prohibited in this area.

Andaman & Nicobar Islands, situated in the Bay of Bengal with Port Blair as the Capital city, were treated as the penal settlement till the early forties. After independence of India, the islands were accorded of “Part –D” state of the India Union with the reorganization of the states in 1956, it acquired the status of a Union Territory under the administration of a Lieutenant Governor.

The paradise islands of Andaman & Nicobar Islands glitter like emeralds in the Bay of Bengal. The Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands stretches over 700 kms. from North to South with 37 inhabited Islands. The archipelago, consisting of 572 small and big islands and rocks are aligned from North to South in the form of a chain of Islands between Cape Negaris (of Myanmar) in North and Achin in Sumatra (of Indonesia) in South, the former being situated 192 Km. from northern tip of Andaman and latter 144 Km. from southern tip of Nicobar i.e. Indira Point. There are two groups of Islands viz. Andaman and Nicobar separated by 10<sup>0</sup> Channel. The Andaman Group of Islands consists of South and North Andaman Districts covering a gross length of 467 kms, and consist of Narcondam Island, East Island, Smith Island, Steward Island, Baratang Island, Havelock Island, Neil Island, Rutland, Little Andaman, Peel Island, Viper Island, Lawrence Islands Ross and Smith Island, Avis Island, Interview Island, John Island, Lawrence Island, Henry Lawrence Island, Cinque Island, Brother and sisters Island, Red Skin Island, Ross Island, Jollybuoy Island etc. While Nicobar Islands constitute the Nicobar District covering approximately 259 kms. and consist of Car Nicobar Island, Chowra Island, Teressa Island, Bompokka Island, Katchal Island, Kamorta Island, Nancowry Island, Trinket Island, Pulomilo Island, Great Nicobar Island (Cambellbay), Tillangchong Island etc. The total geographical area of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are 8249 Sq.kms. The geographical area of Andaman Island is 6408 Sq.kms and that of Nicobar Island is 1841 Sq.kms. The Andaman & Nicobar Islands lies between 920 & 940 East Longitude and 60 & 140 North Latitude. The climate of A&N Islands is described as Tropical Climate. Nearly, 86 % of the total area of these Islands is covered by Forests. The Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands has been divided into three Districts viz. (i) South Andaman District (ii) North and Middle Andaman District and (iii) Nicobar District. Port Blair, the Capital of this territory, is also the headquarters of South Andaman District, Mayabunder is the headquarter of North and Middle Andaman District and Car Nicobar is the headquarter of Nicobar District. Deputy Commissioners are the head of each District. The Andaman District consists of one Sub-Division i.e. South Andaman. The South Andaman Sub-Division consists of three Tehsils i.e. Port Blair,

Ferrargunj and Hut Bay. The North and Middle Andaman consist of two Sub-Divisions. Mayabunder and Diglipur Sub-Division consisting of three Tehsils i.e. Diglipur, Mayabunder and Rangat. The Nicobar District (consisting of 19 Islands) is divided into three subdivisions namely Car Nicobar, Nancowry and Campbell Bay consisting of three Tehsils. Only seven villages of Great Nicobar Island under Nancowry sub-division have been recognized as Revenue villages while the remaining area of Nicobar District consisting of 192 Census villages has been declared as Tribal reserves.

The climate of Andaman and Nicobar Islands is described as Tropical Climate. The Islands are situated in the Hot or Torrid Zone. Nearly 86 % of total area in these Islands is covered by forest. There are only two seasons viz. Rainy Season and Summer Season and there is virtually no Winter Season. The Islands are visited by South - West and North - East monsoons during the period from May to December. Average annual rainfall in these Islands is 3000 mm. The period from January to April is Summer Season. The mean relative humidity is 79% the mean maximum temperature is 30.20<sup>0</sup> C and mean minimum temperature is 23.00 C.

## **RURAL AND HERITAGE TOURISM IN ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS**

### **1) CELLULAR JAIL A HERITAGE AND NATIONAL MEMORIAL**

The Cellular Jail, also known as Kala Pani is derived from Sanskrit words 'Kal' which means Time or Death and 'Pani' which means Water was a colonial prison in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, India. The prison was used by the British government especially to exile political prisoners to the remote archipelago. The complex serves as a national memorial monument. The construction of Cellular Jail commenced in 1896 and completed in 1906. Spread as seven spokes of a bicycle wheel, this unique three-storied structure was the first of its kind in India as it had 693 cells specially built for solitary confinement of the prisoners. Extraordinary feature of the Jail was the total absence of communication between prisoners housed in different wings since the front of the row of cells faced the back of the other.

