

RURAL TOURISM IN WEST BENGAL (INDIA): A VEHICLE FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

Rural tourism is a new procedure of activity that can fetch economic and socio-cultural welfares of the rural communities. In West Bengal, a province (state) of India, rural tourism in its true procedure is relatively innovative. Any way of rural tourism that exhibits the rural life style, culture, art and heritage at the rural areas, by that means profiting the people socially and economically. Rural tourism can make complete utilization of tourism resources in rural areas to regulate and enhance rural industrial structures, outspread the agricultural industrial chain, endorse non-agricultural employment, develop rural tourism services, intensify the income of farmers and rural people, and generate a better economic foundation for the advanced rural infrastructural development. Rural tourism can help to change our society in various aspects. The rural residents have a possibility and potential to present a very enjoyable and exhilarating change from traditional tourism which tourists are locating jaded and therefore have began inspecting new vistas of adventure and gathering knowledge. Rural tourism faces various challenges internally and externally. This study covers the positive impacts of the rural tourism and those impacts act as vehicle for socio-economic development of the rural communities of West Bengal.

Keywords: *Tourism, Tourist, Rural Tourism, West Bengal, Socio-Economic Development, Rural Community*

INTRODUCTION

West Bengal is an important province (state) of India in respect to tourism. Tourism is the precise vehicle for developing a state like West Bengal which is on the track of modern economic development by structural transfiguration of the economy. The value-added consequence is increasing the excellence of tourism in West Bengal. Now tourism has enormous scope in West Bengal by enriching facilities to the tourists. Over the previous two decades the perception of rural tourism has become one of the matters of pivotal importance in modern tourism. Nature based tourism is one of the main characteristics of rural tourism. Rural Tourism is the travel in the rural areas and enjoyment of various rural aspects, like its art and culture, heritage, handicrafts etc. It carries out in a manner that endorses the protection of rural nature, art, culture, handicrafts, heritage etc. and ultimately the rural communities. A rural tourism is directly related to the category, quantity and eminence of rural environmental capital and socio-economic practices. The prospective for rural tourism may be a major strength in rural socio-economic growth which resulting in poverty alleviation. West Bengal is such a province (state) in India where there are various types of

rural tourism products of its lush green countryside. The Government of West Bengal has appreciated the huge potentiality of rural tourism industries and hence has articulated some appropriate policy frameworks to attract more and more domestic and international tourists as well as investors in these industries. West Bengal aims to become a favoured tourism and tourism-related expenditure destination in the country for its unique geographical characters and for its various tourism-related products.

Now tourism industry has turned into one of the significant key drivers of the socio-economic development by creating various direct and indirect jobs, business and concerned infrastructures development all over the world. In the previous years we have seen that the global Travel and Tourism commerce developing at a higher rate than substantial sectors such as financial services, automotive and health care. In year 2014, the Travel and Tourism sector generated INR 484.69 trillion and 27.7 crore occupations in the world for the global economy. In the past six decades, tourism industries have experienced continued and steady expansion and vast diversification, for becoming one of the fastest-growing economic segments in the world economy.

The foreign tourist arrival figure in the year 2013 was 69.70 Lakh and 74.60 lakh till the end of the year 2014. It has grown over from 2010 to 2014 at a CAGR of 7.0% per annum. The Indian Travel and Tourism sector subsidized INR 764.26 billion, which is 6.70% of GDP of India projected to grow at 6.40% per annum. By comparing with the other countries concentrating on the tourism as a significant industry, the share of India needs to be amplified at least by 3% to reach the universal average. West Bengal has conversant an increase of 5.30% in the tourist arrivals since the year 2014. The foreign tourist nurtured by 2% and domestic tourist upsurge by 12% in West Bengal in the year 2013 over the previous year's record. The Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) during the duration January to December of 2016 were 88.90 lakh with the expansion of 10.70% as compared to the FTAs of 80.27 lakh with a expansion of 4.50% from January to December 2015 over from January to December 2014 and the Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) from tourism in US\$ terms from January to December 2016 were US\$ 23.146 billion with a growth of 9.80% as compared to the US\$ 21.071 billion with a expansion of 4.10% for the duration January to December of the year 2015 over the duration January to December 2014.

