

# **Tourism Development in Goa: Trends, Importance and Challenges\***

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## **Abstract**

The paper focuses on the growth of tourism in Goa since it became free as a Portuguese colony i.e. 1961 till 2014. Contribution of tourism sector to the growth of the state economy, in terms of income, employment, foreign exchange earnings and linkages with other sectors has been growing. Though Goa's economy is driven by tourism sector today, the rapid growth of domestic tourism and foreign tourism in the state has posed various environment problems and challenges which are faced by the stakeholders and state. Relevant policy recommendations are suggested for the balanced growth of this vital sector of Goa's economy.

**Keywords:** Tourism; Sectoral Shares; Employment; Foreign Exchange; Pollution.

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## **Introduction**

Goa an internationally famous tourist destination is more popularly known among foreign tourists; as “Rome of The East or Pearl of the Orient”. Goa was constituted as the twenty fifth state of the Indian Union on May 30, 1987, prior to which it was a part of the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu, since December 1961, when these areas were liberated from the Portuguese rule. The state of Goa is located on the southern coast of India in the coastal belt of Konkan. The State is situated between the coastal borders of Maharashtra and Karnataka states. Its total area is 3702 square kilometers. It is a small state compared to the other states in India. The state has two distinct types of terrains, the hilly tract and the coastal plains. Goa’s coastal line is about 100 kms long and is endowed with lovely beaches and idyllic beauty spots, making domestic as well as foreign tourism a flourishing major economic activity in the state.

The magnificent and picturesque beaches, the sun and sand, the architectural splendors of Goan temples, churches and Old Portuguese architectural houses have made Goa a firm and favorite tourist destination among travellers across the world. Goa’s isolation from the rest of India, for more than four centuries under the Portuguese rule, its geographical borders in the form of Sahyadri ranges and the tidal rivers have managed to give the people of Goa a unique and separate identity. Having been the meeting point of races, religions and cultures of East and West over the centuries, Goa has a multi-hued and distinctive lifestyle where people of all religions live in peace and harmony with each other. Goan people are very hospitable and warm hearted and the Goan cuisine, which is a blend of different Portuguese and Roman influences is mouthwatering and delicious.

Goa’s natural beauty, its confluence of eastern and western culture and very friendly and hospitable people has earned it a place on the tourism map of the world. Lavishly gifted by nature, it has become a tourist paradise for both domestic and foreign tourists. Today tourism, is the major economic activity in the state and trade, hotel and tourism have a multiplier effect which percolates to the local population. Tourism has contributed substantially to the service sector driven growth in the economy, in terms of income, output, employment and foreign exchange generation. The tourism industry contributes to 18 percent to Goa’s Net State Domestic Product and 14 percent of the total foreign exchange earned in the country.

### **Objectives of the present study:**

1. To analyse trends in the growth of tourism in Goa post 1961 till 2014.
2. To examine the contribution of tourism sector to the state economy in 2004-2014 period.

