

# The Problems of Coastal Tourism in Bakkhali and Sustainable Strategy of Development

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*Abstract:* Coastal Tourism is contemplated as extending sector of the economy of any developing country. Being a developing country in India also in West Bengal Tourism is one of the most important parts of our Bengal's developing economy. The present work is mainly going to look for the problems faced by tourists in Bakkhali after the construction of Namkhana bridge and facing the other problem related to infrastructural facilities. There are different types of problems that are related to physical & socio-cultural issues. The primary and secondary data are used to explain the research problems and associated issues. This paper has also highlighted the changes in the tourism industry & the perception of local people about the spot and also mention the sustainable strategy of development regarding the problems and proper planning of the area will increase both domestic and foreign tourist attraction in the very recent future.

*Keywords:* Coastal Tourism, Coastal area development planning, sustainable strategy, etc.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism helps to promote the development of selected remote & backward coastal areas for its tourism background. West Bengal has 180km long shoreline divided into two regions western and eastern part. Among them, Bakkhali is situated on the eastern part of south Bengal. In all over world Bakkhali is one of the beaches that has half-moon shaped south facing view that provides beautiful sunrise & sunset of the main attraction of tourist. Bakkhali is not properly explored but it is one of the calm & quiet beaches of south Bengal. Tourism in India is developing income sector like many other developing countries and also generate employment source for different backward & remote areas. In South Bengal coastal tourism is developing day by day. In South 24 Parganas, Sundarban is well-known world heritage site carved in 1987. Bakkhali is not verily populated like other sea beaches Digha, Mandarrmoni in West Bengal. Bakkhali is a breathtaking refreshing weekend short trip for tourist. Opening of Namkhana Bridge to reduce the time of tourist, local people & a hassle-free journey to over Hatania Doania river. It is not properly open to connect Kolkata to Bakkhali bus services. This paper is to find out the existing problem of ecotourism in Bakkhali. There are health issue problem and low connectivity, lack of opportunities in both economically, educationally.

### LOCATION OF THE STUDY

Bakkhali is well known coastal tourist spot in West Bengal which is the southernmost end of the south. first in the year 1972, A Govt tourist lodge with 3 rooms was opened by honorable Chief Minister of West Bengal for tourism development. Bakkhali is a breathtaking island located on one of the several deltic islands of Sundarban. Bakkhali ( Latitude 21° 34' N & 88° 25' E) is a coastline village of approximately 7 km towards Freserganj.

## II. OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To form an idea over tourism development.
- ❖ To access the infrastructure facilities.
- ❖ To identify the existing tourism problem.
- ❖ To analyze micro level planning.
- ❖ To suggest a sustainable strategy

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Baitalik A, Majumder S, [2015] has stated in their paper entitled Coastal tourism destination in West Bengal Historical Background and development that though the region is continuously changing with tourism development.

Chattopadhaya U, Ghosh A, [2013] analyzed in their paper outlined A, Present Status and Tourism Potentialities, A Case Study in Bakkhali and Adjacent Tourist Spots, South 24 Parganas West Bengal, the concept of sustainable ecotourism need more awareness in that coastal area.

Tarafder S, N, C, Jana [2014] has suggested in their paper entitled Tourism In Coastal West Bengal Of India: Issues, Opportunities, and Challenges, that extension of coastal tourism in the west is possible by not affecting the environment.

Samanta B, [2017] highlighted in his paper named "Changing Scenario in Bakkhali and Fresherganj Coastal Area" that the tourist place is changing over time-based well infrastructural facilities.

Baitalik A, Majumder S, [2018] highlighted in their paper outlined An Analysis On Performance And Seasonality Of Coastal Tourism In West Bengal seasonal variation change tourism industry.

Dandpath K, P, Mondal M, [2013] suggested in their paper named Urbanization and its Impact On Coastal Eco- Tourism In West Bengal that urbanization change land and land cover pattern of the coastal area.

Bandyopadhyay J, Mondal I, [2014] Roy B, highlighted in their paper entitled change Detection Of Land Use and Land Cover and Identification Of Interrelationship Between Geomorphology and Land Use Land Cover in and Around Bakkhali, Fresherganj, and Henry Island, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India that indicates the changes of LULC rapidly.

#### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research works are done by using both primary and secondary data. The secondary data collection from different journals, books, and Websites and the entire research methodology is developed on the basis of the following design. Some statistical representation is also used to represent the present situation of coastal tourism holding by Bakkhali and problems is also highlighted through a primary survey. The projected Trend of tourism has been made according to the Least Square Method.

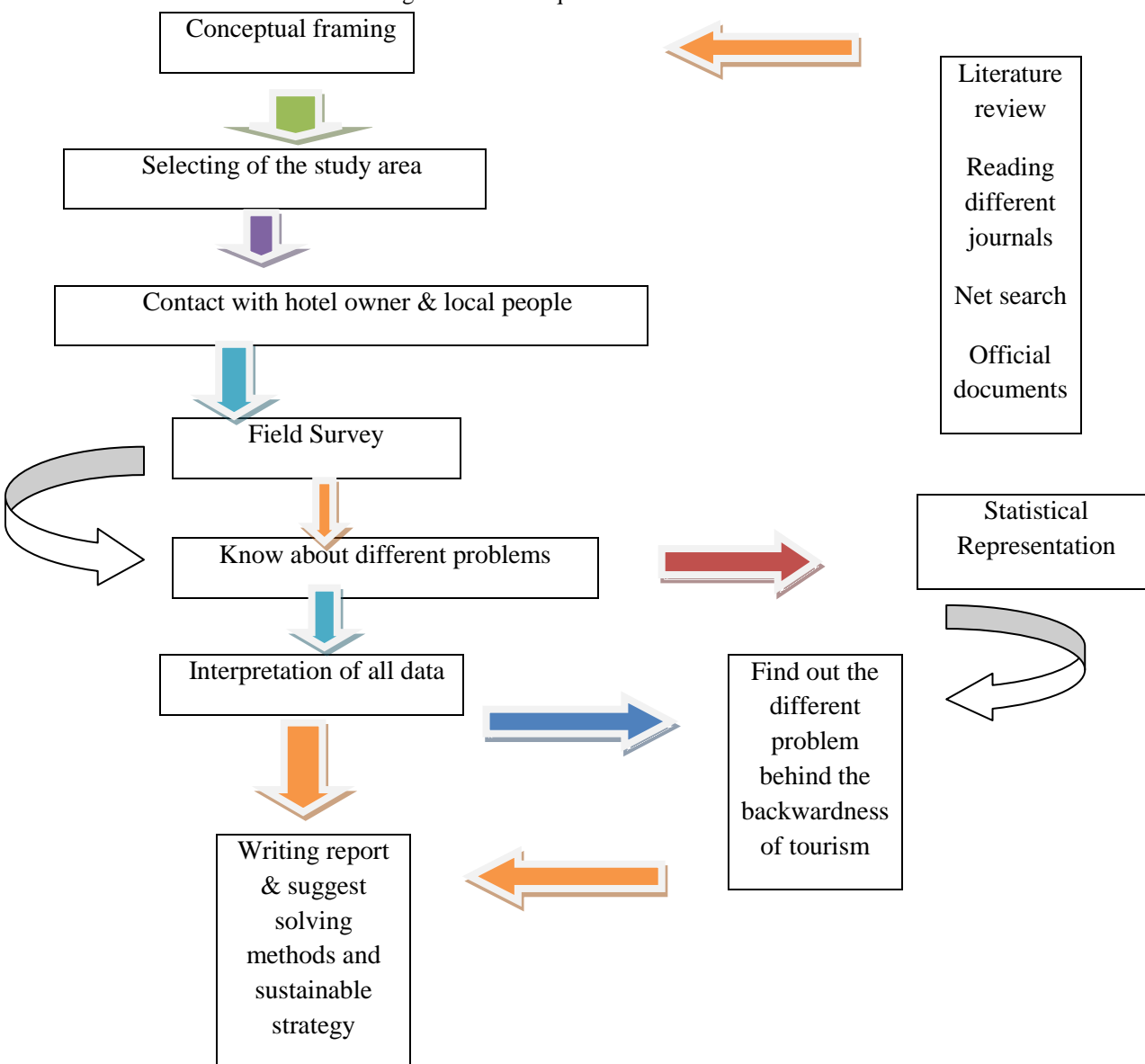
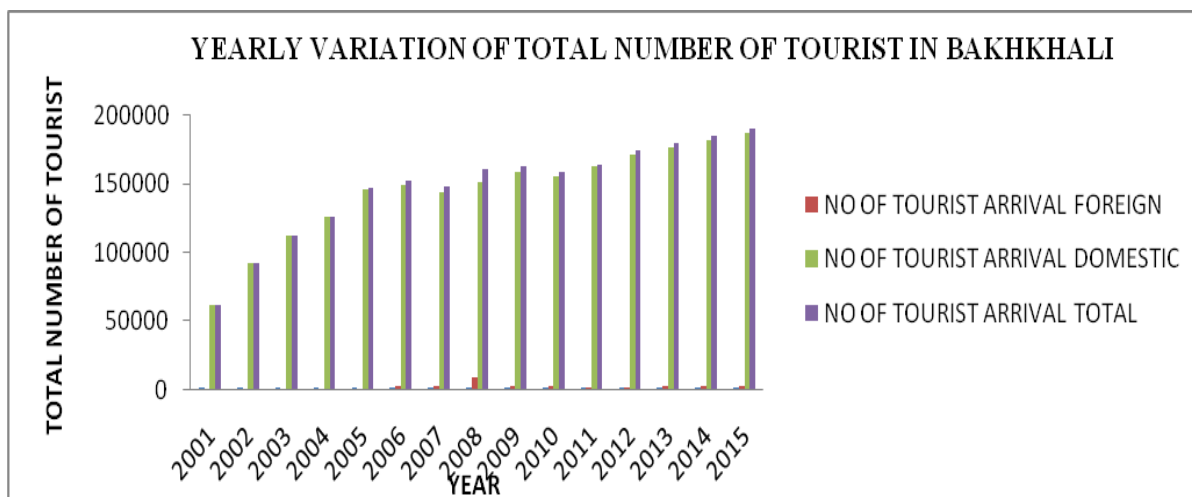


