

A Study on the Impact of Sri Lankan Crisis on Kerala Tourism

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<p>Article History</p> <p>Article Submission 10 March 2023</p> <p>Revised Submission 08 May 2023</p> <p>Article Accepted 25 May 2023</p> <p>Article Published 30 June 2023</p>	<p>Abstract</p> <p><i>Tourism is a major sector in the world that has a significant role in the economic development of various countries. Tourism sector also helps in the generation of employment opportunities. Sri Lanka and Kerala are two major tourist destinations in South Asia. Millions of tourists visit Sri Lanka and Kerala every year. Sri Lanka as a nation suffered from a brutal civil war and it adversely affected all the major sectors in the country. After the end of civil war, Sri Lanka achieved significant growth and development in multiple fields. Millions of tourists visited the nation and Sri Lanka received foreign exchange earnings worth billions of Dollars. But the terrorist attacks in the year 2019, COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing economic and political crisis shattered the nation and especially the tourism sector. Kerala, the southern state of India is currently benefitting from the Sri Lankan crisis. Kerala is a major rival to Sri Lanka in terms of tourism. Both Sri Lanka and Kerala has similar climate, landscape, food cuisine, geography etc. As a result of the Sri Lankan crisis, international tourists started preferring Kerala over Sri Lanka. This article aims to analyze the impact of Sri Lankan crisis on Kerala tourism.</i></p> <p>Keywords- <i>Sri Lankan crisis, Kerala tourism, Sri Lankan tourism, civil war, COVID-19, terrorism.</i></p>
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Sri Lanka, formerly Ceylon is a prominent nation in South Asia. This Island nation is well known for its history, diverse culture and natural beauty. Sri Lankan population is mainly composed of Sinhalese and Tamils. Sri Lanka gained Independence in the year 1948 after being ruled by the Portuguese, Dutch and the British rulers for centuries. Nation's economy was seriously affected by the colonial rule and it took some time to restructure the nation and regain its lost glory. But all the efforts failed to generate positive results due to a civil war that lasted 26 years. Sri Lankan civil war began in the year 1983 and lasted till 2009 when the Sri Lankan armed forces defeated Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Even though Sri Lankan Tamils were a minority group, they had significant role in the Country and its history. Sinhalese community, which constituted 75% of Sri Lankan population exploited the Tamil community and deprived them from their rights. As a result of this the Tamils started fighting against the Sinhalese community and also against the Government. The protests started initially in a peaceful manner but later on transformed into an armed rebellion. LTTE led this movement under the leadership of Velupillai Prabhakaran and their main motive was to create an Independent Tamil state. The Sri Lankan civil war led to the death of nearly 1 Lakh innocent people and millions of people were displaced. The Government under the leadership of Mahinda Rajapaksa crushed the rebellion and defeated Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. LTTE's leader Prabhakaran was killed by the Sri Lankan army and this marked the end of the civil war. Civil war had a serious impact on Sri Lanka in multiple aspects. Nation had to spend large amount of money for funding the war, millions of citizens were affected and all the sectors were seriously impacted. After the end of civil war Sri Lanka showed signs of recovery. The Government of Sri