3. To evaluate the challenges and costs of tourism to the local population.

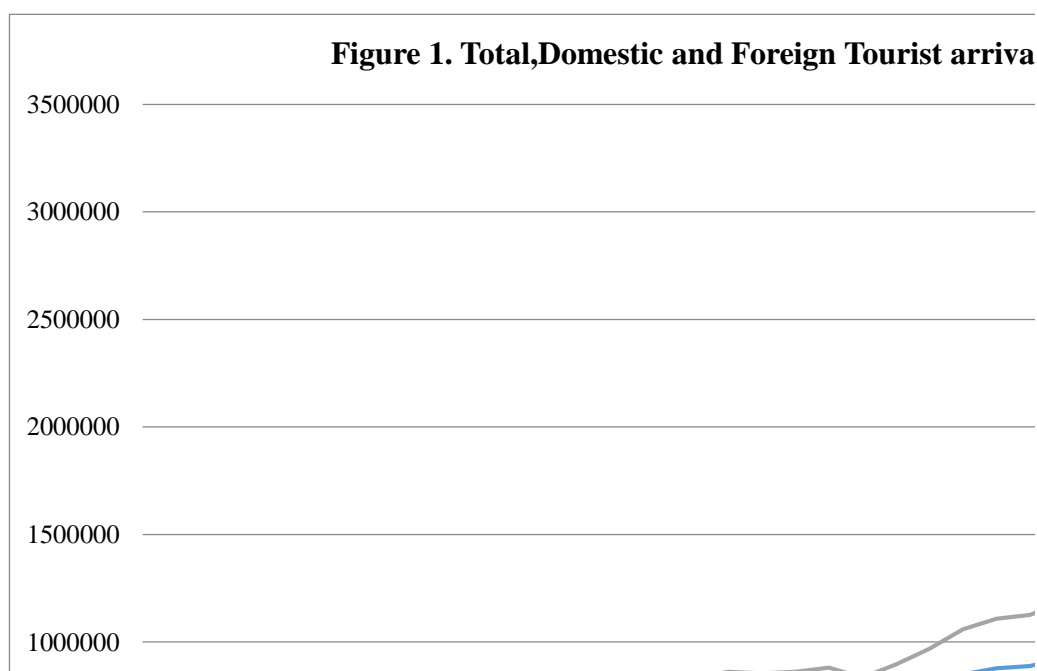
4. To suggest policy measures to improve the quality of tourism services in Goa.

### **Methodology and Data Sources:**

The growth of tourism is analyzed in terms of domestic and foreign tourist arrivals of various nations and growth in hotels, restaurants etc. in the state. Contribution of the tourism sector is measured in terms of its share in the economy's income, output, and employment and foreign exchange earnings as also links with other related sectors. Average shares and average annual growth rates have been used for analyses. Secondary data from 2004 to 2014 period has been used and for tourism growth analysis data after 1961 till 2014 has been used from various government reports of Directorate of Planning Statistics & Evaluation (DPSE) Porvorim, Goa and employment data from Census and National Sample Survey Organization reports for relevant years have been utilized.

### **Growth in Domestic and Foreign Tourist Arrivals:**

Tourist arrivals in Goa have shown a continuously rising trend since 1961. In 1964 the total number of tourists, which visited Goa, were 50,000 most of them were domestic tourists. However, the tourist influx into Goa increased in ten years, to 2 lakhs in 1974-75. In 70s began the inflow of foreign tourists or hippies as they were called; in the coastal belt of Baga and Anjuna. The total number of tourist arrivals was 3.84 lakhs in 1980, this figure jumped to 7.75 lakhs in 1985, further to 8.78 lakhs in 1995, 20.8 lakhs in 2004. The year, 1985 was crucial for Goa, from the point of view of foreign tourism, as charter flights from abroad started in 1985, which marked the onset of high-end tourism. Until then the tourism activity was not gaining much in terms of foreign exchange earnings. The decade of 1990s, saw a rise in the growth rate of tourism, with tourist arrivals of 10.59 lakhs. By 2004 the number of tourists visiting Goa has reached almost 21 lakhs. Tourist arrivals into the coastal Indian state of Goa crossed the five million mark in 2015. Of the 5.30 million tourists, 541,000 were foreigners, the state government said in a statement. The numbers mark a 30 percent increase over the previous year, the statement added. Foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) into Goa remained unaffected in 2015, notwithstanding the slowdown in many source destinations in Europe and Russia.



**Table 1.1 Average Annual Growth rates of Tourist Arrivals in Goa (in percent)**

Period	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Total Tourists
1970-2014	7.31***	10.83***	7.71***

Source: Various issues of Statistical Pocket Books, DPSE, Panaji and Tourist Statistics Government of Goa, Department of Tourism, Panaji. Statistically significant at 1% level.

From table 1.1 it can be observed that total tourist arrivals in Goa are growing at an annual average rate of 7.71 percent over the long term period 1970-2014, with foreign tourism growing at a higher rate of 10.83 percent compared to domestic tourism at 7.31 percent. Charter tourists were merely 4 percent of total foreign tourist arrivals in 1985 but by 2015 they formed 53 percent of the total foreign tourists who visited Goa.

