



ECOTOURISM TOURISM IN EAST GODAVARI, ANDHRA PRADESH

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Abstract:

An attempt has been made in this paper to highlight the different variants' of ecotourism in East Godavri district of Andhra Pradeh. There are many forms of tourism in East Godavri classified by typical features like nature, culture, heritage, time, health and many other things. This may be useful to the 28 lakh tourists who are visiting every year this district from all over the country, besides 3,000 foreign visitors, in attaining the true purpose of their travel. Ecotourism or green tourism is ecological tourism, with the main objective to preserve the nature or approach to rare species. Ecotourism activity involves an important education and interpretation component, as well as support for raising awareness on the necessity of natural and cultural capital preservation. Ecotourism must have minimum consequences on the environment and must also contribute to the welfare of local populations. That is why the author opted Ecotourism in this paper.

Key words

tourism industry

Introduction:

An attempt has been made in this paper to highlight the different variants' of ecotourism in East Godavri district of Andhra Pradeh. This may be useful to the 28lakh tourists who are visiting every year this district from all over the countryⁱ, besides 3,000 foreign

Nestled beautifully on the river Godavri, East Godavari is located in the north east of the state of Andhra Pradesh. Here you can behold sheer magnificence of eternal nature through veils of time you can see amazing temples reflecting the zenith of architectural brilliance and unmatched craftsmanship. Behold Mother Nature in all her glory. Give in to your spirit of adventure. Quench your thirst for knowledge of our pristine culture and rich heritage. There are many forms of tourism in East Godavri classified by typical features like nature, culture,

visitors, in attaining the true purpose of their travel

ⁱ. *District Gazetteer – East Godavari 2010, Government of Andhra Pradesh.*

heritage, time, health and many other things.

Forms of tourism

The major heads are as follows after summarizing the latest findings of tourism.

- (A) Eco-natural tourism
- (B) Cultural tourism
- (C) Pilgrimage(religious tourism)
- (D) Rural tourism
- (E) Health tourism
- (F) Holiday tourism



- (G) Educational tourism
- (H) Business tourism
- (I) Tourism on water / seaside tourism
- (J) Mountain tourism
- (K) Rural tourism
- (L) City tourism

Maredumilli Eco Tourism

The Maredumilli Forests of East Godavari District are having rich biodiversity and the area is having semi evergreen forests with undulating terrain, which forms part of the Eastern Ghats. The Maredumilli Community Conservation & Eco Tourism Area is situated on Maredumilli – Bhadrachalam road, nearly 4 Km. away from Maredumilli village. The area is having many streams flowing over the undulating rocks in the deep woods and any visitor feel thrilling experience in the Nature.

The Eco-tourism project is managed by the local indigenous tribal community of Valamuru, Somireddypalem and Valmeekipeta Vana Samrksana Samithi people with the active support of Andhra Pradesh Forest Department. The project was successfully completed in a short span of time due to the commitment of the highly motivated community participation coupled with the timely financial assistance from the World Bank aided Andhra Pradesh Community Forest Management Project. This also provided unique opportunity to the native ethnic community to spread the message of conservation to the masses.

The jungle star campsite is located adjoining the Valamururiver with the stream flowing on 3 sides overlooking the Vali-SugrivaKonda which is believed to be the battle ground

of the Vali-Sugriva during the Ramayana period. The remarkable variation of the battleground with the presence of grass land, encircled by forests on the other hillocks makes the visitor to pay attention on the legendary story.

As a part of Tourism Development Maredumilli Forest Rest House was constructed in the year 1914, the Forest Rest House is in Maredumilli Village with all facilities. The name of the rest house is Abhayaranya Forest Rest House. Suits are available here for stay of Tourists.

Papikonda wild life sanctuary²

Papikonda wild life sanctuary situated in the fertile godavaribasin, the 591km Papikonda wild life sanctuary has abundant vegetation that is native to the easternGhats. It is located about 50km from rjaahumundry. The animals that can be spotted here include tiger, panther, gaur, deer,Chowsingha,Sambar, block,mouse and deer, barking deer,sloth bear and marshcrocodile,apart from avriety of birds. You can also enjoy aboat ride from Rajahmundry upstreamand the godavari river with packed lunch Konaseema is an oasis of enchanting beauty. Peace and tranquility that is adreamtour destination for all. The northern side is bounded by godavari. It is one of most fertile lands present in Coromandel cost. The entire region is rich in coconut trees, mango groves, cashew and paddy fields. Every January of Konaseema is a witness for its great 'Konaseema festival' boat competitions make us to remember Kerala. They are held in different steams of fiver Godavari.

