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Mysuru as a tourist destination: A economic perspective

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Abstract

Mysuru is the most beautiful place, blessed with beauty and bounty of rivers temples and palace city of India also. Palaces, Gardens, Monuments, Churches and temples, Mysuru Zoo, Libraries, Museums, etc are most attracted places in Mysuru. Mysuru is one of the oldest and famous for cultural heritage like Dasara festival. Mysuru has great opportunities for tourism development, thus creating large scale employment opportunities, generating income, improving standard of living and contributing for economic development of the nation. All these developments truly depends on places of Tourist interest in Mysuru. Mysuru is one of the most prominent tourist areas of India. The Mysuru Palace in the city is the most visited place in India, above Red Fort, Qutb Minar, and even the Taj Mahalas of 2006. The New York Times recently listed Mysuru as one of the 31 must-see places on Earth for two consecutive years. Thus, they attract tourists from all over the world. It provides live hood to more than two lakh people directly and thousands of people indirectly. It also has vast potential to contribute to the state's economy.

Keywords: Mysuru, Mysuru tourism, Tourist places, Economic perspective

Introduction

India is one of the world's oldest living civilization and also the world's largest democracy which has made stupendous progress among developing nations. Indians impressive variety of history and culture, from ancient gangetic kingdoms to the present state harmoniously blend to form a unique atmosphere in more than a million square kilometers of scenic sights, placid backwaters, and lagoons, bay and rough-lava rocked seas, lush green paddy fields, beautiful beaches, forests, wildlife and landscapes and cultural heritage colorful fair and festivals.....India has them all

Mysuru is one of the popular tourist destinations in Karnataka state, India. The tourism in Mysuru district offers a wide array of places to see. The delighting BR Hills, Palaces, Historical monuments and Dasara festival make mysuru a beautiful tourist destination. Dasara festival is the main example for culture and heritage add to the grandeur. Mysuru was the previous capital city in the state of Karnataka, India. It is the headquarters of the Mysuru district and Mysuru division and lies about 140 km (87 mi) southwest of Bangalore, the new capital of Karnataka. The city covers an area of 128.42 km² (50 sq mi) and is situated at the base of the Chamundi Hills.

Development of Mysuru Tourism

The international tourist traffic has increased incredible over the years, particularly after the world war second. India has contributed in lot to international tourism. After independence the country adopted a policy of development through planning, in 1952, when the first year plan was formulated. India has so many tourist attraction places like Delhi, Chennai, Shimla, Goa and Kashmir, Hampi, Pattadakal, Mysuru. Mysuru among them is one of the most beautiful tourist attraction places. Mysuru is known as the Palace city of India. It is bounded by Palaces, Gardens, Museums, Mysuru Zoo, Religious places like church, temples have all along attracted tourists from all over the world.

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Places of Tourist Interest in Mysuru

- Mysuru Palace is a palace situated in the center of the city. It was the official residence of the former royal family of Mysuru and also housed the durbar (royal offices).
- Lalitha Mahal is the second largest palace in Mysuru. It is located near the Chamundi Hills, east of the city. The architect of this palace was E. W. Fritchley. The palace was built by Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV in 1921 for the exclusive stay of the Viceroy of India. The palace is pure white in colour and is built in the style of Italian palazzos with twin columns and domes. It also has a sprawling terrace and landscaped gardens.



- Jaganmohan Palace was built in 1861 by Krishnaraja Wodeyar III in a predominantly Hindu style to serve as an alternate palace for the royal family. This palace housed the royal family when the older Mysuru Palace burned down due to a fire. The palace has three floors and has stained glass shutters and ventilators. It has housed the Sri Jayachamarajendra Art Gallery since the year 1915. The collections exhibited here include paintings from the famous Indian painter, Raja Ravi Varma, the Russian painter Svetoslav Roerich, and many paintings of the Mysuru painting style.
- Jayalakshmi Vilas Mansion was built in 1905 by Chamaraja Wodeyar for his eldest daughter, Jayalakshmi Devi. This mansion has three wings and contains a series of twin Corinthian and ionic columns, regal pediments, and oval ventilators. The mansion was originally built with a cost of Rs. 7 lakhs. This mansion was acquired by the Mysuru University to house its post-graduate campus. It was then renovated in 2002 from funding provided by Infosys Foundation. The main hall in this mansion is the Kalyana Mantapa which has an eight-petal shaped dome with stained glass windows with a gold-plated Kalasha (tower) at the top. A new gallery called Writer's Gallery has been created in the Kalyana Mantapa hall that will exhibit personal items, photographs, awards and writings of renowned writers of Kannada. A special illumination system has also been added to this heritage structure. This mansion is said to be the first university museum complex in the country.

Gardens

- The Brindavan Gardens are show gardens that have a beautiful botanical park, full of fountains, as well as boats in the river beneath the dam. Diwans of Mysuru planned and built the gardens in connection with the construction of the dam. Display items include a musical fountain. Various biological research departments are housed here. There is a guest house for tourists as well. It is situated at Krishna Raja Sagara (KRS) dam.