Figure- Design of Research Methods

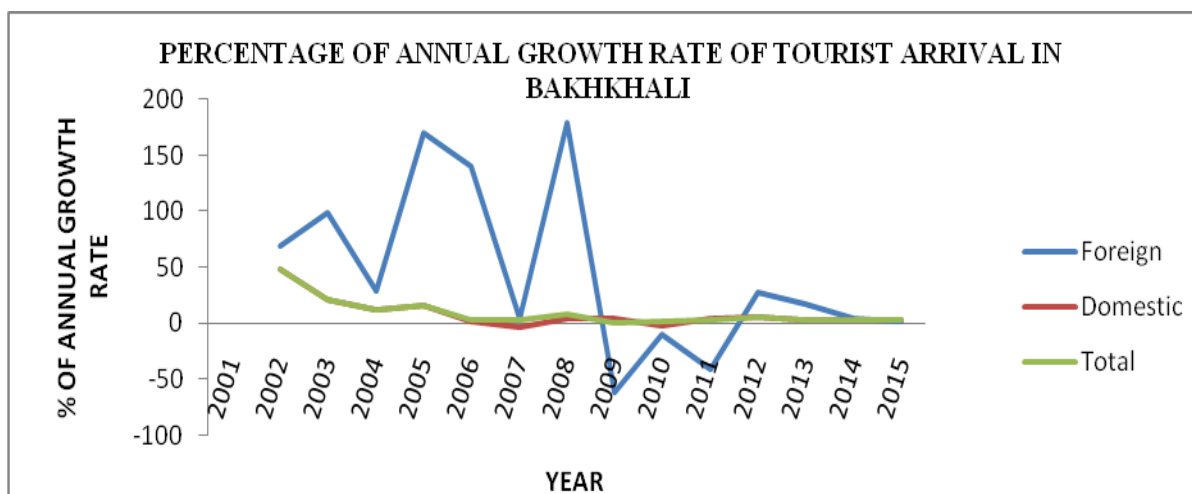
## V. RESULT & DISCUSSION

### Basic Scenario of Tourism:

In this paper, the author tries to find out the trends of tourist flow both domestic and foreign from 2001 to 2015 (Department of Tourism, Government of West Bengal) in Bakkhali –Freserganj sea beach. This picture shows that there is a big change in tourist arrivals from 2001 to 2015. In the year 2001, the total number of tourist arrived in Bakkhali was 62288 that reached 190030 in 2015. Number of tourist flow increase due to different changes in infrastructural facilities that attract both domestic and foreign tourist. But no of foreign tourist was not sufficient due to some hindrance of this area. In the previous year, one of the big problems was a communication problem, 3 times break journey Sealdah to Namkhana, then crossed Hatania Doyania river and then reached Narayanpur to Bakkhali. In the year 2008 foreign tourists arrival was highest 9451 & 2011 it was 1952 because of the natural calamities AILA also decreased no of domestic tourist arrivals in 2010-2011.



Source: Department of Tourism, Government of West Bengal



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### Different Climatic conditions and Weekly Variation of Tourist:

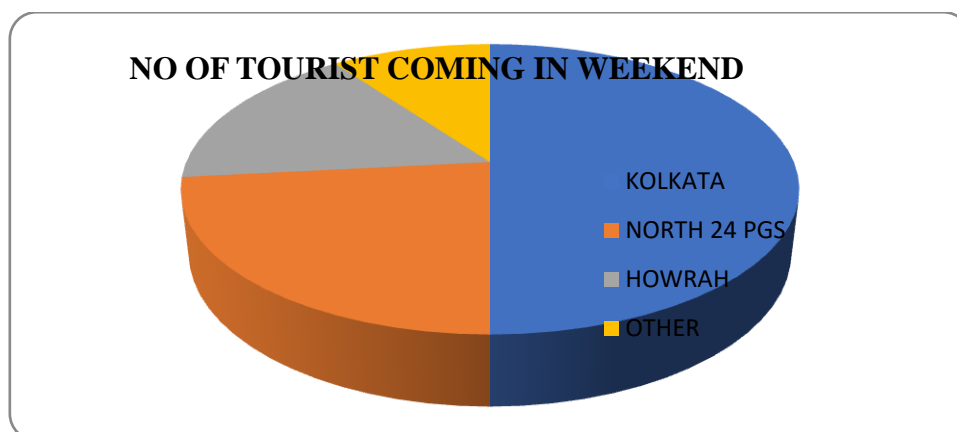
There is a huge number of tourist arrival in Bakkhali sea beach. Highest no of tourist arrivals in December, April, and May due to winter and summer vacation. In the weekend or any other occasion number of tourist flow increase rather than weekdays because the maximum no of tourist came there from Kolkata for a short trip. It is easy to go there for the natural view and beach recreation. After Kolkata, a large portion of tourist come from north 24 Parganas, least no from other districts. Different holidays & variation of the season are the primary barriers for tourist arrival.



Source: Department of Tourism Government of West Bengal

**Hotel Condition and its impact on Tourism:**

The condition of hotels is not all over good. The peak season of tourist arrival, the rate of the hotel is doubled. When there is excess demand, whole night power cut is a common problem in the rainy season or at the time of Kalbaisakhi (Norwester). Mobile Network facility & internet connection is very poor in the hotel room. Sometimes moderate infrastructure facilities of the maximum hotel cannot satisfy tourists in the desired level. But sometimes the construction of hotels violating the rules of Coastal Regulation Zone and the extension of tourism industry resulting in harmful effects on the environment both physical & ecological.



Source: Primary survey

**Tourist Facilities:**

There are different types of tourist facilities in this area. Bakkhali and Freserganj hotels and resorts. In hotels, both AC and Non AC hotel rooms, running water in 24 hours, swimming pool in some lodges, food facilities, children's park, are there for tourists. More recreational facilities in sea beach for tourist attractions and beach beautification. In the time of power cut, the generator is also available in maximum hotels.