An exciting launch ride on the Godavari river from Divipatnam takesthe tribal villages of gandipochama and



rampachodavaram. you can reach rampachodavaram by road from rajamundry, which is at a distance of 50km. here one can witness the traditional tribal dance "vela" performed by women dressed in bright attire the dance is highly rhythmic accompanied by singing. yet another tribal dance called kommu is performed by men only, dressed in typical tribal attire with a headgear of horns which is at rampachodavaram, one can drive down to maredumilli just 20km away which is a little known hill station the drive through the dense jungle is quite enjoyable and one can expect close encounters with wild animals.

Papi Hills or PapiKondalu (In Telugu language) is part of Eastern Ghats through which Godavari pierces and flows in twists and turns (called 'malupulu' in telugu) towards east. Entire area of PapiKondalu is covered by tropical rain forests and deciduous rain forests.

The boat ride commences at Polavaram in summers because of low water levels and in Pattiseema at all other times. The boat ride leads you to countryside patch-worked with tiny farm plots, the landscapes dotted with tribal habitations, the river banks forested with the timber reserves, the fresh air and the deep river all blend together to make it a magic place. They present ideal settings to enjoy the nature. The beauty of the uncrowded spaces all along the river makes people stop and stare. Actual PapiKondalu is a place where the width of Godavari is narrowest (less than a KM). From a distance you would feel that both the hills are merging together however the boat cruises through the narrow width of Godavari and this is the best of the entire trip.

Small waterfalls, water streams, thick rain forest and other flora and fauna adds to scenic beauty of PapiKondalu. A legend about PapiKondalu is the Lord Rama and goddess Sita dwelled here during the vanavasa.

Considerable percentage of Telugu movies are shot in Rajahmundry and East Godavari district. (PapiKondalu is an important attraction for these movie makers). Ramadasu, Apadbandavudu, Godavari, are few of the popular movies shot here. The boat takes you till Parentallapalli in Khammam district the abode of Lord Shiva.

Konaseema

The Godavari River island is large enough to support unending acres of coconut groves but small enough to offer you a secluded holiday. Sun streaked riversides, the backbeat of waves striking shore, a musky earthen fragrance, coconut palms gyrating to the breeze off the river. This region well known for Andhra Pradesh hospitality³.

That Konaseema in season & out of season. A must visit on the itinerary of every true blue vacationer. A set of breathtakingly picturesque islands floating in a 50 km stretch of river Godavari, Konaseema brings to mind the canvas of a master painter. What better than to cruise down the gently lapping water, to set foot on each of these floating gems, to explore their pristine, almost virgin, beauty first hand? If you have been dreaming about a Kerala backwater cruise, we suggest you make your way to Konaseema now.

Andhra Pradesh Tourism makes the Konaseema experience even more memorable with its air conditioned 3 double bed roomed Houseboat Cruises. Now available for private charter are



fully furnished boats accommodating upto four adults. Each is equipped with two double bedrooms with attached bathe, and a sit out-cum-dining area on the deck. On board, to attend to your comforts, are trained attendants. If to travel more than 4 members, extra 300 Rs will be charged for each member. The boat can be accomodate nearly 12 members.

The cruiser which sets sail at 10 am will take you long the winding tributaries of Godavari - Vynateyam and Vasista. Food is served - breakfast & lunch (veg) on the boat and dinner (non-veg) on an island in typical rustic style. The menu is a compilation of the best of ethnic cuisine fresh vegetarian fare and spicy non vegetarian food to bring you the true taste of Andhra.

The boat will drop anchor at Dindi Resorts (both starting and ending point). From Dindi resorts the cruise sail upstream Rajolu Town and to downstream upto Narsapur town. The tourists can travel in and around nearly 50 K.m. The travelers those who wanted to stay night at boat, for them the boat will be anchored near the resorts. Air conditioned rooms accomodation facility provided only to the travelers those who booked for 24 hours, and stay night at boat. for smooth and comfortable travel, advance booking is must.

Backwater Tourism/Houseboat

Konaseema is a delta located in the East Godavari and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh, India. This delta is surrounded on all sides by waters (of Godavari and the Bay of Bengal). Konaseema is famous for its scenic greenery and vedic scholars. The origin of the name may be from Telugu word "Kona" meaning corner which resembles its shape. The northern side is

bounded by Gautami Godavari and southern side is bounded by Vasista Godavari. Coconut palms, the arboreal symbol of Konaseema landscape, fringe the backwaters framing the blue tropical sky during daytime and a starry twinkling firmament during evenings.

The festivals of Rathotsavam (for Lord Vishnu) and PrabhalaTeertham (for Lord Shiva) are famous all through the region. Most famous of Rathotsavam festivals are of Antarvediteertham and Yanamteertham.

Konaseema Rural Tourism:

India is a country of rich culture and heritage. With above 70% population residing in around 6 million plus villages, real India has its roots right inside this simplistic structure. With Rural Tourism, we try to take you to a journey of not so known(places like Konaseema,) – the land and people which is the back bone of this country. It is a journey to explore diversity and hospitality from nook and corners of Rural India.

