

# DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE SOUTHERN PROVINCE

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**T**he tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka during the first ten months of the year 1990 increased approximately by 75% as against the decrease of tourist arrivals from 1982 until 1989. The improvement of the political and ethnic situation of the country is the main reason for this development.

## Tourist Arrivals from 1982 to 1990 (Upto September)

Year	Tourist Arrivals
1982	407,230
1983	337,530
1984	317,734
1985	257,456
1986	230,106
1987	182,620
1988	182,662
1989	184,732
1990	214,664

(Upto September)

## Projected Tourist Arrivals for the next 10 years

Year	Tourist Arrivals ('000)	
	Low	High
1990	260,	280,
1991	338,	378,
1992	422,	490,
1993	507,	614,
1994	583,	737,
1995	640,	850,
1996	720,	960,
1997	790,	1070,
1998	860,	1180,
1999	940,	1290,
2000	1020,	1400,

## Accommodation Available as at 1990.

	Graded	Up-graded
Colombo City	2,835	43
Greater Colombo	1,614	437
South Coast	2,922	317
East Coast	-	-
Hill Country	341	113
Ancient Cities	1,391	27
Northern	-	10
All Regions	<u>9,103</u>	<u>1,047</u>

## Accommodation Requirements at Low and High Projections

Year	Low	High
1990	4,700	5,100
1991	6,200	6,900
1992	7,700	8,900
1993	9,200	11,200
1994	10,800	13,400
1995	11,700	15,500
1996	13,100	17,500
1997	14,400	18,300
1998	15,700	21,500
1999	17,100	23,500
2000	18,600	25,500

## Availability of Accommodation in the Southern Province

32 approved tourist hotels are scattered in the Southern Province, from Bentota upto Amaduwa (Yala). The number of rooms available in these hotels are 2180. The number of rooms in guest houses, rest houses are not included in this list.

The Board will assist in the completion of several approved hotel projects in the Southern Province as there is a big demand for accommodation in this Province. In addition to the above projects, the Board has received several requests from interested investors, specially foreign investors, for new hotel projects in the Southern Province.

The Board has undertaken to prepare a 10 year development plan with the assistance of experts from the World Tourism Organisation, and the team is expected soon.

For future development programmes, the Board has earmarked the Southern Province as one of the major areas. For this purpose, the Board is taking action with the Ministries of Health, Fisheries, Social Services, and Womens Affairs & Tourism of the Southern Provincial Council. They have prepared a comprehensive development plan for the development of tourism in the province.

According to this development plan, the infrastructure facilities such as roads,

telecommunication, water supply, electricity and drainage work will be improved in collaboration with the respective departments and Ministries. The highway from Colombo to Katragama will be developed and the railway line from Matara will be extended upto Katragama. Direct dialing facilities will be provided to areas such as Hikkaduwa, Bentota, Koggala, Galle, Tangalle and Tissamaharama, with additional telephone extensions and international direct dialing lines. The water supply to these hotels will be augmented with the water supply schemes, and the approval of the Central Government will be sought for the installation of central sewage systems in towns, where major hotel projects exist, i.e. Bentota/Beruwela and Hikkaduwa.

The facilities in existing hotels will have to be improved in order to cater to high spending tourists, who look for more facilities. New International and speciality restaurants will also be opened up in those areas for these tourists.

Water sport facilities in the area will be developed and in future, approval will be given to foreign nationals interested in starting water sport facilities in the Southern Province, as well as other areas of the country.

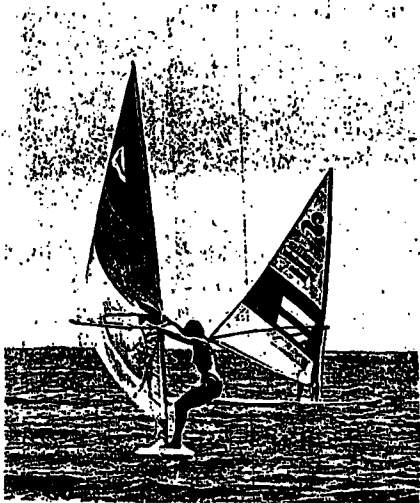
Other attractions in the area includes the development of marine parks in collaboration with NARA, Coast Conservation Department and Central Environmental Authority. These parks will be sited in Polhena-Matara, Dondra and Tangalle.