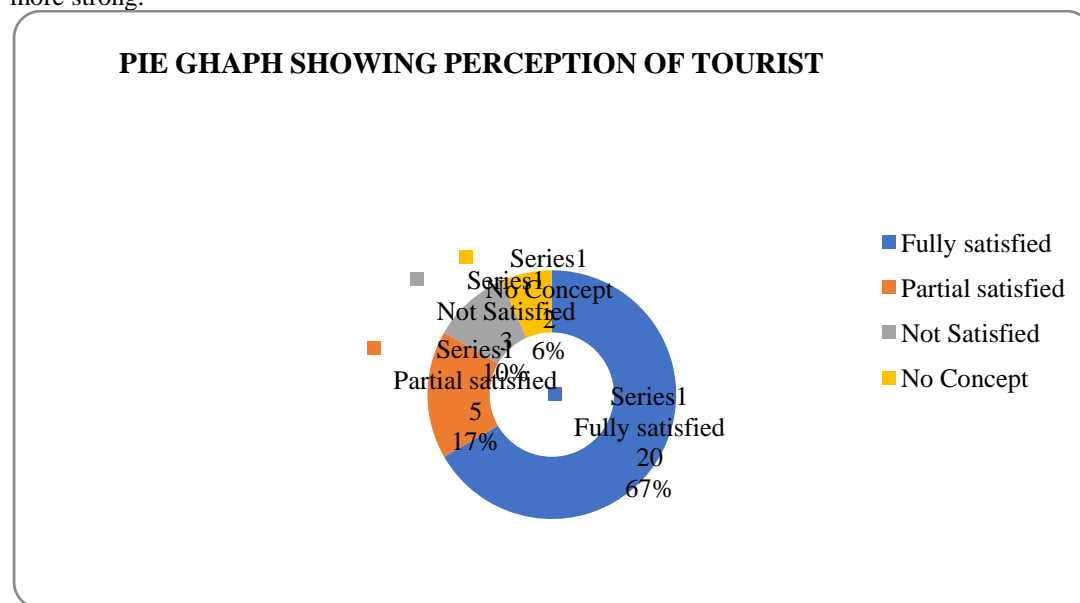
**Present Condition of Tourism:**

Now in recent years, the number of tourists is increasing at Bakkhali Sea beach and its surrounding area, Henry Island, Freserganj. Most of them come from Kolkata and other adjacent districts to enjoy a weekend short trip for 2-3 days or in institutional national holidays. Before the construction of Namkhana Bridge, tourists face a major problem of communication, but after that, there is a minor problem of communication. It is a more easy route to reach Bakkhali by using Namkhana Bridge. Local people, villagers, tourists, Hotel owners, shopkeepers are more hopeful about the construction of the bridge. They said that Bakkhali Tourism will develop for the bridge. Many tourists showing their interest to come there again. They came to Bakkhali before the opening of Namkhana Bridge and after it opened they are happy for reducing the communication problem. Namkhana Bridge will add more facilities for the yearly arrival of domestic and foreign tourists. Foreign tourists will access the route from Kolkata Airport to Kona expressway which is named NH 117 & directly reach to Bakkhali.

**Perception of Tourist about the Construction of Namkhana Bridge:**

Regional planning starts with micro level planning. Bakkhali is not economically and educationally developed. There was a big problem with crossing Hatania Doyaniar river. Most of the tourists who came there one or two times they said that Namkhana bridge reduced 90% of that area's problem. The bridge will open very soon for the

direct bus route from Dharmatala to Bakkhali. Shopkeeper, Hotelowner, villagers are hopeful. They said a tourist is easily accessed Bakkhali, for that reason no of tourists will increase. They think that the tourism industry will be more strong.



Source: primary survey

**Existing Problem of Bakkhali :**

There are two types of problem that is a physical problem and illegal infrastructural problem that violating the Coastal Regulation Zone(CRZ) rules.

Coastal erosion and shifting of shoreline are the most common factor of Bakkhali Freserganj coastal area. Sand dune erosion in Bakkhali is symbolized of high coastal erosion. Different types of cyclone injure the top layer of parent soil of this area.

A mixture of sandy soil and mud soil of the two twin islands, Bakkhali & Freserganj is one of the reasons of coastal erosion.

Henry island is now replaced in manmade fishing land that effects on natural ecosystem of the area.

The increasing tourist flow in Bakkhali and its surrounding area increase the different recreational, refreshment accessories, different human activities, illegal construction of hotels and tourist lodges filling the wetland area, extension of urbanization, illegal construction of swimming pool in some resorts hamper the ecosystem of the area and give a negative impact on the environment.