Objectives of Study

The main objective of the study is to measure the effects of rural tourism on the rural societies in West Bengal. The specific aims of the study are mentioned below:

- To clearly recognize the concept and role of rural tourism in socio-economic expansion of the rural communities.
- To find out the impression of rural tourism on rural people.
- To generate employment opportunities of rural people.
- To improve the connectivity of urban to rural people and expansion of trade related handicraft product.
- To provide the awareness to the rural people getting the benefit from rural tourism sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism

Tourism usually signifies forms of recreation that take place afar a specified distance from the home or in a secretarial jurisdiction different from one's place of permanent accommodation. Tourism is an economic,

environmental, and social force of global proportions. Since 1970s, the term tourism has been commonly used to describe the field of travel and reflected to some extent the increasing growth in pleasure travellers, who usually were called tourists. Tourism has a wider implication encompassing in economic benefits as well as social and cultural benefits. In the year 1942, Professor Hunziker and Krapf of Berne University gave an appropriate and technical definition. According to them "Tourism is totality of the relationships and phenomena arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, provided the stay does not imply the establishment of a permanent residence and are not connected with a remunerated activity." The Tourism Society in Britain had also endeavoured to clarify the concept and in the year 1976 demarcated it as "Tourism is the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations; outside the places where they normally live and work and their activities during the stay at these destinations it includes movement for all purposes, as well as day visits or excursions." In the year 1982, Mathieson and Wall coined the term 'Tourism' as "Tourism is the temporary movement of people to destinations out of their normal home and work place, the activities undertaken during the stay and the facilities created to cater for their needs." Tourism is currently the largest and the fastest developing industry in the world. Today tourism is the most attractive and resourceful multi-billion industries in India (Ahamed, 2018a). Today tourism is highlighted for its immense business scope. Tourism is not an occupation for pastime and entertainment but is an inspiring activity. In 19th century travel for recreation was only undertaken by the elite society. Then the scenario is changing gradually. And by 21st century, travel became a new concept of economy-tourism available to all with huge money. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) tourism is the world's most extensive industry generating 12% of the worldwide gross national product and it implements around 200 million people worldwide (World Travel and Tourism Council, 1995). Tourism industry is existed at the second highest industry in revenue-generating following the oil industry.

The direct contribution of Travel & Tourism industries to the world Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment in 2015 was US\$ 2.20 trillion and 108.0 million concerned jobs correspondingly. By taking its vast influences, including indirect and encouraged

contributions, into account, Travel & Tourism's total involvement to the global economy in the year 2015 was US\$ 7.20 trillion (2015 prices) and which corresponds to 9.80% of the total GDP. In relation to employment, in the year 2015 the Travel and Tourism sector providing directly and indirectly 284 million employments i.e., 1 in 11 of all employments in the world. 2.50 million new jobs were created directly in the sector in the year 2015, by taking the integer of direct jobs to 108 million. In aggregate, 7.20 million new jobs were generated because of direct and indirect and by encouraged activities. The total involvement of Travel and Tourism industry for employment raised by 2.60% in the year 2015, while the total GDP involvement raised by 3.10% which is faster than wider economic development (2.30%) for the fifth consecutive year. In employment development terms of the Travel and Tourism sector outperformed various additional selected industries in the year 2015 including the financial services, health care and education sectors (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2016).

Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is the new way of tourism originating from Europe in the 19th century. It takes the natural and humanitarian objects with the rurality as tourist's attractions and is depended on the natural environment, beautiful landscape, art and culture and other possessions in rural zones. Rural tourism, at a very elementary level, can be perceived as tourism that exists in rural areas. Generally, these activities are classified as eco-tourism and agri-tourism. Cox *et al.*, (2009); Getz & Page (2015) and Ahmad & Schroeder (2003) categorized it as involving admittance to the wildness and exploiting on the advantages of rural zones, namely nature and open area. We may also incorporate nature-based activities, sports, arts and culture and heritage, hunting and fishing, products and amenities (Alexander & McKenna, 1998). Rural tourism is a phenomenon getting importance gradually in the new era of tourism. A seminar organised by WTO in June 2003 at Kielce in Poland, defined rural tourism as 'Rural Tourism is engaged in by tourists seeking rural peace; it is tourism away from the mainstream tourism activity. Visitors who wish to interact with the rural environment and the host community, in a meaningful and authentic way, engages it in.' Tourism in the rural zones is one of the new prospects that are being formed for those dwelling there. They have the possessions, manpower and basic

ability in terms of hospitality. The elementary concept of rural tourism is to benefit the rural communities by utilising business prospects, income generation, employment prospects, conservation and growth of rural arts and crafts culture, infrastructural development and protect environment and heritage. Tourism in rural areas can be considered a promising substitute for income level and increasing employment for the rural communities. Other way, rural tourism can be defined as any activity that takes place in the countryside or any method of tourism that show case the rural heritage, life, art-culture in rural areas for promoting local rural people socially and economically. This tourism is experience oriented and generally experienced predominantly in natural surroundings (Ahamed, 2018b).

Tourism in West Bengal

West Bengal is a unique state in India in terms of travel and tourism. It has all the three vital ingredients of tourism, sea, mountains and forest. At the period of partition in 1947, Bengal was fractionated into West Bengal and East Bengal. West Bengal became a state of the Indian republic with Kolkata as its capital while East Bengal is now known as Bangladesh, a self-governing country. Geographically, West Bengal is comparatively narrow and long and running from the delta of the Ganges in the south to the enormous Himalayas with Darjeeling as the 'Queen of Hill Stations' nestled in the north. West Bengal is a state located in the east of India that flourishes bounties of lush green countryside. The enormous expense of greenery of rural Bengal had been a component of admirations as well as basis of inspiration for authors, writers, poets and artists of West Bengal. West Bengal has the extensive variety of attractions in terms of tourist destinations from the bustling Kolkata mega polis with its historical and latest attractions, to the sectors of tranquility like the Himalayan landscape in the north to the Sunderbans Mangrove forest in the south. From the Chhotanagpur plateau region in the west, woods in the north and southwest, Himalayan ranges in the north, sea beaches of the Bay of Bengal in the south and rivers crisscrossing the entire of the state. The diverse panorama offers the perceptive traveler a very widespread choice and caters to the necessities of varied travel sections (see table 1). More explicitly, the white snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas, Darjeeling, mentioned by many as the 'Queen of the Hill Stations' and the Himalayan Railway in Darjeeling acknowledged as a 'World Heritage Site' by the UNESCO, the enormous tea estates in Dooars,

the well-known Royal Bengal Tiger of Sundarban, the numerous historical landscapes of India and as well as of Bengal glorious and enriched history are all wonders for the prospective domestic as well as international tourists.

West Bengal is one of the most ethnically and culturally unique states of India. The people of West Bengal inherit their individuality and aspiration from the substantial Indian mosaic. One can still recapture the colonial period in its relics which survived the state's progressive growth in socially, culturally and economically (Ahamed, 2017).

Year	Foreign Tourists (in Lakh)	Domestic Tourists (in Lakh)
2010	11.9	211
2011	12.1	222
2012	12.2	227
2013	12.5	255
2014	13.7	490
2015	14.9	702

Source: "India Tourism Statistics", Ministry of Tourism and State/ Union Territory Tourism Departments.