If the foreign tourists are considered by their country of origin, there has been a change in the countries from where foreign tourists come. For instance, in the

early 1970s, Goa received most of the foreign tourists from U.S.A, U.K, and Germany with the maximum number of tourists from USA until the year 1974-75. Thereafter the largest number of tourists has been coming from U.K. except, during 1979 up to 1982, when Germany topped in the category of foreign tourist arrivals. During the period from 1994 to 2004, Goa has been receiving the largest number of tourists from U.K, mostly charter tourists with an average annual arrival of 1.14 lakhs, followed by Germany with an average annual arrival of 24.4 thousand tourists. Though Goa is a former Portuguese colony, the tourists' arrivals from Portugal are on the decline over the long term. In the recent past tourists from Russia, Finland, and Germany are increasing in number. However, Goa continues to receive the large number of foreign tourists from U.K, every year.

**Table 1.2 Foreign Tourist Arrivals in Goa by Country of Origin (in percent)**

Countries	1994-95	2004	2014
U.K.	<b>74.00</b>	<b>41.00</b>	<b>28</b>
Finland	-	<b>9.66</b>	<b>5</b>
Germany	<b>14.90</b>	<b>7.29</b>	<b>10.89</b>
Russia	-	<b>7.05</b>	<b>29.14</b>
U.S.A	1.50	1.68	1.94
Sweden	-	2.66	3.67
France.	1.88	2.22	6.83
Switzerland.	3.64	2.60	2.65
Portugal	-	1.05	0.65
Others	4.08	24.79	11.23

Source: same as in table 1.1. - Negligible.

Table 1.2 shows that in 1994-95, 74 percent of the foreign tourists were from U.K followed by tourists from Germany with a share of 15 percent. In 2004-05, though U.K topped the list of foreign tourist arrivals there was a decline in their share to 41 percent in 2004-05. Similarly, the share of German tourists dropped to half of its share a decade ago. This was due to the rise in the share of foreigners from France and Russia. In 2014, too Russian tourists had a

share of 29.14 percent in the total foreign tourist arrivals, followed by U.K with 28 percent share and Germany with 10.89 percent of the total foreign tourists which visited Goa. Thus, one finds foreign tourists from U.K predominate; yet new destination tourists have also started visiting Goa. This goes to point out that Goa is becoming known as a good tourist destination across the globe.

"Foreign tourist arrivals from UK, Russia, France, UAE, and many others have shown an increase in arrivals to the State despite continued recession and crises' that hit the European regions," the state's tourism department said in an official statement. The state has been one of the big beneficiaries of the e-tourist visa concept introduced by the government in November 2014. Over a 12-month period ended December 2015, 49,626 foreign tourists visited Goa on e-tourist visas, the Goan tourism ministry said. The state contributed 13.4 percent to the total FTAs on e-tourist visa in February 2016, 19.1 percent in January and 16.5 percent in December 2015. The e-tourist visa facility is now available to citizens of 150 countries.

### **Growth of Hotels and Restaurants in Goa:**

The growth of the tourist inflows to Goa has directly influenced the growth of the hotel industry. The number of hotels increased from 49 in 1964 to 138 in 1975-76 i.e. an average annual growth rate of 16.51 percent. The number of starred hotels increased marginally from four in 1965-66 to seven in 1975-76. The beds in all hotels also increased from 1048 in 1964 to 3671 in 1975-76 (Government of Goa, Daman and Dui, 1978). By 1980, the number of hotels went up to 196, of which 12 were star hotels and 184 were non-star hotels, with 6587 bed capacity. According to 1988 data, 11,140 beds were in operation distributed across 281 hotels and lodges in Goa. In 1993, the total number of beds in hotels in Goa were estimated to be 15,100 and the total number of rooms were around 7500, of these 1686 (22.48%) were in the Star Category hotels and the remaining, 55 percent were in the approved ABC category hotels and the remaining were in the unapproved category. The status of accommodation of domestic and foreign tourists, talukawise, from the Tourism Maser Plan 2011, shows that in the year 1994, there were 400 hotels with 17500 beds, with 16.90 beds per 1000 tourists.