Leakage of petrol in seawater from a lot of fishing boats & vessels polluting the sea water and effect on seawater ecosystem.

Illegal deforestation for burning wood of different hotels and restaurant cooking purposes causes natural vegetation loss.

Unplanned and illegal stational shops, handcrafts shops, snacks & tea stalls, fast food center, fish fry shop, chair business owner within 200m of sea beach dumped their wastage materials, dangerous solid waste for environment plastic bags, plastic water bottles. Even most of the tourist and local people had no positive perception about pollution & no concept of proper cleaning procedure of the area.

Saline water in most of the tubewell is not drinking water. Increase the uses of groundwater for tourist consumption, hotel owners and lodges lowering the groundwater table

There is no alert system in the beach for any vulnerable disaster (Tsunami) and no awareness of coastal erosion, beach beautification, conservation of natural resources and no concept of local communities about ecotourism.

Most of the villagers are still unemployed & not aware of coastal tourism development planning.

An unknown beach local people called Kargil beach is eroded every year. Proper construction of damp is needed.

There is a lack of big Hospital (health facilities), insufficient medicine shop, ATM, banks etc.

Most of the hotels are not constructed in the proper way infrastructure is not good & many of them are only lodging no flooding. Tourist face problem in rainy season night to go out for dinner. Poor mobile network facilities in a hotel room is another problem facing young tourists.

Frequency of train is not sufficient, gapping of train time is long from Sealdah to Namkhana station. Tourists wait a long time in the station it is one of the common problems.

### Sustainable Strategy for Development of the area:

Sustainable strategy means the strategy which has a long term effect in the planning of the area. Bakkhali and Freserganj area have lots of problems that need proper solving strategies. The author suggests different strategies that are-

Micro-level and grass root level planning are very much important for proper planning of the backward remote area development.

Prevention of coastal erosion, sand dune, and damp construction should be a more valuable strategy.

There should be more infrastructural facilities. The legal construction of hotels and lodge is needed.

There should be strict rule of Coastal Regulating Zone (CRZ) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for also tourist, local people, hotel and lodge owners.

Need more powerful awareness programme for proper management of the natural and physical environment. Local people and tourist should have the concept of ecotourism development.

Increase more refreshment permanent facilities for attracting more tourist.

The communication system should be more developed for tourism development.

Proper education facilities for young people to generate more employment facilities and guide to more local people for construction of legal tourist hotels and not violating the CRZ rules.

Construction of health and medical centers and big hospitals are most important sustainable strategy.

This area is ecologically rich for biodiversity and immediately stop the large tourist project that hampers the environment.

If the train line is doubled and the frequency of train will increase then no. of tourist will increase.

Proper planning for digging tubewell in coastal areas and conservation of drinking water system is important.

Proper recycling methods of garbage and waste material of hotels and resorts not instead throwing or dumping in the beach area.

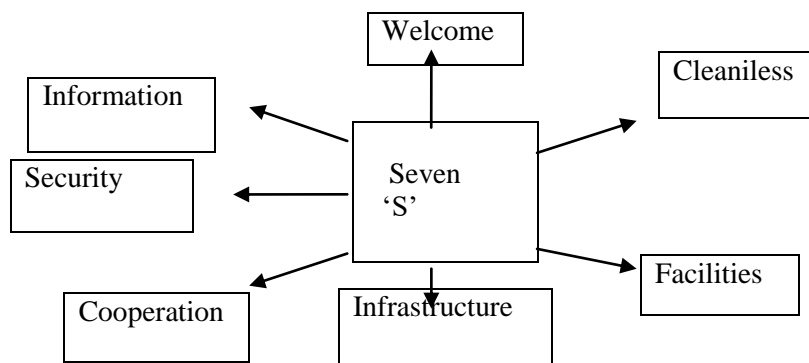
Transfer the illegal construction of the hotel, handcrafts shops, tea stalls, fish fry center in the safe region which are violating the rules of CRZ.

Control the vessel and boats which discharge oil in the sea.

Construction of Alert system office near to sea beach area for awarding the people to avoid any problem.

