

MEASURE ON CONSTRUCTION OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES CENTER I AS THE TOURIST DESTINATION OF TOURS IN VIETNAM

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***Abstract:** In the current era of economic integration and development, tourism has been one of the key economic sectors making an important contribution to the economic growth and development. Recently, the Vietnamese cultural heritage has become an important product that effectively serves the development of tourism in general and cultural tourism in particular. One of the places with great resources of cultural heritage for the tourism activities is the National Archives Centers where the archives documents are kept. One of the centers where a large volume of documents of historical value could be exploited and developed to become the product of cultural tourism is the National Archives Center I. Currently, the National Archives Center I has not been able to maximize its strengths and concretize the process of construction of the Archives Center as the tourist destination. In this article, the author has given a number of measures on the construction of National Archives Center I as the tourist destination of tours in Vietnam.*

***Key words:** model, tourist destination, tourism resources, tourists.*

1. PREAMBLE

The archival documents are not only a special antiquity, one of the great resources of cultural heritage of each nation, but also a true and vivid reflection of the nation's history of formation and development. With their great values, the archival documents could become a product of tourism and help the National Archives Centers become a tourist destination if they are invested and developed. However, in reality, at present, the National Archives Centers have not improved fully their potential, and have not yet developed a destination of tourist attraction.

The National Archives Center I is the place where a large volume of documents on the feudal period, the archival documents in French from Tonkin during the French colonial period, and the archival documents of the pro-French government in the temporary war zone from 1946 to in 1954, are kept. This is a large volume of documents of historical value, which could be exploited and developed to become the product of cultural tourism and turn this place into a tourist destination that attracts a large number of tourists in the region and abroad. Therefore, the research of solutions on the formation of model of: National Archives Center I - the destination of tours in Vietnam is an issue that needs to be concerned.

2. CONTENTS

2.1. Policy of leadership of the State Records and Archives Management Department of Vietnam and the National Archives Center I regarding the construction of tourist destination model at the National Archives Center I

Following the State's policy in the expansion, advertisement and promotion of the value of archival materials and the construction of public areas, most of the Centers have built the exhibition and display areas. This is also the premise for the construction of the archives centers as the tourist destination. Therefore, the leadership of the State Records and Archives Management Department of Vietnam has always encouraged the Centers to improve their infrastructure, expand the display and exhibition areas, and regularly collect and gather the documents in order to expand and advertise the value of archival documents through the tourism. However, the leadership of the State Records and Archives Management Department of Vietnam has not yet promulgated any specific legal document on the direction and

process of construction as well as the regulations in construction of the Archives Center to become the tourist destination of the tours in Vietnam.

Although there are no specific regulations or guidelines on the construction of the tourist destination model at the National Archives Center I, the Center has initially focused on and invested in the construction of the Center to become the tourist destination. Specifically, on March 2, 2022, I conducted an interview with Ms. Nguyen Thu Hoai - Deputy Director of the National Archives Center I on the policy of the National Archives Center I regarding the construction of the tourist destination model, she shared: *“Currently, the National Archives Center I has not promulgated any specific policy regarding the construction of the destination model at the Center. However, the Center is also aware of its tourist potential, so it has taken the measures to promote the tourism such as renovation and improvement of its infrastructure, particularly the exhibition and display areas”*. It is thanks to these changes that in the recent years, the Center has had more beautiful and modern galleries; the tourist promotion activities have also been widely carried out; the staff who serve the tourists to the Center has been required more strictly regarding the skills. At the same time, the Center has also actively looked for partners to link the tourism (travel businesses, museums, media agencies, etc.)

Thus, it can be seen that although the leadership of the National Archives Center I has not yet promulgated any specific policies or documents regarding the construction of the tourist destination model at the Center, they still see the potential for the tourist development of the Center and initially executed the measures of tourist attraction.

2.2. The first results of the construction of the National Archives Center I to become the destination of tours in Vietnam

In the recent years, the National Archives Center I has actively executed the measures to attract readers and tourists such as construction of open and modern exhibition and display areas; promotion of tourist advertisement activities in various forms to bring the image of the Center in particular and archival documents in general closer to the community.