In 1996, the hotels increased to 436, with a bed capacity of 18,391 with 16.0 beds per 1000 tourists. Tiswadi has the highest number of hotels, followed by Salcete and Bardez talukas. Since Goa has been projected essentially as a

beach leisure resort, 77 percent of the hotels and resorts have come up along the coastal belt with 73 percent of the total bed strength. In fact, statistics reveal that 77 percent of the domestic tourists and 95 percent of the foreign tourists prefer to stay in coastal areas (Kamat, 1997). The total number of hotels (including star category hotels)/paying guest houses with rooms/beds capacity in the state of Goa as on 2005, show that the number of hotels has risen to 2156, an almost 10 fold rise from the time of statehood. The number of rooms is 19,312 and the number of beds is 36,618. Of the total number of hotels in Goa, 78 are in the star category with 5836 rooms and 11,441 beds. And in 2015 the number of hotels has risen to 3358 with 31,767 rooms and the number of beds is 56,595. Of the total number of hotels in Goa, 63 are in the star category with over 5362 rooms and 10001 beds. It is worth noting that along with the star and good category hotels there has been a mushrooming of hotels, joints and restaurants in the informal sector too.

### **Contribution of Tourism in the Economy's NSDP:**

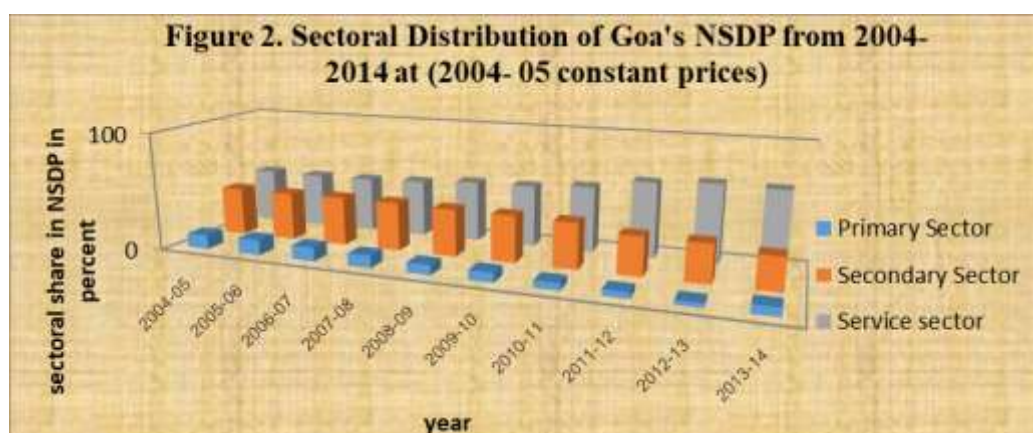
It is very evident that in the last decade, Goa's economic growth has been propelled by growth in its service sector. The share of primary sector was 11.96 percent in 2004-05 and this share has shown a declining trend especially in 2012-13 when the primary sector's share fell to merely 3.40 percent due to the ban or closure of mining activity virtually paralyzing one of the major economic activities of Goa's state economy.

**Table 1. 3 Sectoral Shares of Goa's NSDP (at 2004-05 constant prices) (in percent)**

Sectoral Share	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Primary Sector	11.96	12.88	11.72	10.40	8.37	8.10	5.95	5.27	3.40	7.03
Secondary Sector	40.98	40.62	41.32	41.06	39.97	39.51	38.43	32.46	32.13	27.43
Service sector	47.06	46.50	46.95	48.54	51.66	52.39	55.63	63.45	66.47	65.54

Source: Economic Survey of various years.

The share of the secondary sector was around 41 percent till 2007-08 after which this sector's share has also declined to 27.43 percent in 2013-14. The service sector is the only sector which is continuously showing a rising trend. The tertiary sector's share in the NSDP was 47 percent in 2004-05 but by 2013-14 it shot up to 65.54 percent driving the economic growth of the state. From this one can conclude that Goa's service sector is the dominant sector contributing above 60 secondary sector and the primary sector has the least share in the total income and output.