Lanka initiated various projects and policies that led to the rehabilitation of the nation and recovery of various sectors. One of the major sector that recovered quickly after the civil war was tourism. The Government received financial support from various nations like China and India and this fuelled nation's recovery process. Infrastructure facilities like Sea ports, airports, railway lines, highways etc. were constructed. Sri Lanka is well known for its natural beauty. This small island nation is blessed with beautiful beaches, hill stations, tea plantations, water bodies etc. International tourists refrained from travelling to Sri Lanka as a result of security constraints. But millions of international tourists visited the country after the civil war and Sri Lanka generated foreign exchange worth Billions of Dollars from tourism sector. After the end of civil war, Sri Lanka was considered as one of the prominent tourist destination in South Asia along with India. But this favorable situation never lasted for too long. Sri Lanka witnessed serial bombings and terrorist attacks led by Islam State terrorists in the year 2019. These bombings were considered as the worst attacks the Island nation has faced after the end of civil war in 2009. Several international tourists were killed along with Sri Lankan citizens. Bombings were held in multiple locations including churches and hotels. These attacks spoiled the reputation of Sri Lanka as a safe tourist destination. It was just a beginning. In the following year there was widespread outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic across the world and travel bans, lockdowns and curfews were imposed across the world. Millions of people lost their lives and tourism was not at all a priority for the people. As a result of this pandemic Sri Lankan tourism sector was badly affected just like other countries. In the post pandemic phase Sri Lanka faced serious financial issues and nation's economy was shattered. Nation's foreign exchange reserves got depleted, Sri Lankan Rupee's value fell drastically, nation experienced high amount of inflation and Sri Lanka failed to repay loans to countries like China. As a result of these issues Sri Lanka is no longer a major tourist destination in the world and nation lost its reputation in the tourism sector. The number of international tourists fell drastically and there are no signs of recovery.

Kerala, the southern state of India is considered as a major tourist destination in the world. Kerala is the first state in India to declare tourism as an industry and Kerala tourism industry is considered as one of the fastest growing tourism industry in the country. Kerala state Government failed to identify the potential of tourism sector till 1980's and state's tourism sector was mainly dominated by private operators. Col. Goda Varma Raja, husband of Travancore Queen Karthika Thirunal is considered as the first person who discovered the true potential of tourism in the state. After the formation of Kerala state, Government formed various departments like Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) to promote and facilitate tourism in the state. As a result of these efforts Kerala emerged as a major tourist destination in the country and in the world. Millions of international and domestic tourists visited Kerala every year and state earned valuable foreign exchange reserves from tourism sector. In the 1950's and 1960's Kerala was considered as one of the poorest State in India with extreme poverty, poor Human Development Index and high level of illiteracy. Large number of Keralites started migrating to Gulf countries in search of job opportunities and they succeeded in attaining the same. This migration pattern helped in the development of Kerala and also contributed to the growth of tourism sector. Now foreign remittances and tourism revenue are considered as the major contributors to Kerala's revenue. Tourism sector has an inseparable role in Kerala's economy and state's development.

I. Review of Literature

This article analyzes the situation in Sri Lanka after the end of military conflict and eradication of terrorism in 2009. This article exposes the ground realities in the country and focuses on the formulation of policies that protects the interests of all communities in Sri Lanka.

After armed struggle in Sri Lanka, Lankan Tamil expatriates living in western countries are not willing to return to their country citing human rights violations. Western countries responded with strict repatriation policies but many Sri Lankan Tamils escaped from legal issues and continued to stay in western countries.

Analyzed Sri Lanka's attractiveness to tourists, historical evolution, changing patterns of tourist arrivals and tourism boom.

Studied about the impact of 30year war on Sri Lanka's tourism industry. Analyzes the impact of war on tourism sector and Government's role after the conflict. Government policies advantage large tourism operators at the expense of small business.

Assessed the impact of tourism on local residents. There were huge protests against tourism projects in Dambulla few years back, but now local community is supporting tourism. Tourism has positive impact on local community. Tourism increased employment opportunities, property value and infrastructure.

Analyzed the causal relationship between tourism earning and economic growth in Sri Lanka from 1977-2012. There is unidirectional causality between economic growth and tourism earnings. Economic growth only causes tourism earnings. Government should formulate policies that supports tourism.

This article analyzes the relationship between foreign exchange earnings tourist arrivals, tourist prices, tourist spendings and direct employment in tourism sector. Tourism is the fifth largest source of foreign exchange earnings in 2012, third largest in 2013 contributing 5.2% to total foreign exchange earnings.