At the National Archives Center I, the public areas, also known as the exhibition and display areas, have been built. In previous years, the exhibition and display areas were quite small, not commensurate with the tourist potential of the Center. However, in the year 2021-2022, the Center has been expanding and rearranging the documents at the exhibition and display areas for the purpose of attracting tourists to come to visit and experience. It is expected that these two permanent exhibition areas will be officially opened to receive the tourists by the end of this year. The National Archives Center I has the advantage of location and traffic when it is located on a convenient traffic route, moreover its location is in the center of Hanoi city, so the Center has combined to organize the exhibition of documents indoors and outdoors at other locations in Hanoi. Thanks to that, the Center attracts more than 2500 tourists every year. The tourists who visit and experience at the Center also have quite good feedback on the welcoming attitude of the staff at the Center and they feel quite happy when they could witness and touch the archival documents such as the Nguyen dynasty manuscripts, the Nguyen dynasty directory. Many foreign tourists who come the National Archives Center I for the first time are also surprised by the beauty and value of the archival documents in Vietnam. They are happy to experience and learn about a new land, a historical dynasty in a country which is rich in cultural traditions. In particular, the application of new technologies in the archival activities makes the tourists extremely excited when they have access to the archival documents in an authentic and vivid manner and deeply feel the message that the exhibition and display shows desire to convey.

With the number of tourists visiting the Center every year as well as the positive feedback of tourists on the quality and services of the Center, this proves the more and more increasing demand on survey of the archival documents and the higher and higher coverage of the Archives Center. In order to achieve such achievements, it is partly due to the good training of staff at the Center, most especially the fact that the Center has carried out many forms of advertisement to introduce the image and attract tourists to come the Center such as: Organization of

exhibitions; production of archival publications; posting of articles on the mass media.

Although the guidelines and a number of measures on the construction of the tourist destination model at the National Archives Center I have been promulgated, so far, the construction of the model of the Archives Center - the tourist destination at the National Archives Center has been still faced with many difficulties and restrictions such as: The display of original documents is easy to damage the documents; the infrastructure has not met the needs of sightseeing; the human resources have not been properly trained in the tourism skills and operations; the government has not promulgated the regulations on the construction of tourist destination models; some officials have still been doubted the feasibility of the construction of tourist destination model at the National Archives Center I. Particularly, for the construction of the model of National Archives Center I as the tourist destination of tours in Vietnam, a large amount of funding is required or the tourism promotion, human resources training, infrastructure upgrading, ... However, where does this funding come from, because the Center could not meet such a large amount of funding. This has still been a difficult problem for the Center when it executes the construction of the tourist destination model [2].

2.3. Some measures on perfection of the construction of the National Archives Center I to become the destination of tours in Vietnam

2.3.1. Assessment of feasibility

There are many opinions that construction of the tourist destination model at the Archives Centers is not feasible because they think that the archival documents are boring and do not bring the high entertainment. However, as we all know, in the world this type of historical - cultural tourism is extremely developed such as in Taiwan, China, Germany and some other European countries. In Germany, the tourist destination model at the Archives Centers have been very developed and attracted a large number of domestic and foreign tourists. Looking at the achievements achieved by other countries, we are completely also capable of such development. Meanwhile, the National Archives Center I is also home to rich and diverse resources which meet

the tourism demands and the staff quality, and its infrastructure are under the improvement to serve the tourism. Ms. Nguyen Thu Hoai - Deputy Director of the National Archives Center I also affirmed: *“The National Archives Center I is fully qualified and capable of construction of the tourist destination model if it is invested in the correct direction and has a synchronous development strategy”*.

2.3.2. Some measures

2.3.2.1. Completion of legal documents as the basis for the construction of tourist destination model

Currently, the leadership of the State Records and Archives Management Department of Vietnam has not yet issued any specific guidelines or regulations on the tourism development as well as the construction of tourist destination model. Therefore, the Centers face with the difficulties in executing the process of construction of tourist destination model. Starting from such matter, in order to complete the legal documents as the basis for the construction of tourist destination model, I would like to give some suggestions as follows:

- Regarding the State Records and Archives Management Department of Vietnam: It is necessary to promulgate a process of construction of tourist destination model and specify the price to be paid by visitors when they visit the National Archives Center. At the same time, coordinate with National Archives Center I to find out the reasonable investors to promote the tourism development.