To analyze further the sources of growth of the service sector, the sub-services under the service sector are examined. From the table 1.4 it can be seen that Transport, Storage & Communication services has registered the highest average share of 44.18 percent in the service sector output in 2004-2014 period. This sub-service has also shown the highest average annual growth rate of 23.00 percent. Banking, Insurance & Real Estate had the second highest share under the service sector of 24.28 percent followed by Trade, Hotels & restaurants with a share of 17.58 percent in the above mentioned period.

Based on the average annual growth rates the sub-services which have emerged as the drivers of the service sector growth in 2004-2014, are transport, storage & communication at 23 percent, Other Services at 18.66 percent, banking and insurance services at 13.37 percent and real estate growing at 11.22 percent. One can observe that it's not only hotel services but transport storage, banking insurance and real estate services which are growing rapidly. Thus services that are linked with tourism activities have benefitted the most. For instance, the Credit-Deposit Report 2010-11, stated that 374 (63%) major bank



branches in Goa were concentrated in the three talukas of Salcete, Bardez and Tiswadi, the latter are major coastal tourist attraction talukas.

Table 1.4 Average Share of Sub-services under Goa's Service Sector and Average Annual Growth Rates of sub-services (2004-14):

Sub-service	Percentage share in total service sector	Average annual growth rates
1. Trade, Hotels & Restaurants	17.58	4.52**
2.Transport,storage& communication	44.18	23.00***
3. Finance, Real Estate, banking	24.28	12.36***
a. Banking, insurance	13.46	13.37***
b. Real Estate	10.82	11.22***
4. Community ,social services	14.41	14.38***
a. Public Administrative services	4.67	6.31***
b. other services	9.74	18.66***
Total service Sector(1+2+3+4)	100.	15.97***

Source: same as in table 2.1. \*\* significant at 5% level.\*\*\* significant at 1% level.

Also, more than three fourth of the total credit is accounted for by the talukas of Tiswadi, Salcete and Mormugao. Taluka wise, credit advanced by all the banks, indicates that Tiswadi taluka, famous for tourism ranked highest, and followed by Salcete, which is an important centre for industrial as well as tourism activity. Mormugao, a busy export port and Bardez, a tourist attraction were ranked third and fourth respectively. (Government of Goa 2009). Thus it is clear that banking services in Goa are growing mainly due to the demand for credit from the tourism sector. The share of tourism and service sector in the total employment of the state economy also shows a similar trend.

**Table 1.5 Workforce by Industry of Origin in Goa (1991- 2012) (in percent)**

Workforce by industry of origin	1991(main workers)	1999-2000	2011-12
<b>Culti</b>	13.7		
<b>AL</b>	8.55 26.03	16.08	3.70
<b>LS</b>	3.78		
<b>MQ</b>	3.98	3.54	10.58
<b>Manu.</b>	14.36	10.00	15.87
<b>EGW</b>	--	---	--
<b>Cons.</b>	6.07	12.75	9.84
<b>THR</b>	13.98	18.56	24.25
<b>TSC</b>	7.78	11.94	10.47
<b>BRE</b>	--	5.81	3.00
<b>CPS</b>	20.7	21.31	22.3
<b>Total</b>	92.9(+7.10marginal workers)=100	100	100

Source: Census of India (1991) and NSSO (2000,2011). Culti-Cultivators, AL-

Agricultural labor, LS-Livestock, MQ-Mining Quarrying, Manu – Manufacturing, EGW- Electricity, Water supply & Gas, Cons- Construction, THR- Trade & Commerce, TSC- Transport, Storage & Communication, BRE-Banking & Real estate.CPS - Community, Personal & Social Services.- not available.

Thus tourism services have emerged as an important driver of economic growth both in terms of output and employment in the state. Thus, Goa's economy has witnessed a structural change in its workforce distribution where

the employment share of service sector has grown over a period. This testifies how service sector has been the major employer in the economy and the importance of the tourism services in the total employment cannot be ignored.