Deals with the impact of COVID-19 on tourism industry, contributions of tourism sector on Sri Lankan economy and socio-cultural development. Analyzed the way in which Sri Lankan tourism industry collapsed due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Describes the context and framework for assessing destination attractiveness in Kerala. This study reveals Kerala's strengths and weaknesses.

This paper analyzes indigenous entrepreneurship in the case of houseboat tourism in Kerala. Sustainable tourism aims to improve economic and social benefits of tourism development. Effective engagement of local communities is essential for sustainable tourism.

Human resources development has an important role in rural tourism development. Human resource development in rural communities is affected by number of drawbacks. In the absence of private sector, public sector needs to take the initiative in empowering the local community to participate in tourism. Kerala is an example in this case.

This paper highlights the public private partnership nature of Kerala travel mart, a tourism trade show held in Kerala. The objective is to analyze the effectiveness of public private participatory nature of Kerala Travel Mart. Kerala Travel Mart has some areas of improvement.

II. SRI LANKAN TOURISM

Sri Lanka is considered as a major tourist destination in South Asia. Sri Lanka is blessed with natural beauty, but the Island nation failed to derive benefits from tourism sector until the year 2009 due to a brutal civil war that lasted for 26 years. In the year 2009, only 538000 international tourists visited Sri Lanka and country's receipts from tourism was only 754 million USD. Tourism sector contributed to only 1.8 % of nation's GNP. As a result of long lasting civil war major infrastructure facilities in the country were seriously damaged or destroyed. LTTE terrorists bombarded airports, aircrafts, railway networks and other infrastructure facilities. International tourists refrained from travelling to Sri Lanka owing to security threats. A nation with beautiful beaches, hill stations, plantations, historical monuments etc. was unable to utilize its tourism potential for decades. Sri Lankan government succeeded in defeating LTTE in the year 2009 and the main priority of the government after the war was the development of social and economic infrastructure in the state. Countries like China and India offered development aids and loans to Sri Lanka and China was the major contributor. With the support of China, Sri Lanka constructed new port in Hambanthota, airport in Mattala and revamped the railway network in the country. Several highways and other projects were also implemented. As a result of advancement in infrastructure facilities and restoration of peace and security in the country, international tourists started visiting Sri Lanka and the island nation started earning valuable foreign exchange. The number of international tourists rose to 2.03 million in the year 2019 and the nation earned receipts worth 4.66 billion USD from tourism sector. Tourism sector's contribution to GNP also increased to 5.6 %. But the figures in 2019 was much

less when compared to previous year 2018. This was due to some major incidents that happened in the country in the year 2019.

Sri Lanka witnessed significant growth in tourist arrivals and tourism receipts from 2009 to 2018 but the situation got worsened in the following year. 2019 was just the beginning of a downfall. On 21 April, 2019 Sri Lankans witnessed massive bombings in different parts of the country. Multiple bomb blasts were reported in three Christian churches and three luxury hotels in Colombo. The Islam State terrorists undertook the responsibility of these blasts that killed 269 people including 45 foreigners. Sri Lankan government received serious intelligence reports from India regarding the possibility of terrorist attacks in the country but the government failed miserably in protecting the citizens and avoiding the attacks. The Easter bombings of 2019 seriously tarnished the image of Sri Lanka and nation's administration. Major countries in the world including United States of America warned its citizens about the potential risk which they have to face if they plan to visit Sri Lanka. As a result of these attacks and potential security threats in the country, international tourists started avoiding their visit to Sri Lanka. The worst situation was yet to come. In the year 2020, the first case of COVID-19 was reported in China and soon after many other countries reported the outbreak of pandemic. The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 as a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. All the countries in the World imposed lockdowns, travel bans and curfews to prevent the spread of the pandemic but millions lost their lives. In the initial stages countries like China, USA and European countries were seriously affected but later on the situation got worsened in South Asian countries like India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh etc. Sri Lanka recorded a total of more than 6 lakh cases and more than 16000 deaths. Sri Lankan Government imposed lockdowns and travel restrictions in the country and all the airports were closed. International tourist arrivals fell down from 2.03 million in 2019 to just 5.4 lakhs in 2020. This fall in tourist arrivals had a serious impact on the nation and its citizens. Tourism sector was a major contributor to Sri Lankan economy and also aided nation's economic growth. As a result of decline in tourism revenue, Sri Lanka's foreign exchange reserves depleted drastically. This crisis also affected millions of Sri Lankan's who were directly or indirectly employed by the tourism sector or industry. The nation witnessed high level of unemployment, poverty and fall in Human Development Index indicators. The travel bans and restrictions regarding COVID-19 pandemic were lifted by various countries as a result of steady decline in COVID-19 cases. International flight operations were back to normal and people started travelling. Sri Lanka expected to regain its lost glory in tourism sector and the island nation prepared itself to visit the guests but the condition was getting worse day by day.

