Chapter-9: Conclusion
The whole study in the previous chapters has been guided by a single objective— the contribution of tourism in rural as well as regional development of Bankura district of West Bengal. This district is economically backward, in spite of having rich tourism resources. It is revealed from the study that the tourism resources of the district are not optimally utilized. It is also found that a multi-sectoral industry like tourism may change the rate of development of the district. The fruits of development may also be distributed optimally in order to ensure balanced regional development.

The major and minor destinations of the district have shown their regional character and mainly based on region's geographic personality. This hypothesis has been dealt in Chapter-3. This chapter shows how the tourist places represent local and regional character. The north-western Bankura is hilly. Many hills and hillocks are located in this region. As a consequence, this area has three hill based tourist places—Biharnath Hill, Susuma Hill and Koro Pahar. The southern Bankura is forested and its scenic beauty is thus magnificent. The tourist places of this part of the district are mostly forest based like Jhillimulli, Sutan, Chhendapathar and others. All these are natural tourist places apart from Mukutmonipur which is partly natural and partly man-made.

The eastern part of the district, on the other hand, is potential in terms of heritage tourism. This area houses two important cultural tourist places of the district—Bishnupur and Jairambati. While Bishnupur, the temple town and capital of Malla Kingdom shows its unique architectural style and design, Jairambati is the major religious centre—the birth place of Maa Sarada.

It is also discovered that there are differences between the eastern and western part of the district in terms of geography, economy and society. The eastern part is plain composed of alluvium, economy is dominated by efficient agriculture and enjoys little bit higher economic status. The western part on the other hand is composed of latentic...
plateau, meager agriculture with consequent lower economic standard. But the western part of the district has magnificent scenery and people with excellent artistic skills. These factors of the western part give it higher potential for tourism development. Almost all the scenic places of the district are located in this region. The souvenir points are also located in this area. Undoubtedly, tourism potential is higher in the west than that in the east.

The accommodation and transport elements of tourism also generate both employment and income in the district. The Chapter-4 deals with these elements. It shows the growth and development of the hotel industry in the district. This industry of the district is about seventy years old. First hotel in the district was established in Bankura town in 1940. In these earlier days, hotels were established only to meet the administrative and other business needs. However, the first hotel established for tourists in 1970 in Bishnupur town. Subsequently, a number of hotels came up in other tourist places of the district. Among the tourist places, Bishnupur has the highest number of beds available for tourists, followed by Jairambati, Mukutmonipur, Biharirath and Susuma Hill. But in terms of quality of hotel, Mukutmonipur and Bishnupur are the best in the district. Analysis on the spatial distribution of hotels reveals that most of the hotel beds are concentrated in the eastern part of the district. Keeping in view, the present demand for hotel beds, it has been suggested to create more beds in Bishnupur and Jairambati. But if the sustainable tourism development is considered, local entrepreneurs should be encouraged more to establish hotels in the hilly northern and forested southern part of the district. Hotels should be established in the potential tourist places to divert the tourist flow towards all parts of the district. This will help in channeling the benefits from tourism towards the rural areas.
It is found from the study that the efficiency in terms of transport is not good enough for desired development of tourism sector. Spatial variability is another character of transport network. Apart from Bishnupur and Kotulpur blocks where two famous tourist places – Bishnupur and Jairambati are located, other blocks with tourist places have lower density of roads. In terms of efficiency of transport network of the district on the other hand, a close association between network connectivity and level of tourism development has been observed and reported in Chapter-4.

The hypothesis ‘development of souvenir industry may create new avenues of rural employment and income in the district’ has been dealt in Chapter-5. The tourism development has direct positive impact on the handicraft and handloom industry of the district. The survey among the artisans of the craft villages and souvenir shops in various destinations highlights a close association between the volume of sale and profit of souvenir products with the inflow of tourists. The major findings include the followings:

(i) The industry is highly dominated by the presence of intermediaries who eat up the maximum profit earned in this business.

(ii) The standard of living of the artisans is comparatively lower than that of the shopkeepers.

(iii) The highly skilled artisans of the district live in highly deplorable socio-economic condition.

(iv) The dokra artisans and stone carvers are the poorest among the poor artisans in the district.

(v) The baluchari artisans have a number of physiological problems like abdominal pain.
(vi) Terracotta work is the most famous among all the souvenir products of the district

(vii) Most of products being sold in souvenir shops are locally made with local materials and these products have the authenticity

(viii) All the products suffer from one common problem i.e. good quality packaging

The comparative analysis between the souvenir shopkeepers and souvenir artisans on the basis of socio-economic status has shown that the shopkeepers are in better economic situation than the artisans. The average income and savings of the shopkeepers are higher than that of the artisans. Most of the shopkeepers are marginally employed in this business. Both the souvenir industry and shops create great avenues of employment directly and indirectly. From the study, it is also found that amount of sale of the souvenir products is largely dependent on the inflow of quality tourists. Sale of the shopkeepers in various destinations is directly dependent on visitor arrival while the sale of the artisans is indirectly dependent on tourist inflow. The direct contact between tourists and artisans may boost the profit of the artisans that leads to better socio-economic conditions of them.