### **Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourism:**

Around 50 lakh foreign tourists visit this India every year, of which around 6 to 10 percent visit Goa. The estimated foreign exchange earnings to the country is 10,543 million US\$ in 2008-09. That means foreign exchange earnings from Goa alone will be about 700 million US\$ per year. The foreign tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earnings are given in table 1.6. In 2014-15, foreign exchange earnings from foreign tourism in Goa crossed 1400 million US \$.

Thus it can be concluded that tourism based services in Goa contribute nearly 18 percent of the state NSDP, around 25 percent of the total employment and 1451 million US \$ to the exchequer by way of foreign exchange earnings. Thus tourism industry has been making substantial contribution to the economic development of Goa by way of foreign exchange earnings, local employment and the state income and output.

**Table 1.6 Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India & Foreign Exchange earnings in India, Goa:**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Foreign tourist arrivals (in lakh)</b>	<b>Estimated Foreign Exchange Earnings (in million US\$)</b>	<b>Estimated Foreign Exchange Earnings from Goa (in million US\$)</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2004-05</b>	36.03	6666	672
<b>2005-06</b>	41.00	7853	645
<b>2006-07</b>	46.70	9123	742
<b>2007-08</b>	51.70	11666	876

<b>2008-09</b>	50.70	10543	730
<b>2009-10</b> <b>(uptoDec.'09)</b>	<b>37.20</b>	<b>8663</b>	<b>912</b>
<b>2014-15</b>	<b>53.00</b>	<b>19670</b>	<b>1451</b>

Source: same as in table 1.2

### **Costs and Challenges of Tourism in Goa**

Economic benefits and costs of tourism reach virtually everyone in the region in one way or another. Tourism activity also involves economic costs, including the direct costs incurred by tourism businesses, government costs for infrastructure to better serve tourists, as well as congestion and related costs borne by individuals in the community. Tourism's economic costs are therefore an important consideration in state tourism development.

Tourism can create both benefits and costs to the local society and its members in any given economy and Goa is no exception to this. If tourism in the state is not planned and controlled, Goa will lose its charm and magnificence as a peaceful and safe tourist destination of the country. Some of the economic and socio- cultural problems which have resulted due to mass tourism have been discussed below.

### **Marginalization of Agriculture**

Over the last 50 years, the importance of agriculture in the State income as well as employment has been continuously declining directly or indirectly due to tourism. Some of the major reasons cited for this decline are high literacy rates, availability of clerical and white collared jobs in the government services, tourism sector and hotel industry, creating scarcity of agricultural labor, attracting migrant labor and resultant high costs in the sector.

Due to tourism and rapid urbanization, there has been a tremendous pressure to convert land for non-agricultural use. As a result, land available for cultivation has declined as can be seen from the land utilization pattern over

time and hence the same limited cultivated land is used for sowing more than once. Table 1.7 reveals that the land not available for cultivation has almost doubled from 5.5 percent in 1961 to 10.28 in 2013-14. Similarly, cultivable waste land which can be potentially cultivated has declined from 25 percent in 1960-61 to 14.5 percent in 2004-05 and increased to 18.67 percent in 2013-14. This has been mainly due to the practice adopted by some farmers not to cultivate their plots and turn them into fallow land, which are later sold for real estate purposes at attractive prices.

**Table 1.7 Land Utilization Pattern in Goa (1960-61 to 2013-14).**

<b>Year</b>	<b>1960-61</b>	<b>1989-90</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2013-14</b>
<b>1.total geog area sq kms</b>	370672.3 (100)	361113 (100)	361113 (100)	361113 (100)	361113 (100)	361113 (100)
<b>2.area under forest</b>	105295.4 (28.4)	105294.0 (29.16)	125473 (34.75)	125473 (34.75)	125473 (34.75)	125473 (34.75)
<b>3.land not available for cultivation</b>	36609.0 (5.5 )	33137.0 (9.18)	37137 (10.28)	37137 (10.28)	37137 (10.28)	37137 (10.28)
<b>4.other uncultivated land</b>	95193 (25.80)	79341.0 (21.97)	56690 (15.70)	57302 (15.87)	64892 (17.97)	64892 (17.97)
<b>i) permanent pastures</b>	1305.0 (0.4)	1305. (0.36)	1305 (0.36)	1305 (0.36)	1305 (0.36)	1305 (0.36)
<b>ii)land under trees</b>	595.2 (0.2)	580 (0.16)	580 (0.16)	580 (0.16)	580 (0.16)	580 (0.16)
<b>iii)Cultivable waste</b>	93,292.8 (25.2)	77456 (21.45)	54805 (15.18)	55417 (15.35)	52275 (14.5)	67412 (18.67)
<b>5.net area sown</b>	133574.8	143341	141813.0	141201	133611	129206