- **Happy Man Park** The Happy Man Park near Kamakshi Hospital, some three kilometers from the railway station, is very popular among children and parents. The park is quite compact in size but contains a mini zoo and many hens and ducks roam around the lawns freely. The park is landscaped with a stream and wooden bridges. Music is played through loudspeakers scattered around the park. The main attraction of the park is a statue of a 'Happy Man' with a pot belly representing the "Laughing Buddha" or "Budai", a Maitreya (future Buddha).
- **Butterfly park in Karanji lake** This consists of a medium-sized bird park, boating, and a children's play area.
- **Parks, gardens, and children play areas.** Mysuru has about 180 parks and playgrounds. Most of the residential areas have their own small parks: e.g. Ambedkar Park in Jayanagar, a southern city district has a 500-metre perimeter footpath, etc. The newly built Andolan Circle Park has a walking track that takes around five minutes to go around. This park is near Kuvempu Nagar in South Mysuru. But many Mysuruans go to walk around the many lakes which pepper the landscape such as the central Kukarahalli Kere by the university where the journey around is about 4.5 kilometres. Another is the Lingabudhi Kere which has a footpath with bamboo forests and on average takes more than 20 minutes to go around. This park is a desirable neighbourhood to the southwest called Rama Krishna Nagar, 5 km away from the city center.

Museums

- **Mysuru Sand Sculpture Museum:** With 115 truckloads of sand and with more than 150 huge sculptures, this museum showcases more than 16 themes of the Heritage of Mysuru.
- **Regional Museum of Natural History:** This museum is located on the banks of the Karanji lake in Mysuru and has exhibits related to biological diversity, ecology, and geology of Southern India.^[5]
- **Folk Lore Museum:** This museum is located on the University of Mysuru campus and exhibits over 6500 folk art and crafts from all over the state of Karnataka.^[6]
- **Rail Museum:** This museum is located near the Mysuru Railway station and is the second one of its kind established in India after the one at Delhi. This museum exhibits ancient locomotives and carriages, some of which are still in working condition. Photographs and books related to railway are also present.
- **Wax Museum - Melody World:** This museum is based on music and musical instruments. This one-of-its kind museum exhibits over 100 life-size wax statues and over 300 musical instruments categorized in various bands and stage settings. Representing Stone Age to Modern instruments, some of the bands and genres displayed are Indian Classical North & South, Punjabi Bhangra, South Indian, Jazz, Rock, Middle East etc. It was established in October 2010.

Places of worship

- Chamundi Hills is close to the palace city of Mysuru. Its average elevation is 1,000 meters. A panoramic view of the city is seen from the top of the hills, including views of the Lalitha Mahal palace, Mysuru Palace, Karanji and Kukkarahalli lakes. At dusk, the view of the city is especially beautiful, and on Sunday evenings and during the Dasara festival, the illuminated Mysuru Palace glitters.



- St. Philomena's Church is a church built in honor of St. Philomena in the city of Mysuru. It was constructed in 1956 using a Neo Gothic style and its architecture was inspired by the Cologne Cathedral in Germany. In 1926, Sir T. Thumboo Chetty who was the Huzur Secretary to the Maharaja of Mysuru, Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, obtained a relic of the saint Philomena, after writing to Peter Pisani, Apostolic Delegate of the East Indies. This relic was handed over to Father Cochet who approached the king to assist him in constructing a church in honor of St. Philomena. The Maharaja of Mysuru laid the foundation stone of the church on 28 October 1933. In his speech on the day of the inauguration, the Maharaja is said to have quoted, "The new church will be strongly and securely built upon a double foundation Divine compassion and the eager gratitude of men..." The construction of the church was completed under Bishop Rene Fuga's supervision. The relic of St. Philomena is preserved in a catacomb below the main altar.



- St. Bartholomew's Church, was built on the land donated by the Maharaja of Mysuru, Krishnaraja Wodeyar III (1799-1868) [8], and it was consecrated in 1830. The church was constructed in 1832 with contributions from military officers and civilians. In 1847, the church was affiliated to the Anglican denomination and was handed over to the Madras Government in 1852
- Infant Jesus Shrine is located at Pushpashrama in Naidu Nagar Mysuru some five kilometres from Mysuru palace. The gateway of the church stands 30 feet high There is a grotto on the right side containing a life-sized statue of Infant Jesus. The church is built in an octagonal diamond shape with granite stne. There are three huge teakwood doors to enter the church. There are carvings of St. Teresa and ST. John on the right side door. The left side entrance has carvings of St. Therese and ST. Edith Sterin. The altar has a globe and a tree. The church has fourteen stained windows decorated with beautiful pictures. There is a small chapel on the back of the church on the mezzaine floor.