West Bengal intends to become a preferred tourism and tourism-related endowment destination in the country for its exceptional geographical attractions along with its numerous tourism-related characteristics. It will flourish necessary infrastructure and encourage tourism in an integrated aspect which will bring in more and more investment and confirm that all these are in conformity with the pertinent acts, rules and regulations concerning to environmental concern. West Bengal is an important province of India in respect to tourism. Tourism is the accurate vehicle for developing a state like West Bengal which is on the path of contemporary economic growth by structural conversion of the economy. The value-added consequence is increasing the quality of tourism in West Bengal. Now tourism has massive scope in West Bengal by enriching facilities to the tourists. The state West Bengal is covering an area of 87,853 sq. kms. According to census 2011, West Bengal has population of 9.13 crores. The total population development rate for this decade was 13.84% while in previous decade it was 17.84%. The population of West Bengal formulates 7.54% of Indian population in 2011 census. About three quarter of the population of West Bengal live in the rural areas. This state occupies 4% of the total area where rural people live almost 8% of the total population. Development at an associated annual growth rate of approximately 13%, India's Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) from the leisure industry sectors are likely to reach US \$26 billion in the year 2015 from the present

level of about \$20 billion, according to apex industry figure of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM). In the year 2012, near about 207.31 lakh foreign tourists visited India, out of which 12.19 lakhs visited to West Bengal. Number of foreign tourist arrivals in India is 7.68 million and annual growth rate is 10.20%. Foreign earning from leisure industry is in INR terms 123,320 crore and US \$ terms US\$ 20.24 billion and yearly growth rate is 14.5% (see table 2).

West Bengal is having a unique feature in respect to other states of India of sharing its boundary internationally with the countries of Bangladesh Bhutan and Nepal and domestically with the states of Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa. The state is having the unique characteristics for its connection from the frozen Himalaya in the North to the attractive coastal line in the South. The state is having five national parks, fifteen wildlife sanctuaries, and three tiger reserve forests. Over the past decade mass tourism in various forms occupied the tourism market in West Bengal, but by the changing scenario of purchase habit of the tourist, the attention is shifting gradually to the new tourism stuffs like eco-tourism, wild life tourism, rural tourism, agri-tourism etc. Recognising the tourism industry as one of the massive potential, the West Bengal Government has drawn up ambitious plan to develop it.

Table 2: India's Foreign Exchange Earnings from Foreign Tourist Arrivals

Year	Foreign Tourist Arrivals (in nos.)	Percentage Change Over Previous Year	Foreign Exchange Earnings (Rs. Crore)	Percentage Change Over Previous Year
2011	63,09,222	9.2	77,591(P)	19.6
2012	65,77,745	4.3	94,487(P)	21.8
2013	69,67,601	5.9	1,07,671(PR)	14
2014	76,79,099	10.2	1,23,320(PR)	14.5
2015	80,27,133	4.5	1,35,193 (PR)	2.6

Source – Annual Report 2015-16, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, (P) Provisional, (PR) Provisionally Revised estimates

Tourism has constantly been an essential part of the India's five-year plans. Sometimes, it is being bestowed priority sector rank in the Twelfth Five Year Plan. The respective budget allocation of the Ministry of Tourism in the year 2015-16 is INR 1,573 crore. The respective measures taken by the Ministry of Tourism in the previous five years to boost the development and growth of tourism in India including West Bengal by taking some measures:

- By launching of the Visa on Arrival empowered Electronic Travel Authorisation system.

- By launching innovative schemes like Swadesh Darshan and PRASAD.
- By launching clean India campaign, Swachh Smarak and Swachh Bharat.
- By justification of taxes, tax outings, etc.
- By investment in tourism substructure such as hotels, MICE centres, etc.

