

EXPERIENCE AND INSPIRATION FROM THE PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL TOURISM INDUSTRY AND NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY RESPONSE COOPERATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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ABSTRACT

Southeast Asia's cultural tourism industry has been booming in recent years, and the contribution rate of Chinese tourists has increased significantly, becoming an important driving force for regional economic growth. However, the prosperity of the tourism industry also faces non-traditional security threats, such as public health crises and terrorism. This paper analyzes the development status of Southeast Asian cultural tourism industry, the contribution rate of Chinese tourists and the experience of non-traditional security response cooperation, and discusses its inspiration for the sustainable development of Pakistan's cultural tourism industry. The study shows that China and Southeast Asia have accumulated rich experience in cultural and tourism cooperation, including policy coordination, infrastructure construction and security cooperation mechanisms.

Keywords: *Southeast Asian cultural tourism industry; Non-traditional security; Contribution rate of Chinese tourists; Pakistan; Sustainable development.*

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INTRODUCTION

Southeast Asia's cultural tourism industry has made remarkable achievements in recent years, and the rapid growth of Chinese tourists has injected strong impetus into the regional economy. However, the prosperity of the cultural tourism industry also faces many challenges, especially the intensification of non-traditional security threats. This paper aims to analyze the development experience of Southeast Asia's cultural tourism industry, explore the contribution rate of Chinese tourists, and put forward suggestions for the sustainable development of Pakistan's cultural tourism industry.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Prosperity and Development of Southeast Asian Cultural Tourism Industry and China Factors

Increase in the Number of Tourists and Consumption

Chinese tourists are one of the main sources of tourists for Southeast Asian countries. For example, during the Spring Festival in 2024, the number of travel orders of Chinese tourists in Southeast Asia increased by more than 30% compared with the same period in 2019, and the amount of spending also increased significantly, (XU, 2024). Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and other countries are reporting record hotel bookings and consumer spending. Thailand received 244,000 Chinese tourists during the Lunar New Year in 2024, spending 8.6 billion baht (about \$239 million), up 366% year-on-year (ZHANG, 2024).

Contribution to GDP

Tourism plays an important role in the GDP of Southeast Asian countries, and the spending of Chinese tourists is directly driving this growth. For example, tourism contributed 28.3% to Cambodia's GDP in 2016, creating a large number of jobs (ZHANG, 2024). In 2023, Thailand's tourism revenue reached 1 trillion baht, of which Chinese tourists contributed significantly, (BAI, 2024).

Visa-free Policy Promotion and Effect

Southeast Asian countries are wooing Chinese tourists with visa-free policies. For example, in 2024, Thailand, Singapore and China implemented mutual visa exemption policies, which greatly promoted the visit of Chinese tourists. Malaysia is also trying to attract Chinese tourists by increasing flight frequency and optimizing tourism facilities, (ZHANG, 2024).

Driving Effect of Tourism Industry Chain

Spending by Chinese tourists is not limited to tourist attractions, but also drives the development of hotels, catering, transportation, retail and other related industries. For example, Alipay data shows significant growth in food, beverage and attraction ticket spending by Chinese tourists in Southeast Asia, (BAI, 2024). In addition, the preference of Chinese tourists has shifted from shopping to "experiential travel", further promoting the upgrading of local tourism services.

Cultural Exchange and Economic Cooperation

The increase in Chinese tourists has also boosted cultural exchanges and economic cooperation between China and Southeast Asian countries. For example, the Belt and Road Initiative has promoted tourism cooperation, with Southeast Asian countries further attracting Chinese tourists by providing Chinese language services, mobile payment and other convenient measures, (ZHANG, 2024).

The contribution of Chinese tourists to the tourism economy of Southeast Asia is not only reflected in the direct consumption growth, but also promoted the economic development of the region through policy promotion, industrial chain promotion and cultural exchanges. In the future, with the further implementation of the visa-free policy and the optimization of tourism services, the contribution of Chinese tourists to the tourism economy in Southeast Asia is expected to continue to grow. The cultural tourism industry has not only promoted the economic growth of Southeast Asian countries, but also

promoted cultural exchanges and people-to-people exchanges. For example, China and ASEAN have strengthened the construction of tourism infrastructure and the development of cultural and tourism products through the Belt and Road Initiative, which has promoted the prosperity of the regional tourism market.