Wildlife

- **Mysuru Zoo:** is one of the oldest and most popular zoos in India. Located on the outskirts of Mysuru, the zoo is home to a wide range of wild species. The official name for the zoo is Shri Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens, although it is known most commonly by its shortened name. Mysuru Zoo is one of the city's popular attractions. It was established under royal patronage in 1892, making it one of the oldest zoos in the world.
- **Ranganthittu Bird Sanctuary:** is a small Bird Sanctuary, being only 0.67 km². In area, and comprises six islets on the banks of the Kaveri River. The islets came into being when a dam across the Kaveri River was built in the 18th century. The ornithologist Dr. Salim Ali observed that the isles formed an important nesting ground for birds, and persuaded the Wodeyar kings of Mysuru to declare the area a wildlife sanctuary in 1940. The islands are host to numerous small mammals, including bonnet macaque, colonies of flying foxes, and common small mammals like the common palm civet, the Indian gray mongoose, and the monitor lizard. The mugger crocodile or marsh crocodile is a common inhabitant of the riverine reed beds. About 180 types of birds [10] have been observed here. Breeding water birds include the painted stork, Asian openbill stork, common spoonbill, woolly-necked stork, black-headed ibis, black-headed ibis, lesser whistling duck, Indian shag, stork-billed kingfisher, and other common birds like egrets, cormorants, Oriental darter, and herons. The great stone plover, and the river tern also nest here. The park is home to a large flock of streak-throated swallows.

Libraries

- The Oriental Research Institute, formerly known as the Oriental Library and established in 1891, contains over 33,000 palm leaf manuscripts.
- Jayaprakash Nagar Mysuru has an excellent library with a good collection of English and Kannada books. The library compound also offers a mini stadium, an open air auditorium, a yoga centre and a 500-meter walking track. The library is adjacent to a cute niche garden with a good view of the Chamundi Hills.

Economic perspective

1. Economic benefits to the society i.e flow in the form of foreign exchange earnings, direct and indirect employment opportunities created due to the development of tourism and the associated infrastructure, and the resultant income multiplier effects. It also leads to increased government revenues in the form of various kinds of taxes levied on tourism activities.
2. Improvement and preservation of parks and cultural heritage properties.
3. Tourism brings development in terms of infrastructure, connectivity by road, railways and air, encourages local skills, and helps mobility and better understanding of culture.
4. Tourism also promotes cross-cultural exchanges with tourists and resident population learning more about each other's culture. In the multi-ethnic society such as India the domestic tourism can ideally help achieve cross-cultural understanding.
5. The tourism infrastructure utilizes the idle and wasteland in the area.
6. Contribution to local economies Tourism can be a significant or even an essential part of the local economy. As environment is a basic component of the tourism industry's assets, tourism revenues are often used to measure the economic value of protected areas. Part of the tourism income comes from informal employment, such as street vendors and informal guides. The positive side of informal or unreported employment is that the money is returned to the local economy and has a great multiplier effect as it is spent over and over again. The World Travel and Tourism Council estimate that tourism generates an indirect contribution equal to 100 % of direct tourism expenditures.
7. Direct financial contributions to heritage protection. Tourism can contribute directly to the conservation of sensitive areas and habitats. Revenue from monuments-entrance fees and similar sources can be allocated specifically to pay for the protection and management of environmentally sensitive areas. Some governments collect money in more far-reaching and indirect ways that are not linked to specific parks or conservation areas. User fees, income taxes, taxes on sales or rental of recreation equipment and license fees for activities such as hunting and fishing can provide governments with the funds needed to manage heritage resources.
8. Competitive advantage. ie More and more tour operators take an active approach towards sustainability. Not only because consumers expect them to do so but also because they are aware that intact destinations essential for the long term survival of the tourism industry. More and more tour operators prefer to work with suppliers who act in a sustainable manner, e.g. saving water and energy, respecting the local culture and supporting the well being of local communities.
9. In tourist destinations develops the tiny and cottage industries which is famous in that destinations for example is mysuru famous for dolls and mysuru silk, Hand-made wood art etc these are all giving live hood for local people.
10. Local products and food, local cultural and traditions dance, art, festivals like Dasara these are all famous all over the world. When Dasara people and government earn good income.

Conclusion

Palace city Mysuru is one of the most amazing holiday destinations in Karnataka. The Vast and beautiful Palaces, BR Hills, Gardens, Churches and Chamundi temple its rich and colourful attraction deserve a substantially greater tourist inflow. Mysuru has more attractions than other regions in variety of tourist centers. Tourism at present is the largest industry in the world. Tourism frames massive and continuous flow of people to more and more all around the globe. In recent years tourism has undergone several major shifts. Now tourism is an organized industry in which it entered in the multinationals, by means of transport which carry people in bulk to far-off places has increased rapidly and the increase in the size of range of jet aircraft has led to the creation of a long haul package holiday market. The objectives of tourists also vary in space and time. This emerging pattern of tourism is transforming the socioeconomic pattern and cultural value of the people all over the world. Tourism plays the crucial role for national economies throughout the world. The tourists are attracted to the destinations not only because of the natural resource or natural beauty of the place, but because of the returns they get on the expenditure they do in the tourist place. Tourism is an organized industry, its dimensions are wide, its location varies and its benefits spread over large segments of the population. The tourists both foreign and domestic all contribute to the development of Mysuru economy and provide employment to the people and afford opportunities to them. Among the states of the country Karnataka enjoys wide variety of tourism products and places of attraction not only for the domestic tourists but also for the international visitors. The state government has taken steps to improve the tourism industry by improving the facilities for the tourists and visitors.

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