Rural Tourism in India Especially in West Bengal

The rich variability and diversity that India has in relation with different cultures in each area, the traditions and customs, colourful festivals, handicrafts and folk arts as well as conducting arts and various heritages make numerous rural areas in India as probable rural tourism destinations. The Union Ministry of Tourism, India, in association with UNDP launched a tourism scheme linked to the prevailing rural tourism plan of the government in 2004. As per the project scheme, the UNDP will cooperate in the extents of capacity building, contribution of NGOs, local communities and artisans forge robust community private and public-sector partnerships. The government determined for developing essential infrastructures for enabling rural tourism in all over India. In West Bengal, the concept of rural tourism is associated with rich variety and diversity in terms of customs and traditions, cultures, heritages, commemorations, arts and handicrafts as well as executing art make numerous rural areas in West Bengal as potential rural tourism locations. The West Bengal government is giving special importance for development of necessary infrastructure for facilitating rural tourists.

Ballavpur Danga in Birbhum district for folk dance, Sonada village in Darjeeling district for heritage, Antpur village in Hooghly district for Sari weaving, Kamarpukur village in Hooghly district for spiritual greatness and crafts and Mukutmonipur in Bankura district for Sari weaving, have been encompassed as potential rural tourism spots in the Endogenous Tourism Project occupied by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, UNDP and the Women's Interlink Foundation (refer to table 3). Tourism festivals like Vishnupur Festival, the Dooars Utsav and Poush Mela have been intended for showcasing the rural legacy of the state. Some heritage of the state including Hindu and Islamic shrines, folk music like Baul (of Birbhum district), Vhawiya (of Coochbehar district), Bhaitali (of Murshidabad district), classical music such as Bishnupur Gharana, certain folklores and legends, dance like Chau (of Purulia district) and a variety of attractive

arts and handicrafts items like the brass works, cane and bamboo works, silk and cotton textiles, hand embroidery (kantha stitch), terracotta etc. Rural fairs and festivals also play an important role of rural cultures of Bengal like Joydev Kenduli Mela, Jagatdhatri Puja (of Kagram, Murshidabad district). South-Western region of West Bengal like West Midnapore, Purulia, Bankura and Birbhum districts are covered with Sal, Mahua, Mahogany forest. These forestlands are occupied by the tribal communities like Santals, Kols, Vil, Mundas etc. This region has already been recognized as centres of ecotourism in West Bengal. Destinations like Sutan, Kakrojore, Ayodha hills, Jhillimilli, Duarsini, Susunia hill, Maithan, Amarkanan, Joypur forest etc. are all ecotourism hotspots.

Table 3: Rural Tourism Sites in WB and Their USPs (Selected by Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India)

Sal No	Name of the Village	Districts	USPs
1	Ballabhpur Danga	Birbhum	Folk Dance
2	Sonada Village	Darjeeling	Heritage
3	Mukutmonipur	Bankura	Sari Weaving
4	Antpur	Hooghly	Sari Weaving
5	Village Kamarpukur	Hooghly	Spiritual and Crafts

Source: Annual Report 2015-16 Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data for the study has been collected from both the primary as well as secondary sources. The primary data has been collected by questionnaire survey to the direct and indirect tourism service providers. The questionnaire is drafted to collect the information concerning their family members, service engagement, engagement of family members in their occupation, economic conditions, problems of their occupations, income from their occupations, impact of tourism in their livelihood, financial support from the government and non-government levels, cultural welfares, health and hygiene opinions on rural tourism etc. The questionnaire comprises of 22 questions. Primary data has been composed personally from the respondents of different rural tourism destinations in West Bengal. The respondents are selected randomly. Questions were enquired sequentially to the respondents to pursue their views. Data has been gathered from different households erratically, where the respondents are directly and

indirectly affianced in tourism services in the rural areas. The survey has been made from 200 different rural tourism service providers in West Bengal.