The Turtle ponds in the Southern Province has become a major tourist attraction, specially in the Bentota, Hikkaduwa, Induruwa and Galle areas and a turtle pond will be established at Hikkaduwa in Akurala in one of the abandoned lime pits.

A project to open up dolphinarium with the assistance from the National Marine Mammals project and Hub Services

Research World Institute of California and with the financial assistance from a donor country is under consideration. The ideal place for setting-up of a Dolphinarium would be Kapparatota at Weligama, close to the NARA Research station.

The Provincial Council is interested in establishing a mini zoo in Galle, with help from the Dehiwela Zoological Gardens. A new National Park will be opened at Bundala and more accommodation for the visitors to the Yala Park will be provided. The Board has acquired 1070 acres at Amaduwa near the Yala entrance for this purpose. A comprehensive report on this has been prepared by a German Hotel Company. This includes the construction of Safari Camps, Safari cottages, tree top huts etc. The Ministry of Tourism & Rural Industrial Development and the Board is currently looking into this development programme.



Another tourist facility that could be developed in the area is the use of hot water springs at Handunagala, near Ridiyagama at Ambalantota. The Board has obtained a detailed report from an expert from Japan for the development of thermal springs in the island, and based on this report and the requirements of the Tourists, this facility will be developed soon.

**JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

**Hotel School**

The Board is taking meaningful action to start a satellite hotel school at Kog-

gala in the Koggala Beach Hotel complex. The students selected from the area will be taught various basic level courses in cookery, house-keeping, reception and restaurant service, which will enable them to obtain jobs in the hotels in the Province. Any trainee interested in the management and higher level courses will have to enter the main Hotel School, after they complete the basic level courses in the Satellite School.

In addition to the job opportunities created for the students passing out from the Satellite Hotel School, the Board has already undertaken a training pro-

gramme in association with the Southern Provincial Council to provide the youths in the area with a knowledge of English and other foreign languages so that they can work as Area Tourist Guides and Site Tourist Guides. The Board has already completed a training programme for Area Tourist Guides at Galle, and other areas in the Southern Province.

The job opportunities are not limited to those trained in hotel management and guiding work. There will be a demand for minor/unskilled grades from the area. The number of people engaged in providing boating facilities, water skiing, restaurants and many other activities connected with tourism will be increased in future. The manufacture of batiks, curios, handicrafts, wood carvings, gems and jewellery will increase and as a result the job opportunities in those fields will go up.

A chart giving out the economic benefits obtained by the country through tourism from 1980 to 1989 is given below.

REVENUE FROM TOURISM 1989 (IN RS. MILLION)

Source of Revenue	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Hotels & Restaurants	103.7	139.5	133.5	70.3	57.2	26.7	21.0	17.1	13.2	16.0*
Travel Agencies	14.3	13.8	17.4	20.4	30.6	25.8	29.7	37.6	24.0	20.0*
Shops	1.3	2.0	6.8	7.0	6.5	5.3	4.2	3.3	2.6	3.0*
Embarkation Tax	29.8	34.6	36.4	29.7	39.0	25.7	46.0	36.4	37.2	53.9
Cultural Triangle	-	11.4	19.6	14.8	16.3	13.6	14.7	13.7	14.1	19.2
Botanical Gardens	1.7	2.8	2.8	2.2	2.1	1.7	1.8	1.2	1.1	3.0
Zoological Gardens	1.5	2.4	2.4	1.9	1.7	1.3	1.1	0.7	0.8	0.9
National Parks	N/A	N/A	1.5	1.4	3.2	2.6	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.4
Museums	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.5
Total	152.6	206.9	220.7	148.0	146.9	102.9	119.3	110.5	93.6	115.9*
* Estimated										

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The job opportunities are not limited to

The estimated earnings from tourism for the year 1990 is about 4 billion rupees, and the development programmes envisaged for the country, including the development programme mentioned above for the Southern Province will increase tourist earnings for the years to come. This will help solve the balance of payments problems and provide other economic benefits to Sri Lanka.

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development of irrigation systems as described in this article was an outstanding feature of this maldevelopment. Lunugamvehera, which has been described as a colossal monument to technocratic folly, may also turn out to be a monument to the robber barons who were once so blithely invited to come to this country.

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