	(36)	(39.69)	(39.27)	(39.10)	(37.0)	(35.78)
<b>area sown more than once in ha</b>	5602.4	12249	29355	30155	35589	28646
<b>gross cropped area in hectares</b>	139177.3	155590	171168	171356	168634	157852
<b>Cropping intensity *</b>	104	108.5	121	121	126.65	122.17

Source: Directorate of Agriculture, Government of Goa and Government of Goa, (2004) \* author's calculation.

The total surface land in 1960-61, it increased to 39.69 percent in 1989-90 and thereafter it declined to 35.78 percent in 2013-14. Due to this, the area sown more than once has gone up. The cropping intensity also has increased from 104 in 1960 to 108 in 1989-90 to 122.17 in 2013-14. Thus agriculture is on the decline in Goa mainly due to real estate and tourism related activities.

### **Higher Cost of Living**

A consequence of a relative decline in agricultural growth as also agriculture

and allied activities is that the economy of Goa has become excessively dependent on its neighboring states of Maharashtra and Karnataka for many of its food stocks, dairy and poultry products, consumer goods and garments. This has no doubt boosted the transportation and distribution services, but has led to increase the final value of a good paid by the local consumers. Tourism has also been responsible for a general higher cost of living for the local population. The rising trend in prices can easily be gauged from the movements in Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the urban white collared employees.

Taking 1982 as the base year index, the CPI for middle class workers in 1991-92 was 245 and it rose to 554 in 2004-05, further to 1182 in 2014-15 (Government of Goa, 2015) . And food is the major item of expenditure in the 1990s and it continues to be even in 2014. Though the economy has one of the highest growth rates of real per capita income in the country, yet the inflation rate seems to have over taken the income growth rate.

### **Socio-Cultural problems**

During peak tourist's season, the roads, markets, beaches and other recreational places are packed and over crowded with tourists that locals develop a sense of hostility towards tourists. Local people pointed out social problems of drug abuse, excessive alcoholism, crime and prostitution have become common today in Goa and this is misleading today's local youth. Foreign tourism has resulted in many social problems and vices like drug peddling, rise of floating casinos and gambling, rising crimes and suicides by foreign visitors, illegal stay by foreigners in Goa, illegal purchases of Goan land by foreign tourists in violation with the FEMA guidelines and many such issues which are creating unrest among the local NGOs of Goa.

### **Miserable State of Beaches**

Today the virgin white beaches of North Goa have turned into overcrowded places lined up with shacks, hotels and motels. The beaches of Goa are facing multifarious problems of pollution. Firstly due to the haphazard and rapid growths of shacks and hotels, along the beach side, violating existing Coastal Zonal Regulation. Also the increasing influx of tourists generating huge quantities of solid and liquid wastes without proper disposal have led to environmental degradation. Marine pollution caused by movement of oil tankers and barges pollute the beach eco-system considerably. Similarly Candolim beach and Coco beach at Nerul are fast losing their coastline due to sand erosion. Tourism Infrastructure at Calangute and Vagator beaches, some of the most beautiful beaches of Goas are lacking in standard quality infrastructure. Calangute beach has heaps of garbage causing stinking smell during peak tourist seasons. There are no proper changing rooms, toilets, urinals, no garbage treatment plant, improper maintenance of benches with some broken ones, no proper police patrolling and no proper illumination. The situation at Vagator beach is worse. The 70 non-conventional energy lamps fitted on the helipad have not been repaired till date. There are no urinals, no drinking water facility, no changing rooms, no proper dustbins and no proper security personnel. The tourist police booth is rusted and lying crumbled on the ground (Navhind Times September, 2010) Lack of planning, coordination and execution of policies at the right time by various stakeholders in the tourism sector have resulted in the present state of affairs.