FINDINGS

Out of 200 respondents 43 (21.5%) were female, 124 (62%) were direct service providers and rest were indirect service providers, 132 (66%) respondents answered tourism is the main family income source, 110 (55%) respondents said most of the family members are engaged with this business, 135 (67%) respondents said per head income of the concerned members is less than INR 7000 thousands per month, 184 (92%) respondents expecting government help for business development and infrastructural development for the tourists, only 31 (15.5%) respondents got bank loan and 127 (63.5%) want to get bank loan with government subsidy, 181 (90.5%) respondents believe there is a positive socio-cultural effect of this tourism on their life.

DISCUSSION

Promotion of Rural Tourism in West Bengal

To endorse West Bengal as the most looked-for tourist destination for domestic and international tourists, the State Government has formulated certain plans and policies. West Bengal Government is also taking special initiatives to encourage and encourage Tea tourism in the state. The State Government has already chalked up schemes to upgrade accommodation, refurbish heritage bungalows, and undertaken landscaping to enhance this specific sector.

The foremost thrust areas of the tourism strategy are-

- Promote maintainable development of tourism in this state.
- Preservation and advancement of local art, culture, environment and heritage.
- Upgradation of adventure tourism, sports tourism, rural tourism, eco-tourism, river tourism, forest and wildlife tourism.
- Notification of unusual tourism areas in the state.
- Public Private Partnership (PPP) in formation of tourism infrastructures.

Positive Economic and Socio-Cultural Impacts of Rural Tourism

There are so many positive impacts of rural tourism on economical and socio-cultural perspective which are mentioned below-

- Create employment opportunity.
- Rise income level.
- Intensify demand for other services and goods.
- Generate foreign exchange.
- Development in public services.
- Generate government revenue.
- Modernisation of agriculture and other rural happenings.
- Benefited local small business.
- Rural people learn to use modern tools and technology.
- Improve culture, health and education of the rural communities.
- Provide higher standard of living.
- Cultural understanding through festivals and fairs.
- Lessen migration of rural people to urban extents.
- Development of market of the handicrafts and Agro products.
- Rural artisans get direct contact with the customers.

Socio-Economic Development Based on Rural Tourism in the State West Bengal

In the 10th five-year plan of the Government of India, tourism has been recognised as one of the chief sources for employment generation and encouraging sustainable livelihood in this country. The expansion of a strong base around the perception of rural tourism is useful for a country like India, where approximately 74% of the population resides in its 7 million villages (Choudhury, Dutta & Patgiri, 2018). The economy of rural people of West Bengal has enhanced especially in terms of agricultural manufacturing largely. The most remarkable acceleration of growth occurred in major agricultural crops in the year 1980 (Ghosh, 2004).

Rural tourism scope in West Bengal is vast and varied. The state has no doubt a plenty of attractions like art, culture, wild life, etc. Apart from these, the state is having various handicrafts, textiles and artistic articles producing by the rural people. Most of the districts in West Bengal are producing various types of attractive handicrafts like Kantha stitch, Docra, Terracotta, clay and bamboo, stone carving etc. Terracotta (of Panchmura and Bishnupur), Kantha Stitch (of Bolpur and Labhpur), Stone carving (well-known in Susunia village, Bankura) are some examples of famous handicrafts of rural Bengal.

Tourism in rural areas in West Bengal can be contemplated a promising substitute for increasing

business and income levels for rural communities, produced not only by the division itself, but also by other closely correlated activities such as commerce and services. As a result, the entire rural community ends up as a recipient. The rural tourism in West Bengal should be elaborated considering a lot of sensitive matters that may have substantial significance on the socio-cultural characteristics of rural people. Rural tourism in West Bengal is comparatively new form. The prospective of rural tourism can be a chief force for growth of the rural economic conditions which resulting in poverty alleviation. In the context of West Bengal, the perception of rural tourism should be taking place by contemplating a lot of sensitive matters in relation with socio-cultural influences on the rural communities. It is a vehicle to advantage the local communities through commercial opportunities, employment opportunities, conservation, income generation and development of rural arts, crafts and cultures, investment for organizational development and preservation of atmosphere and heritage. Rural tourism is bringing individuals with different faiths, cultures, language and life-styles adjacent to one another by providing a broad outlook of life. It is a very good vehicle for generate employment and it can progress educational values, cultural and social.