Sri Lanka was ruled by the Rajapaksa family. The Presidential post, Prime Minister post and major portfolios in the cabinet were occupied by the members of this family. The Government run by this family succeeded in eliminating LTTE and thus they received public mandate. Traditionally Sri Lankan governments were close to India, but Rajapaksa family gave more importance to China. They considered China as a major partner to Sri Lanka and received loans worth Billions of US Dollars from China to fund development activities. China had vested interests in Sri Lanka. China used Sri Lanka as a base to challenge India in multiple aspects including defence. Sri Lanka faced the issue of depleting foreign exchange reserves and COVID-19 pandemic worsened the situation. Sri Lanka reached a situation where the nation was unable to repay the loans to China. The nation was left with a scarce foreign exchange reserves and the government was unable to even import crude oil, food grains and emergency medicines. Sri Lanka witnessed massive protests and the protestors demanded the resignation of the President, Prime Minister and Council of ministers. The Government was forced to resign as a result of public outrage. Sri Lanka has gone through multiple stages in terms of tourism sector in past decades. Tourism sector was completely inactive and shattered until 2009, the next decade showed signs of resurrection and recovery and now the Island nation is going through a tough time and the way ahead is not smooth.

International arrivals and receipts – Sri Lanka

YEAR	NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS	RECEIPTS (IN US \$)
2012	11,33,000	1.76 Billion
2013	14,15,000	2.51 Billion
2014	16,65,000	3.28 Billion
2015	19,93,000	3.98 Billion
2016	21,68,000	4.59 Billion
2017	22,48,000	5.08 Billion
2018	25,21,000	5.61 Billion
2019	20,27,000	4.66 Billion
2020	5,40,000	1.08 Billion

Source: World Bank

III. KERALA TOURISM

Kerala is a prominent tourist destination in the world. This southern state of India is well known for its natural beauty. The presence of various beaches, lakes, lagoons, hill stations, forests, waterfalls etc. makes Kerala a preferred tourist destination for both domestic and international tourists. Even before India's independence Kerala was considered as a major spot for leisure. The present state of Kerala was divided into different Kingdoms like Travancore, Kozhikode, Kochi, Kannur etc. before independence. These kingdoms were ruled by various Royal families and they played a significant role in the development of tourism and tourist destinations. The Kingdoms of Kozhikode, Kochi and Kannur had trade relations with Arabs, Chinese and Jews. Many foreign travelers visited these kingdoms during that period. Later on Vasco Da Gama, the Portuguese navigator arrived at the shores of Kappad in Zamorin's Kozhikode kingdom (1498) as a result of his voyage to discover sea route to India. Gama succeeded in establishing trade relations with Kochi and Kannur and later on Kerala became a colony of Portugal. The colonial rule of Portugal was followed by the Dutch and the British. The Kingdoms of present day Kerala suffered from the colonial rule in multiple aspects, but this rule resulted in the development of infrastructure and led to the development of tourism sector later on. After independence the state government failed to identify the true potential of tourism sector and the role of tourism in state's economic development. But in the 1980's government started formulating various policies and started various organizations to promote tourism development in the state. Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) is a corporation constituted for this purpose.