Here is an attempt from vizag Tourism to take you away to Konaseema , a dream land full of peace, simplicity and innocence. Connect with nature, unlearn luxury, and spend time looking at surroundings and people who support your life by providing the raw inputs for complex city life needs. What you explore during these tours is a unique experience and an eye opener to the basics of a developing economy. For corporate people, this gives a day off to go back to roots and this gives an opportunity to spend time in the rural atmosphere away from the Mouse and the motherboard.

The different villages that you visit as a part of Konaseema package are sure to



leave lasting memories in your mind. This is an opportunity to see the India described in novels for people engaged in hustle and bustle of daily city life.

The best part is while visiting these places you would get an opportunity to experience the tradition of art, culture and lifestyles of Rural Andhra. You can enjoy a blend of rural and Temple Tourism as you would get a chance to visit various temples in your rural tourism itinerary. There is an option to stay in a farm House equipped with all facilities to have a feel of the rural atmosphere.

Back Water Tourism of Konaseema:

Konaseema is known for its backwaters. They as a whole, form an intricate network of lagoons, lakes, canals, estuaries, and rivers that drain into the bay of bengal.. Boating along the backwaters offers spectacular views and vistas of konaseema's pristine natural beauty⁴. Coconut palms, the arboreal symbol of Konaseema landscape, fringe the backwaters framing the blue tropical sky during daytime and a starry twinkling firmament during evenings. There are diverse sceneries along the backwaters crisscrossing the coastal areas.

Coringa Sanctuary

Gurgling streams invite you to beautiful lakes and wild life sanctuaries and where lush paddy fields swaying in the breeze appear to dance celebrating life. Coringa sanctuary is an amazing scenic place to visit and is situated in east Godavri which is close to Kakinada city and is widespread over an area of 235 square kms. Rich flora and found can be experienced in the Coringa sanctuary .there are around 35varieties of mangrove plants which are present at this place. It is very famous for olive

Ridley sea turtle estuarine crocodiles and fishing cat.

Kadiyam Nurseries

Kadiyam nurseries spread in 3,500 acres in 11 villages of Kadiyammandal. On December 25th of every year a unique 'Exhibition of Flowers / The Festival of Flowers' is organized by the nurseries nearby. World class variants of flowers is a good worthy feast to natural lovers⁵. World Heritage day is celebrated on April 18 of every year at **Adurru**⁶, an ancient historical Buddhist site. It is known for Buddhist monuments. It is a village located in RazoleTaluk. The ruins of Buddhist stupas, chityas and viharas were discovered by the Archaeological Survey of India(ASI) in the year 1953. Mahastupa is the major attraction of the place.

Rampachodavaram is a tribal village, 50 km from Rajahmundry in East Godavari District. The surrounding villages are very popular with regional film makers for its untouched natural beauty. At Rampachodavaram, the tourists can see the traditional tribal dance, Vela, performed by women dressed in bright clothes. Another tribal dance called Kommu, performed by men dressed in typical tribal clothes with a headgear of horns, is also interesting. Rest houses and huts of forest department are available in Rampachodvaram, Maredimilli, Devipatnam for those who would like spend nights in deep forest. **Hope Island** is a narrow stretch of sandy formation in the mighty Bay of Bengal which was responsible for the formation of the Bay of Kakinada.

Hope Island protect

Hope Island protects the city of Kakinada from the strong cyclone/tidal



waves coming from the Bay of Bengal and offers shelter to ships which berth at anchor in the Kakinada Bay. This enchanting island was formed during the last 200 years by the sand drifting from the tributary of Godavari River. The picturesque island presents a beautiful view with backwaters on one side and sandy beaches on the side facing the Bay of Bengal. The northern part of the island is called the "Godavari point" which overlooks the entry point into the Bay of Kakinada and the Kakinada harbour.

It is concluded that East Godari district has famous locations and attracting many pilgrims. But, maintenance is the major problem. Thus, efforts should be made in this regard.

Research and study –
RamachandraPuram.



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²"The Dancing Doras", - an unpublished M.A., Dissertation S.N.School, Department of Dance, Hyderabad – 2002.

³ "KotiandalaKonaseema", by Dr.Venkateshwarlu, Student Research Project, V.K.V Govt Degree college press -2012 East Godavari .

⁴ "TurpuGodvariZillaCharitra - Samskruthi", Dr. P. ChiranjeeviKumari, March 2008, Akash Offset, Smarla Kota, E.G.Dist.

⁵ Proceedings of the Andhra Historical Research Society, Rajamundry.

⁶ "Turpu Godavari ZillaloBuddhaStupalu" -2012 -by pilliRambabu – center forBuddist