The British Government had been using the Andaman islands as a prison since the days in the immediate aftermath of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. The deportation of prisoners and freedom fighters to Port Blair started as early as 1857 following the Indian Rebellion “Sepoy Mutiny – First War of Independence”. Many of the islands in Andaman were penal colonies to which Indian freedom fighters were banished for imprisonment or execution. The Cellular Jail was constructed between 1896 and 1906. Shortly after the rebellion was suppressed, the British

executed many rebels. Those who survived were exiled for life to the Andaman to prevent their re-offending. Two hundred rebels were transported to the islands under the custody of the jailer David Barry and Major James Pattison Walker, a military doctor who had been warden of the prison at Agra. Another 733 from Karachi arrived in April, 1868. Many charismatic freedom fighters were imprisoned in this Jail. The seven wings prison was constructed with a central tower to keep an eye on the inmates who were mostly kept in isolation. Some famous inmates of the Cellular Jail were Babarao Savarkar and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (Savarkar brothers), Hotilal Verma, Babu Ram Hari, Pandit Parmanand, Ladha Ram, Ullaskar Dutt, Barin Kumaar Ghosh, Bhai Parmanand, Indu Bhushan Roy, Prithvi Singh Azad, Pulin Das, Trailokyanath Chakravarthy, Gurumukh Singh, Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani, Fazl-e-Haq Khairabadi, Yogendra Shukla, Batukeshwar Dutt, Maulana Ahmadullah, Movli Abdul Rahim Sadiqpuri, Maulvi Liaquat Ali, , Bhai Parmanand, Shadan Chandra Chatterjee, Sohan Singh, Vaman Rao Joshi and Nand Gopal.etc. were incarcerated here among others. Revolutionaries involved in Alipore Bomb case, Nasik Conspiracy Case, Lahore Conspiracy Case, Chittagong Armoury Raid Case, Inter-Provincial Conspiracy Case, Gaya Conspiracy Case were also brought to the Cellular Jail under long terms of imprisonment.

The entrance block of the National Memorial houses, Freedom Fighters Photos and Exhibition Gallery in the ground floor. The first floor of the building has an Art Gallery, Netaji Gallery and a Library on freedom movement. A gallery on First War of Independence and another gallery with rare collection of old photographs have also been kept in the premises. An eternal Flame "Freedom-Swatantrya Jyoti" has been erected in the vicinity of the Cellular Jail in memory of all freedom fighters and martyrs. A Light and sound programmes is an added attraction in the Cellular Jail National Memorial and its exhibits about freedom fighters struggle and cruel treatment of the then British Government.

## **2) ROSS ISLAND HISTORICAL AND HERITAGE PLACE:**

Ross Island is one of the historical and heritage place in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Ross Island is located very near to Port Blair. This island is nearby Aberdeen bazaar and Marina Park of Port Blair. Encompassing in its realm 160 years of history Ross is a tiny Island, situated at the entrance of Port Blair harbour. Lt. Archibald Blair surveyed the Island in March 1789, established a Colony and named it after the marine surveyor Sir Daniel Ross. Later the colony was abandoned. The island was the headquarter of the British Government in Andaman &



Nicobar Islands. On visiting the island, one can understand the reasons why the Britishers chosen Ross Island as their head quarter for controlling prisoners . Ross Island still has ruins of some of the buildings that were built during British period. The ruins of buildings have now been engulfed by the roots of huge trees. The place can posses of the ruins of a British Church, Mansion, Market, bakery, water treatment plant, burial ground, chief commissioners house etc. An added attractions is the number of Peacocks, Deer and Ducks you can spot at the Island

The British transported Indian freedom fighters to Andaman in the aftermath of the first war of Independence of 1857. The first batch of 200 revolutionaries arrived in March 1858. A number of them were sent to Ross. Gradually various Govt. functionaries and their residences including that of Chief Commissioner known as Govt. house came up. The Island became the citadel to rule the Penal Settlement at Andaman.

On 18th April 1979, the Island was transferred to the Defence Ministry. The Island has become a hot tourist spot today to view the ruins, and savour the glory of the past days. Very recently, the Tourism Department has commissioned a state of the art Light and Sound show added an attraction and this show is one of the best in the country. To keep alive the feelings of the past Navy has setup a museum 'Smritika - The Ross Memorial.

### **3) VIPER ISLAND HISTORICAL AND HERITAGE PLACE :**

Viper Island derives its name from the vessel “H.M.S. Viper” in which Lt. Archibald Blair came to Andaman and Nicobar Islands in 1789. The vessel it is believed that met an accident and its wreckage was found near the island. Thereafter the island is known as Viper Islands. This small island was the site of the jail where the British used to imprison convicts and political prisoners. Presently we can found the ruins of a gallows at top of hillock. The construction of the Viper Jail was carried out during 1864–67. Lt. Col. Barnet Ford, superintendent of the penal settlement, supervised the work. A small jail was constructed at Viper Island by the Britishers before the Cellular Jail was constructed. The Viper Island jail was used by the British Government to confined the worst form of torture and hardship on those who strove to free and freedom the country from the British rule. The jail was abandoned when the Cellular Jail was constructed in 1906. This Island was part of the great Indian independence history and had witnessed the sufferings and sacrifices of Indian national involved in freedom struggle. Sher Ali, the assassin of Lord Mayo was executed here on 11th March, 1872. On the report of the Jail Committee, and after the construction of the Cellular Jail at Atlanta Point, Viper Jail was closed down.