Along with natural tourist attractions like beaches, hill stations, forests, water falls etc., Kerala also has archeological monuments, forts, palaces, museums, planetariums, zoo's, botanical gardens, wild life sanctuaries, tiger reserves, amusement parks, shopping malls etc. The snake boat races held in different parts of the state especially in the Alappuzha and Pathanamthitta districts are a major tourist attraction. Kerala is also well known for medical tourism. Several foreigners visit Kerala in order to get their diseases cured and they follow the traditional ayurvedic treatment procedures. The Government of Kerala succeeded in the development of infrastructure facilities across the state. Kerala has a good network of roads, railways, metro rail system, four international airports across the state, bus network, boat services, water metro network etc. The introduction of house boats was a major landmark in the history of Kerala tourism. Thousands of house boats were deployed in lakes in Alappuzha and Kottayam. These house boats attract both international and domestic tourists. Thousands of people are employed in house boat sector and it is their source of livelihood. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of Kerala and KTDC has initiated various projects in last couple of years with an intention to increase the number of international tourist arrivals in the state and also to increase foreign exchange earnings from tourism sector. Various tourism promotional events were held in United States of America, United Kingdom, Middle East countries etc. Kerala tourism advertisements and hoardings appeared in prime locations in these countries. These initiatives succeeded in gaining the attention of international tourists and the number of

international tourist arrivals showed a significant growth. As a result of these initiatives the number of international tourist arrivals increased from 7,93,696 in the year 2012 to 11,89,771 in the year 2019. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism sector also showed a significant growth. Foreign exchange earnings increased from 4571.69 crores in the year 2012 to 10,271.06 crores in the year 2019. Politics, corruption, rep-tapism and excessive trade union activities in the state of Kerala is causing a major setback to the tourism sector. Government of Kerala planned to construct a new Greenfield airport in Aranmula, Pathanamthitta district. The proposed airport site was located near Sabarimala temple a major pilgrim center in the state. Trivandrum and Kochi international airports were located more than 100 kilometers away from this temple. The construction of Aranmulaairport could have increased the arrival of pilgrims from across India and from outside the country. The famous Aranmula temple is also located nearby. But constant strikes and political motives ruined the project. Another important project put forward by the government to boost tourism sector was the sea plane project. Government of Kerala decided to implement sea plane project in the state and all the necessary arrangements were made. Required number of aircrafts reached the state, floating terminals were constructed and the project was officially launched. This project was believed to be a major landmark in Kerala tourism after the successful introduction of house boats. But the government was forced to withdraw from the project owing to constant protests and strikes.

The constant harthals and strikes in Kerala tarnished the image of the state and it spoiled the reputation of Kerala as a major tourist destination. Kerala has experienced steady growth in tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earnings till the year 2019, but the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected the state and its tourism sector. The number of international tourists reduced from 11,89,771 in the year 2019 to 3,40,755 in the year 2020. Foreign exchange earnings also experienced similar decline. In the initial stages of the pandemic, Kerala government succeeded in controlling the outbreak and number of cases. The death rate in Kerala was the lowest in the country. The Government of Kerala especially the Health ministry received appreciation from across the country and the world in this context. But later on Kerala government lost its control over the pandemic. Kerala become the state with highest number of active COVID cases and the situation got much worse in the second wave of the pandemic. As a result of this pandemic all the sectors in the state got affected and tourism sector was not an exception. Major tourism destinations and centers were closed down and several people lost their jobs. Now the situation is slowly getting back to normal. Kerala government started formulating new projects to revive the tourism sector and to attract international tourists back to Kerala. The latest project is Keravan, Kerala's Caravan tourism project. This project is expected to attain success just like house boat project implemented years back. Kerala is now looking for new avenues in tourism sector. Kerala is now a major center for international conferences and conventions after the development of world class convention centers and hotels across the state. Kerala is now slowly coming out of the dark phase imposed by the pandemic and there are several positive signs of recovery.