- Regarding the National Archives Center I: promulgate the documents specifying the responsibilities of each individual and department at the Center in the construction of tourist destination model. Organize the refresher and training courses on tourism skills for individuals and staff who directly welcome tourists at the Center.

2.3.2.2. Completion of process of construction of the National Archives Center I model- the destination of tours in Vietnam

For the successful construction of the Archives Center - tourist destination model of tours in Vietnam, the National Archives Center I needs to take the following steps:

Step 1: Promotion the research on tourists' demands

Step 2: Preparation of the tourism resources

Step 3: Investment in and upgrading of the infrastructure

Step 4: Human resources training

Step 5: Tourist advertisement

Step 6: Promotion of joint venture and association with tour operators

a. Promotion the research on tourists' demands

In order to capture the tourists' demands with the purpose of formation of a tourism program which meets the tourists' expectations, the National Archives Center I is required to have the ways of research on the tourists' demands. This not only helps the Center advertise its image, improve its position and reputation, but also is the basis for the Center to earn a profit from the tourism.

To conduct the research on tourists' demands, the Center needs to follow the following steps:

- Determine the research objective: The research objective is to survey the tourists' demands to come up with solutions to satisfy the tourists' demands.

- Determine the research object: The research object of the National Archives Center I is tourists.

- Way of implementation:

+ Research documents: Learn about the market through research works, opinions of experts, books, magazines, internet, conferences... This is a less expensive method but sometimes difficult to find and process the information; the level of reliability and relevance is not high, because this is a secondary source of information, which is widely published.

+ Other forms such as direct survey by interview, opinion form, hiring marketing companies... This form helps the Center obtain the primary and highly effective information sources, but the cost is often quite high and it spends on many stages.

b. Preparation of the tourism resources

The tourism resources of the National Archives Center I are the archival documents. In order to have the diverse and rich resources, the Center is required to strengthen and promote the collection and gathering of archival documents on a regular basis. In order to do this well, the National Archives Center I first needs to make a list of the types of records and documents that are submitted to the historical archives.

Next, the National Archives Center I is required to coordinate with the archival agencies to plan the collection and addition of archival documents to the historical archives. Especially, the collection and gathering of rare and precious documents should be promoted and paid attention to. Because the tourists' demands are to feel the beauty and discover the new. Therefore, the less rare and precious documents are accessed, the more they attract the attention and curiosity of tourists.

In addition, the National Archives Center I is also required to build a system of modern warehouses with equipment and techniques to ensure the efficient preservation of documents so that the documents are preserved fully, free from any damage, termites or mold. If, during the effective process of collection, gathering and addition of documents, the Center collects a large amount of documents, the Center shall take into account of the expansion plan of archives warehouse to meet the needs of the collection and gathering of archival documents.

c. Investment in and upgrading of the infrastructure

In order to meet the tourists' demands, the National Archives Center I is required to invest, upgrade and perfect the infrastructure because currently the Center only operates as a State agency, not a tourist attraction location.

Currently, the Center only has a display and exhibition area, but this area has not been properly and nicely decorated. For the tourism development, the National Archives Center I is required to arrange this area and build a number of other areas for tourism such as: dining area, entertainment area, souvenir are, etc. After the determination of the area to be built, the Center shall prepare an implementation plan for the competent person's approval and funding.