The Experience of China-ASEAN non-traditional Security response Cooperation to ensure the Prosperity of the Cultural and Tourism Industry

Public Health Crisis Response

The COVID-19 epidemic has dealt a severe blow to Southeast Asia's cultural tourism industry, but it has also promoted cooperation between China and ASEAN in the field of public health security. Through information sharing and joint prevention and control measures, the two sides have effectively mitigated the impact of the epidemic on the cultural and tourism industry. First, establish a sound cooperation mechanism: China and ASEAN have gradually established more mature cooperation mechanisms in response to public health crises, such as the China-Asean Health Ministers' meeting mechanism and the China-Asean Health Cooperation Forum. These mechanisms not only promote cooperation in the field of public health but also provide a security guarantee for the recovery and development of the cultural and tourism industry. By strengthening infectious disease surveillance, information sharing and joint prevention and control, public health risks have been effectively reduced and tourists' confidence in intra-regional travel has been enhanced. Second, improve emergency response capacity: the two sides have accumulated rich experience in emergency response during public health crises, such as the rapid establishment of crisis management teams, timely release of information, and close cooperation with public health authorities. These experiences will help the cultural tourism industry to quickly adjust its strategies and reduce losses when facing similar crises.

Prevention and Control of Terrorism and Transnational Crimes

By establishing joint patrol mechanisms and strengthening border control, Southeast Asian countries have effectively dealt with the threat of terrorism and transnational crimes to the cultural and tourism industry. For example, the four countries in the Mekong River Basin signed the Joint Statement on Law Enforcement and Security Cooperation, which provides a guarantee for regional tourism safety. The experience of China and ASEAN in counter-terrorism cooperation has provided support and reference for the prosperity of Southeast Asia's cultural tourism industry in various aspects, as follows:

Multi-level Cooperation Mechanism

China and ASEAN have established multi-level counter-terrorism cooperation mechanisms, including multilateral, mini-multilateral and bilateral cooperation. For example, the ASEAN-China Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Non-traditional security Fields and its action plan have identified counter-terrorism as a priority for cooperation. This multi-level cooperation mechanism provides a stable external environment for the cultural tourism industry and reduces the threat of terrorism to tourism security.

Jointly Combat Cross-border Crimes

The two sides have taken joint actions to combat cross-border crimes and terrorism, such as anti-terrorism early warning teams and joint anti-terrorism exercises under the Lancang-Mekong law enforcement and security cooperation mechanism. These measures have effectively curbed the infiltration of terrorism in Southeast Asia, ensured the safety of tourists, and enhanced tourists' confidence in Southeast Asia.

Improve Regional Governance Capacity to Ensure Tourism Safety

Border control and intelligence sharing

Cooperation between China and ASEAN countries in border control and intelligence sharing has effectively prevented the cross-border flow of terrorists. For example, Guangxi has established a cross-border joint law enforcement cooperation mechanism with Vietnam's Quang Ninh Province, effectively maintaining tourism order. This cooperation mechanism not only guarantees the safety of the tourist destination, but also provides a guarantee for the long-term and stable development of the cultural tourism industry.

Emergency response and crisis management

The two sides have accumulated rich experience in emergency response and crisis management in counter-terrorism cooperation, which helps the cultural and tourism industry to quickly adjust strategies and reduce losses in the face of emergencies.

In short, the experience accumulated by China and ASEAN in counter-terrorism cooperation has provided important support for the prosperity of Southeast Asia's cultural tourism industry. By strengthening regional security cooperation, promoting economic integration, deepening people-to-people exchanges, innovating tourism products and services, enhancing marketing and enhancing regional governance capacity, the two sides have not only effectively addressed the threat of terrorism, but also laid a solid foundation for the sustainable development of the cultural and tourism industry. China and ASEAN have enhanced their capacity to ensure tourism security by establishing mechanisms such as tourism police and cross-border joint law enforcement.

Inspiration for the Sustainable Development of Pakistan's Cultural Tourism Industry

Strengthen China-Pakistan Cultural and Tourism Cooperation

Pakistan can draw on the experience of cultural and tourism cooperation between China and Southeast Asia to attract Chinese tourists through policy coordination and infrastructure construction. For example, visa facilitation measures for Chinese tourists can be introduced, and tourism products with cultural characteristics can be developed.

Improve Non-traditional Security Response Mechanisms

Pakistan should strengthen prevention and control mechanisms related to non-traditional security threats, such as public health crisis response and terrorism prevention and control. We can learn from the experience of Southeast Asia, establish a joint patrol mechanism between China and Pakistan, and enhance the security of tourism.

Promote Innovation and Diversified Development of Cultural and Tourism Industry

Pakistan can promote innovation in the cultural and tourism industry through technological empowerment and cultural integration. For example, digital tourism products can be developed to build cultural tourism brands with local characteristics and attract more international tourists.

CONCLUSION

The prosperity and development of Southeast Asia's cultural tourism industry and the experience of non-traditional security response cooperation have provided important inspiration for Pakistan. By strengthening China-Pakistan cultural tourism cooperation, improving security mechanisms and promoting industrial innovation, Pakistan is expected to achieve sustainable development

of cultural tourism industry and inject new impetus into regional economic growth.

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