International arrivals and receipts – Kerala

YEAR	NO: OF INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS	RECEIPTS (INR)
2012	7,93,696	4571.69 crores
2013	8,58,143	5560.77 crores
2014	9,23,366	6398.93 crores
2015	9,77,479	6949.88 crores
2016	10,38,419	7749.51 crores
2017	10,91,870	8392.11 crores
2018	10,96,407	8764.46 crores
2019	11,89,771	10,271.06 crores
2020	3,40,755	2799.85 crores

Source:Kerala tourism

IV. IMPACT OF SRI LANKAN CRISIS ON KERALA TOURISM

Kerala and Sri Lanka are similar in various aspects. The climate, geography, landscape, culture, food cuisine, infrastructure etc. of Kerala and Sri Lanka have lot of similarities. Every tourist destination in Sri Lanka has a substitute in Kerala. Sri Lanka is located just 369.5 miles away from Kerala. The number of international tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka was much more than that of Kerala in the last decade. The situation was different during the Sri Lankan civil war. After the end of civil war Sri Lanka succeeded in the development of infrastructure across the nation with the support of China. These developments led to the increased flow of tourist arrivals to the island nation. Kerala was not in a position to counter these developments. As a result of this, Sri Lanka became a major tourist destination in South Asia and international tourists preferred Sri Lanka over Kerala. Both Sri Lanka and Kerala has an economy which highly depend on the tourism sector. Tourism is a major source of revenue for both Kerala and Sri Lanka and millions of employment opportunities were created in this sector. The value of Sri Lankan currency was much lower than that of Indian Rupee. Due to this, a trip to Sri Lanka was much cheaper for an international tourist than Kerala. Another important advantage for Sri Lankan tourism over Kerala was the presence of direct flights to western countries. Kerala had four international airports located in Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Kozhikode and Kannur when compared to two airports in Sri Lanka. But this numerical advantage failed to benefit the state in terms of tourism sector. None of the airlines operated direct flights from Kerala to western countries and vice versa. This was a major challenge for the state of Kerala and tourism sector. As a result of this the travel time was much more and international tourists had to spend more time in transit airports. Sri Lanka only had two international airports but there were direct flights that connect Sri Lanka with western countries. As a result of this, an international tourist had to spend very less time to reach Sri Lanka and the travel time was very short when compared to Kerala. Sri Lanka had these advantages over Kerala and this helped the nation to attract more international tourists than Kerala. The state of Kerala had a wide variety of tourist locations than that of Sri Lanka but these hindrances curtailed the growth of Kerala's tourism sector.

The situation in Sri Lanka has changed drastically owing to the current economic and political crisis prevailing in the country. Sri Lanka is no longer a preferred tourist destination. The economic and political situation in Sri Lanka is not favorable. Country's foreign exchange reserves got depleted and Sri Lanka is unable to import essential commodities like food grains, medicines, crude oil etc. Nation is also facing the issue of political instability. The number of international tourist arrivals to Sri Lanka showed a steady decline. Hotels, resorts and home stays are not even able to ensure power supply. Government was forced to impose power cuts for more than 20 hours a day and generators were not operational due to the scarcity of diesel. Public transportation system in the country including government buses, auto's, taxi's etc. failed to operate properly owing to concerns regarding fuel availability. Sri Lanka was once appreciated for the attitude and hospitality towards the international tourists but now the nation fails to provide basic amenities to them. Sri Lankan airlines, the national airlines of Sri Lanka is now facing huge amount of losses due to mismanagement and corruption. Several flights got cancelled due to the unavailability of aviation fuel. Sri Lankan airlines now utilize Kerala based airports like Thiruvananthapuram and Kochi for refueling. Recently Thiruvananthapuram airport offered refueling facilities to more than 100 aircrafts from Sri Lanka. The value of Sri Lanka's currency declined with respect to US Dollars and Sri Lanka failed to repay loans offered by China. Citizens of Sri Lanka are now going through a tough time. People are experiencing severe poverty, unemployment etc. Life in Sri Lanka is now at a standstill.