Finally, after receipt of the funding for construction, the National Archives Center I shall to find a reputable unit to design the drawings and organize the bidding to find a construction contractor.

d. Human resources training

This is a model of a specific tourist destination in a specific field that is archives, so the staff, in addition to the tourism knowledge, and the tour guides shall have the knowledge of history and archives. The staff who work directly at the Center are those involved in the history and archives, so they are very knowledgeable about the archival documents, however, they have not been trained in tourism. Therefore, in order to develop the staff, the National Archives Center I shall coordinate with the tourism training units to train the necessary knowledge and skills for tourism activities, especially the problem-solving skills. In addition, the staff at the Center also need to improve their foreign language skills to be able to serve foreign tourists. Besides, to evaluate the effectiveness of tourism professional training courses, the Center could organize the contests for its staff to practice their skills of guiding tourists and at the same time arouse their passion for tourism.

e. Tourist advertisement

Although the Center has currently organized many forms of advertisement and introduction of archival documents, many people have not known the National Archives Center I because the Center has not yet had any efficient tourism advertisement strategy. Thus, the image of the Center has not been widely disseminated to all ages and professions. Therefore, in order to reach a large number of tourists, the National Archives Center I shall carry out various forms of tourism advertisement such as: advertise on mass media: website, Facebook, Youtube; coordinate with broadcasting stations to produce introductory films of archival documents; organize the exhibitions; publish the archival publications; advertise through KOLs or a third party,... Besides being proactive in the tourist advertisement, the Center could learn more experiences from other Archives Centers at home and abroad to develop an effective tourism advertisement strategy to reach many potential tourists [3].

f. Promotion of joint venture and association with tour operators

Currently, tourists coming to the Center are often alone, not in groups, if in groups, it is mainly a group of students or officials of agencies or organizations involving in the archives. Therefore, in order to attract a large number of tourists in groups, the National Archives Center I shall promote the joint venture and cooperation with travel companies. This association will create benefits for both sides because the Archives Center is a suggested place for historical - cultural tours designed by tour operators to help the tour operators increase profits, on the contrary, the tour operators will help the National Archives Center I widely promote its image to attract a stable number of tourists and also help the Center gain profits from the tourist activities [1].

In order to link up with tour operators, the Center shall learn more about tour operators across the country and then select on the criteria to find out the tour operator that meets the given requirements of the Center.

After the two parties meet and discuss with each other, the contract will be signed and ensure the spirit of cooperation on the basis of mutual benefits. The contract clearly stipulates the responsibilities of Party A and Party B in the process of cooperation and if either party violates the contract, it shall be responsible for the compensation.

2.3.2.3. Build a good relationship between tourists and archivists

In order to promote the tourism, the service attitude of the archivist, specifically the tour guide, is extremely important. Therefore, the National Archives Center I shall build a team of staff serving the tourism activities who are not only good at professional work but also enthusiastic and dedicated, thereby leave a good impression in the minds of tourists on a cultural destination. It is important for the archivists to be aware of their responsibilities. They are not only those who serve the tourists' demands but also those who transmit the contents and values of archival documents contributing to the preservation and protection of the historical memory of the nation.

2.3.2.4. Link with the tourist - history destinations in Hanoi to form tours

Linkage is the basic principle of tourism development. To form the tours, the tourist, culture and history destinations could be linked together for mutual development and tourist attraction. The National Archives Center I is located in Hanoi which is one of the cities of many major tourist, culture and history destinations across the country, so the linkage with other tourist destinations is not difficult at all. The Center could be linked with such destinations as the Vietnam Museum of Revolution, Vietnam National Museum of History, Hanoi Museum, Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, etc. So the tourists shall be able to start from the survey of the history and culture to admiration of authentic artifacts to better understand the periods of Vietnamese history. This linkage is a condition for the tourist destinations to develop together and attract a large number of tourists.

3. CONCLUSION

The construction of tourist destination model at the National Archives Center I is not only a form of introduction and advertisement of archival documents closer to all subjects in the society, but also helps the Archives Center Country I's development commensurate with its potential.

For the successful construction of this model, the support policies and funding from the State Records and Archives Management Department of Vietnam are required. At the same time, coordinate with National Archives Center I to find out the reasonable investors to promote the tourism development. In addition, the National Archives Center I also needs to come up with policies and strategies for synchronous development from infrastructure, human resource training, tourism advertisement and linkage with tour operators to officially carry out the construction of tourist destination model in order to maximize the value of archival documents and enhance the center's position in the public mind.

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