The Chapter-6 deals with the characteristics of tourists, their growth and flow pattern, impact of seasonality etc. The modal age of the visitors in the study area is 35-44 years and the principal market is Kolkata and its surroundings. Most of the tourists visiting the district are service holders and spend most on souvenir purchase. This is very encouraging regarding the future potential of souvenir goods of the district. The tourist inflow in the district shows an almost unimodal distribution with a single peak in a year from mid December to January. The tourism sector of the district is highly affected by seasonality. The effective length of tourist season in the district is only
120 days While domestic tourism is less affected, the arrival of foreign tourists is more affected by seasonality. The seasonality index is the highest for the month of January both for domestic (179%) and foreign (304%) tourists. The 120 days tourist season covers the four autumn and winter months from October to January. Efforts have to be made to cope with the problem of seasonality. The impact of seasonality may also be minimized by creating many recreational facilities in the destinations as well as providing extra privilege to the visitors during the lean season. To expand the present tourist season of 120 days to 180 days, potential visitors should be encouraged to visit the district during rainy season.

The Chapter-7 deals with the hypothesis ‘development of tourism may act as an instrument for rural development and initiate the process of regional development in backward areas.’ The study on the spatial pattern of rural development draws attention on the pattern of regional disparity. To prove this fact, the present study has taken about 40 socio-economic indicators to identify the block level pattern of rural development. Two indices have been prepared – CRDI (Composite Rural Development Index) and WRDI (Weighted Rural Development Index). Both of these indices have shown that the pattern of rural development is haphazard. It is found that the agriculturally better eastern and northern blocks are more developed than that of the western and southern blocks. Bishnupur, Kotulpur, Indas and Sonamukhi are the best blocks in terms of overall rural development.

It is also found from the study that various indicators of rural development respond in different manner with the differences in socio-economic and geographic parameters. The performance of rural development schemes, for example is good in case of western and southern blocks where socio-economic condition is not better and
geographic characters restrict the growth of agriculture. These parameters have been discussed in Chapter-7.

To analyze the contribution of tourism in rural development of the district, the present study has designed two CRDIs – the CRDI without tourism and the CRDI with tourism. From the correlation study between these two block level CRDIs, it is found that overall ranking of the blocks are changed and this change is positive i.e. the blocks with tourism facilities have a tendency to go up in the rural development ladder. This is because the rural people of these blocks with tourism potential get an alternative economic activity with promising employment and income generation potential. But the contribution of tourism in the process of rural development is very negligible as compared to agriculture and allied activities. It is noteworthy that present form of tourism development is contributing to rural development at a small scale.

Apart from this, the present study has also identified four most contributing factors by applying Principal Component Analysis (PCA) in rural development. These are primary and human development factor, education and banking factor, development factor and industrial and recreational factor. To achieve overall rural development of the district, priority based development of these sectors may give better results. It may be said that equal emphasis of all these factors in all the blocks may not give equal result. So, the developmental efforts must be prioritized. For example in eastern and northern blocks, agricultural development may bring most acceptable form of rural development, but in case of western and southern blocks except Sarenga and Raipur, tourism promotion is the best alternative model for rural economic development. Thus promotion of tourism should be made selecting the block, having high potential of tourism.
Figure 9.1: Agricultural Efficiency and Distribution of Tourism Elements

The spatial pattern of block level efficiency in terms of agriculture and major and minor tourist places as well as the souvenir points are overlaid in figure 9.1. It shows that most of the tourist places and souvenir points are located within the blocks of low efficiency scores, except the cases of Bishnupur and Jairambati. Therefore, it can be said that the blocks with low efficiency in agriculture may develop their tourism sector as alternative economic activity to boost their socio-economic condition. Blocks with high efficiency scores such as Bishnupur and Kotulpur may also follow the path of tourism development side by side their agriculture and allied activities. In this case, more emphasis should be given to develop the potential destinations of the blocks of low agricultural efficiency. This would also fulfill the objective of rural economic development in the district.

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The Chapter-8 deals with the tourism planning issues. Various approaches of tourism plannings are considered first, then the present National and State level plans are evaluated. It also considers the policy issues of the district authority. The policies made by the District Planning Committee are mostly in conceptualization phase. These are yet to be implemented so far. These planning proposals are all sporadic and the emphasis is only given to Bishnupur and Mukutmonipur. To overcome all these hindrances, the present study also proposes some policy measures for overall tourism development of the district. These planning proposals cover both physical as well as economic aspects of the district. After physical and economic survey, the study formulated Sustainable Tourism Development Plans (STDPs) in three important sectors: accommodation, transport, and tourist circuit.