Kerala is a major competitor to Sri Lanka in terms of tourism. The current economic and political crisis in Sri Lanka will benefit Kerala and its tourism sector more than any other state or country. This is due to the similarities both Kerala and Sri Lanka have. In this current situation international tourists will refrain from visiting Sri Lanka. So the most suitable alternative available to them will be Kerala. Kerala is a major tourist destination in South Asia and as mentioned all the tourist attractions in Sri Lanka will have a substitute or competitor in Kerala. Kerala has a stable elected government and the southern state is well known for its maintenance of law and order. International tourists won't face any security threats or terrorist threats in the State of Kerala. Kerala has achieved significant progress in the development of social and economic

infrastructure development. The achievements in terms of social infrastructure is commendable. Kerala's Human Development Index (HDI) is at par with that of various developed countries in the world. The state has the highest literacy rate in the country and has one of the best health care system in the country. Kerala is now capable to offer world class facilities and amenities to international tourists and the government is now focusing more on tourism sector. Airlines like Air India started direct flights connecting Kochi and London recently. These flights attracted large number of passengers and was declared successful. More airlines are now planning to operate direct flights connecting Kerala airports and western countries. These flight operations will definitely boost Kerala's tourism potential. The policies formulated by the government and the projects implemented after the outbreak of the pandemic succeeded in attracting international tourists to the state. As a result of this, the number of tourist arrivals are increasing and state continues to generate valuable foreign exchange earnings. Sri Lanka's tourism sector started experiencing downfall from the year 2019 due to the terrorist attacks that happened on the day of Easter. The impact of Sri Lankan crisis on Kerala tourism is evident in that year itself. When we consider international tourist arrivals to Kerala from the year 2012 to 2020, the year 2019 had the highest number recorded till date. 11,89,771 international tourists visited Kerala that year and Sri Lanka witnessed a significant decline in terms of international tourist arrivals in that same year. From these figures it is evident that decline in tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka will lead to increase in tourist arrivals in Kerala. As per the current situation it is evident that the Sri Lankan crisis won't be under control immediately and Kerala will continue to benefit from this. If State's tourism sector attains success in benefitting from this situation, then Kerala tourism will regain its lost glory and God's own country will regain its status as the most prominent tourist destination in the South Asia.

V. CONCLUSION

Sri Lanka and Kerala are well known for its tourism potential and have an economy which is highly dependent on tourism sector and tourism revenue. Sri Lanka suffered a lot as a result of the brutal civil war between the army and LTTE which lasted for more than 28 years. Millions of innocent people lost their lives and several people were forced to migrate from their native places. After the end of civil war, Sri Lanka rose from the ashes like a Phoenix and achieved significant progress in multiple fields. These achievements were possible only because of the determination of the administration and the fighting spirit of Sri Lankan citizens. After a decade of economic progress, Sri Lanka again slipped into serious economic and political crisis. Now the nation stands divided and the common people are suffering due to this crisis. Several countries came forward to support Sri Lanka and support from institutions like IMF is expected soon. Various sectors of the nation including the tourism sector are seriously affected. The Government has to formulate policies to counter these issues and also to ensure economic and political stability in the country. The citizens of Sri Lanka deserve a better life and it is the duty of the administration to ensure the same. Kerala tourism is currently benefitting from the ongoing Sri Lankan crisis but this won't last too long. If the State of Kerala and its tourism sector needs to attain long term benefits in the field of tourism, then the administration and all the stakeholders should formulate new policies and initiate action regarding the same. Both Sri Lanka and Kerala deserves to be the major tourism destinations in the world.

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