Bakkhali is a major tourist spot in this area and Freserganj, Henry island, Jumbudwip are minor tourist spots of the area, more infrastructural facilities.

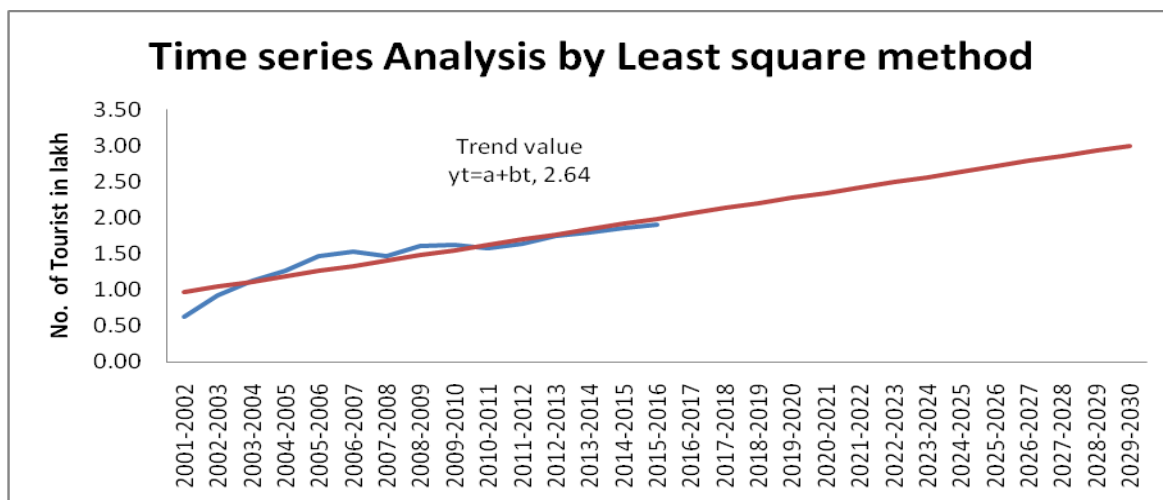
These seven types 'S' are the most important factors of tourism industry development & development of tourist destination. Govt of West Bengal should give more priority of this seven 'S' factor. After identifying the problems of the backward area of Bakkhali, the author thinks that it will be also part of a sustainable strategy of ecotourism development. First of all, information is required for tourist. Developing facilities, infrastructural condition, security in hotels and adjacent small tourist spots, the cooperation of guide, commuters, local people, cleanliness of the area are very much important for developing the tourist place.



Source: Annual Final Report Of Tourism Survey for the State Of West Bengal (April 2014-March 2015)

### Projected of Tourism in Future:

The trend of tourism industry developing in Bakkhali and Freserganj area. It is a positive signal in the tourism industry. If the construction problem of the hotel's decrease & different infrastructural facilities increases then no. of tourist increase in Bakkhali. 90% of communication problem reduced by the opening of Namkhana Bridge. So Maximum tourist prefer this destination as weekend refreshments, picnic spots, official tour, family tour, and friends get together. The bearable rate of hotels attracting middle-class people from Kolkata and adjacent districts. All recreational facilities and infrastructural development of this area create the tourism industry more developing.



Source: Prepared By Author

From this projected trend line by Least Square method ( $yt=a+bt$ ) shows the projected total number of tourist upto2030. The trend line indicates that the number of tourists is increasing but the growth rate is normal and not up to the required level. The  $yt$  value of 2025 to 2030 are 2.71,2.79,2.86,2.93,3.0 , it shows moderate growth rate.So proper planning and sustainable strategy are necessary for fast-growing rate in the context of tourist flow in very recent futures.

## VI. CONCLUSION

After the construction of Namkhana Bridge Bakkhali is easily accessible for tourist who suffered from the vessel journey phobia & also saves time.Need to createa more recreational & attractive renovating thing that increases the value of the spot & decrease the seasonal variation of tourist. Though the West Bengal Government takes many steps to develop the area, Grassroot level planning& proper management is very important for implant more tourism infrastructure. As a planner Author thinks that Namkhana bridge has a broader aspect of tourism at Bakkhali, that can create more employment issues for local people where agriculture and fishing are the main sources of income.

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