### **Suggestions to Improve the Standard and Quality of Tourism in Goa:**

Based on the findings the study recommends the following measures which should be taken up on a priority basis by the concerned authorities:

### **Tourism Product Diversification:**

Beach tourism is the main stream of tourism activity in Goa. But it has been over exploited. Diversion of tourists towards hinterland from beaches for controlling excessive concentration of tourists in the beaches is the need of the hour. It is time for the stakeholders to diversify tourism into the following other areas:

a) Eco- tourism with a focus on Goa's Western Ghat hill areas, wild life sanctuaries, natural forest areas.

b) Adventure Tourism: tourism with activities like parasailing, surfing, yachting, river rafting and trekking in hilly areas of hinterland talukas of Sanguem, Satterri and Canacona will boost tourism in the rural and backward areas of Goa.

c) Business Tourism is another viable form of tourism in Goa. The state should improve the quality of existing transport and infrastructure facilities for this. Business cum convention centres, Golf courses, world class shopping centers, recreational facilities need to be created for this with the help of the private sector to attract high end foreign tourists to Goa.

d) Health tourism – Goa is fast emerging as a hub for good quality health services. Health resorts can be planned. Botanical Gardens, Yoga centers ayurvedic clinics can be encouraged by the government by giving incentives to private investors.

### **Beach Cleanliness:**

a. Maintaining a new beach cleanliness task force that will be responsible for keeping the beaches clean and banning hawkers, vendors on the beaches, and also banning use of plastic bags on the beaches should be introduced.

b. Beautification of the beaches with proper sitting arrangements, proper illumination should be taken up. State should install properly designed utility systems of water supply, electric power, sewage and solid waste disposal and drainage for tourist facilities, which may be given to private contractors to operate. Thus, Beach maintenance management could be given to a private contractor. User fees can be charged from tourists who use these public utilities and fines should be imposed on users if they damage public properties.

c. Removal of shacks and hotels constructed violating existing Coastal Zone Regulations.

d. Plantation of coconut trees, at 50m from high tide line and beyond to prevent sand erosion.

e. Each Hotel or other structure facing the beach as also elsewhere should have adequate sewage treatment system and preferably biological treatment plants should be strictly enforced for such beach side hotels. Recently the Goa State Pollution Control Board has taken a step in the right direction by



charging hotels with rooms of 25 and above with pollution NOC fee of 1 percent of the total value of the hotel property.

f. Police patrolling on the beaches especially during late evenings for the safety of tourists and to monitor drug trade in coastal areas is required.

g. State Government, Municipalities and panchayats should build good sign boards, direction boards and direction maps within their jurisdiction to facilitate the foreign tourists during their travel in Goa.

### **Transportation & Transport Infrastructure:**

a. Improve the quality of roads. A North- South four lane high way corridor should be developed for speedy movement.

b. Augmentation of existing airport with 24 hours charter flights landing facility. And expediting the process of construction of the International Airport at Mopa, Goa.

c. Extending local bus services till late nights and improving connectivity of buses on long routes.

d. Introducing metering system for all the local taxis and hired vehicle services and strictly monitoring them with the help of Regional Transport Office Police.

e. Setting up an Information Centre with Touch screen computerized information facilities network system. Such facilities should be made available at, railway stations major bus stands and at important tourist places.

The above mentioned suggestions can go a long way in attracting more foreign tourists to Goa in the long run and improving the image of Goa as a Clean and Green Tourist destination. Though Goa is facing tough competition from not just other Indian states such as Kerala and Rajasthan, but also from neighboring states of Sri Lanka, Maldives and the far east countries like Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia etc. it still tops the chart as a cool and chilling place to rest. It surely has carved a niche for itself on the foreign traveler's map but maintaining the image of Goa as an irresistible tourist destination is the responsibility of each and every stakeholder of the tourism industry.

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