Viper Island is very near to Port Blair and was the site of the old Jail where the British Government used to harbour convicts and political prisoners. Viper Island is a serene beautiful tourist destination and can be approached by harbour cruise originating from Aberdeen Jetty from Port Blair. This place is visited by number of tourists as it has multiple attractions with historical importance and also has mesmerizing picnic spots with natural picturesque environments.

#### **4) CHATHAM ISLAND :**

Earlier known as "Mark Island" this is a small island where Lt. Archibald Blair formed a colony during 1789 which was later shifted to North Andaman. After the First War of Independence of 1857, the British decided to establish a Penal Settlement on the island. The first batch of 200 freedom fighters of first war of Indian Independence of 1857 landed here on 10th March, 1858. Some persons who tried to escape from the island were hanged on recapture. Superintendent J.P. Walker executed 86 of those recaptured on a single day at a corner of the Island. Gradually, the settlement expanded. A small Saw Mill was commissioned which later developed as the biggest Saw Mill in Asia. By the passage of time, a jetty was also constructed for safe berthing of ships. During World War II, the Japanese occupied the Island. The Aircraft of RAF bombed the establishment of the Island. After re-occupation by the British, reconstruction works began. Lord Wavell, the Viceroy paid a visit at the end of December, 1945 to take stock of the damaged. During the early 50's, an AC Power House was also commissioned. On 10th March 1954, the first President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad landed here by INS Delhi. During the celebration of 150th Year of Indian Settlement, a Memorial Column was installed to commemorate the arrival of 1st batch of Freedom Fighters.

#### **5) THE STATE MARTYRS MEMORIAL, HUMFRAYGUNJ**

"Balidan Vedi" the State Martyrs' Memorial stands as a mute symbol to the Japanese reign of terror in the islands. In the wake of World War II, most of the British left the Islands. With the Japanese occupation on 23rd March 1942, the unarmed India Penal Settlers / Islanders came under their control. Those patriots organised the Indian Independence League (IIL) and INA for participation in the freedom struggle movement.

During the war, the British landed their spies in Andamans whose espionage activities caused heavy damage to the Japanese. The Japanese retaliated with brutal tortures against the locals which continued for months. Seven islanders were shot dead on 30th March 1943 at Dugnabad

(Dignabad) sea shore. On 30<sup>th</sup> January 1944, Japanese took away 44 IIL members from the Cellular Jail to the village Humfraygunj on a hillock, shot dead and buried all the 44 members in an "L" shaped mass grave. In commemoration of those martyrs' supreme sacrifice "Balidan Vedi" has been erected.

#### **6) NETAJI FLAG HOISTING MEMORIAL**

This is the place where Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose hoisted the Tricolor (National Flag) on 30<sup>th</sup> December, 1943 for first time in the island and free Indian soil, before India attained Independence. This is the place where the present Netaji Stadium stands. A commemorative function is held here every year on 30<sup>th</sup> December. This is the place where Lieutenant Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Island may flag hoist on the occasion of Republic Day and Independence Day.

#### **7) PARAM VIR CHAKRA MEMORIAL**

A Param Vir Chakra Memorial is recently installed and it was inaugurated by Lieutenant Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Administration Lt. Gen (Retd). A.K. Singh. This memorial may shows us to feel proud and pride of those soldiers who have laid down their lives to safeguard the country. Param Vir Chakra Memorial, first of its kind, erected at the picturesque Marina Park, Port Blair is another place in the Island that evokes patriotic feelings.

#### **8) ABERDEEN HERITAGE WALK**

Aberdeen is named after the place in Britain that Lt. Archibald Blair, the Great Indian Marine Surveyor who surveyed the islands in 1788, came from. Aberdeen was the main commercial centre during pre-independence period. During those days, it was a small town having a broad street on either side of which there were large prosperous shops, around which fine houses were built. Many of the Government Houses were located in Aberdeen.

#### **9) CLOCK TOWER AT ABERDEEN BAZAAR :**

The clock tower in Andaman is located in heart of Port Blair's hectic Aberdeen Bazaar. Also popularly known as the "Ghanta Ghar" in Andaman, it is a reminder from the British era. It also showcases one of the commendable steps taken by the Port Blair municipal council to promote international tourism. Contradictory to the people believing that the clock shows the wrong time, the four watches on each side of the clock tower shows different timings as per four different time zones.

**CONCLUSIONS :** The main objective of rural and heritage tourism is to showcase rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations and in villages, which have core competence in art & craft, handloom, and textiles as also an asset base in the natural environment. The intention is to benefit the local community economically and socially as well as enable interaction between tourists and local population for a mutually enriching experience. Andaman & Nicobar Administration is promoting rural and heritage tourism in large scale but there is more to do to promote in large scale. Heritage tourism is an asset of the tourism of Andaman & Nicobar islands particularly the cellular jail and ruins buildings of Ross Island.

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