CONCLUSION

Most of the rural people in West Bengal live in below poverty level but there has a unique traditional way of life, heritage culture, handicrafts, art etc. that has a great prospect for upliftment the socio-economic conditions. Rural tourism acts as a stimulant for socio-economic development in rural areas. There is a chance to interact directly with the foreign and domestic tourists and to learn their culture. It acts as boost in employment prospects in rural areas and the stuffs of rural artisans get an organized market. In some cases, government of West Bengal and NGOs jointly worked for developing and promoting rural tourism products. A rural tourism scheme at micro-level was taken up in 2003 on Antpur, a village in Hooghly district to endorse the rural artisans of the village and elevate their socio-economic position. As rural tourism is a multi dimensional, multifunctional and multi sectoral activities so proper co-ordination is necessary between tourism department and with other departments of the state government. The state government is providing variety of recreational facilities in rural areas for increasing the duration of stay in different destinations. The state government is

organising various types of exhibitions, fairs, festivals etc. for promotion the rural arts, cultures and handicrafts.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

An assortment of broad recommendations is projected which will enable the state to achieve the desired progress and development in infrastructures and in the rural tourist statistics.

- Right initiative should be taken. It is the main footstep towards introducing the accurate set of initiatives and accomplishing the desired tourist arrival.
- Regional connectivity should be improved through construction of roads, passenger trains, high speed categorizing and equipping air strips, by renovating domestic airports into international, presenting inland waterway in major rivers for connectivity with some of the extents to explore for refining the connectivity between states and cities.
- Tourist amenities should be increased to ensure the easy accessibility of visa from concerned offices at all the significant destinations undergoing high foreign turnout.
- New concept should be explored such as MICE to fascinate tourists. To build upon this prospect, connectivity and accessibility of world-class infrastructure and facilities should be confirmed.
- Accommodation facilities should be developed in selected unexplored destinations, the service levels should be upgraded by setting up new hotels, by introducing theme-based resorts in the rural areas etc. Some common themes could be clean technology resorts, golf resorts and wild life resort, etc.
- The West Bengal government should collaborate with other governments for promotion of tourism. It is mandatory for the holistic development of tourism that the states associate their efforts and suggest comprehensive services and explanations.
- Rural tourism in West Bengal should be advanced considering a lot of sensitive matters that may have considerable consequence on the socio-cultural characteristics of rural people.
- Rural infrastructure like road, sanitation, water supply, hygiene, electrification, bank ATM centres, security etc. should be ensured by the state government.
- The state government should increase the budgetary provision substantially so that proper promotion of rural tourism can be possible.

- Government should recognize importance of rural tourism at the priority basis and should help for creating healthy competitive business environment.
- Government should give training to the technical and non-technical persons associated with rural tourism.
- Government should generate attractive schemes for entrepreneurship development related with rural tourism among the rural community by providing attractive financial scheme.
- Government should try to develop communication links and others essential amenities.
- Government should emphasis on Public Private Partnership (PPP) model for infrastructural development in the rural areas.
- Tour operators should make logical rural tourism circuits.
- Innovative marketing strategies should be adopted by the state government and tour operators with the help of internet. Provision of marketing assistance should be given to various travel agencies and tour operators to market the rural destinations of West Bengal.
- Government should pay concentration on making guest house, rest house, hotel, local health centres at the rural tourist areas.
- Loans and others financial support like subsidy, tax concession and other incentives should be given to the local communities for entrepreneurship development and existing business development on rural tourism.
- Proper cooperation and coordination should be maintained between departments of tourism and other departments, between businesspersons and leadership and between local government and business community.

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