Accommodation is the most important element of tourism. Any tourism activity always starts with the search for better accommodation facility of the desired destination. Potential visitors often categorize destinations on the basis of quality and availability of hotels and resorts. It directly creates great avenues of employment and income. Keeping in view the importance of this element, the present study has projected the number of hotel beds to be created in near and distant future. The study has predicted about 2700 beds to be established till 2025. It also gives light on the spatial pattern of the accommodation sector in the district. Although Bishnupur has about 44 percent of total hotel beds among all tourist places at present, the demand survey reveals that nearly half of the planned hotel beds are required for Bishnupur only and the rest for Jairambati, Mukutmonipur, and others.

It has also suggested the short term, medium term and long term action plans for the development of this sector. All the new hotels should be environmentally sustainable, and should employ only locals and preferably owned by the local people. Hotels in
potential destinations should be given extra privilege than that to hotels in the popular destinations. The following 2025 vision statement should guide the accommodation industry of the district which states that Bankura district would be destination with high quality accommodation, employing local workforce that provide utmost visitor satisfaction.

Transport is another important element of tourism. The present study area is suffering from the absence of good quality roads. Most of the tourists encountered during survey complain about the bad condition of roads. The present study has identified about 315 km of roads represented by ten major and minor arteries, frequently used by the tourists. All these roads need proper maintenance. In the long run, an airport may be opened in the abandoned Basudevpur aerodrome near Bishnupur town. This will incorporate Bankura in the international tourist map. The appropriate authority should develop this sector according to the 2025 vision statement for transport which states that, transport of the district would have to be fully integrated, viable and efficient network system enabling the visitors to travel with safety, reliability, comfort and convenience.

Sustainable tourism plan considers the development of tourism in holistic manner. It gives equal emphasis on established and potential destinations. The sustainable development of tourism is possible only when the fruits of development are wisely distributed in all the potential areas. In this connection, the present study proposes circuit based tourism development in the study area. Visitors in Bankura district may be directed to travel within three circuits for better visitor experience. This will provide the opportunity of least cost travel and higher visitor satisfaction. The three circuits are Hilly Northern Circuit, Historical East Circuit and Enchanting South Circuit. The Tourism and Recreation Master Plan has been prepared for the major
destinations of these circuits. Above all, a number of measures have been suggested for the tourism induced rural development in the district. These are:

(i) To minimize the disparity between the east and the west of the district by promoting tourism and recreation activities in areas of high potential such as southern and western blocks may be followed.

(ii) The quality of accommodation should be ensured for visitor satisfaction. The entrepreneurs looking to establish hotels in prospective tourist places should be given extra privileges.

(iii) Mukutmonipur has huge potential for further tourism development. It may be projected as recreational hub of the district. In this connection, the concept plans of Bankura Zilla Parishad may be taken into consideration which has been explained in Chapter-8.

(iv) To increase the efficiency of transport in the district two major proposed railway links should immediately be materialized. Four major roads—Ahalyabai Road joining Kotulpur in the east and Jhantipahari on the west, Bankura-Phulkusma road, Bankura-Jhillimilli road and Bankura-Saltora road must be upgraded to four lane roads.

(v) The effect of seasonality may be minimized by encouraging tourists to visit during the monsoon months. In this way, the present unimodal tourist flow pattern may be transformed in bimodal pattern.

(vi) To encourage the souvenir industry of the district, bank loan should be made available to the artisans for purchasing modern machineries. Common Facility Centre for each of the souvenir products may be established in the souvenir points and good quality packaging with product information may be introduced. Handicraft Emporium may also be established in the bus stands or
railway stations of the major destinations such as Bishnupur, Mukutmonipur, Jairambati and Susuma Hill

(vii) Tourist circuit plans should be emphasized to gain tourism induced development in various areas of the district

(viii) To increase contribution of tourism in rural development, expansion of recreation facilities for visitors in villages and remote areas should be done. This will provide employment and income to the villagers.

(ix) The link between the circuits should be sufficiently established so that the movement within and between the circuits is well integrated.

Lastly, it may be concluded that tourism is contributing rural development at lesser degree at present and it will be the best alternative option for economic development in areas where agriculture is no longer profitable and sustainable. The contribution of tourism in the process of rural development can be increased by proper utilization of the existing and potential tourism resources in a planned way. It will give the best economic option for the blocks with high potential of tourism resources. In this regard, tourism plannings should be implemented on the basis of Tourism Resource Inventory of the district. The Master Plan of all the tourist places should be properly executed and regularly monitored. The digital tourism information should be developed and be made easily accessible to the potential visitors. For the well-being of the people of Bankura district, it is essential to promote the popular and potential destinations of Bankura, so that the district can occupy an important place in the tourist map of West Bengal in particular and India in general.