

Project Paper  
On  
**A Review of Tourism Policy and Performance: Bangladesh  
Perspective**

Project Paper Submitted to the School of Business and Economics in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Business Administration.

**Submitted To**

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Perspective**

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the project paper is based on my original work except for quotations and citations that have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UIU or other institutions.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The paper primarily emphasizes on the tourism policies and performances in the context of Bangladesh. Bangladesh has been blessed with immense natural beauty, enriched heritage and a glorious historical background for thousands of years. Tourism is, therefore, one of the flourishing sectors in this country. The paper's specific objectives include the following: to review the institutions of tourism management, analyze the tourism policies, to assess the tourism performance and prescribe some suggestions for overall improvement of the sector. The study has been conducted on the basis of secondary data which have been obtained from difference articles published in online journals, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC), and many other websites.

The paper examines the tourism performance of Bangladesh on the basis of five key indicators. The research findings established that, as the years passed from 2007 to 2017, the number of international tourist arrival and tourism's contribution in employment generation have decreased in 2017 although those were maximum in 2011 and 2013, respectively. However, it has been found in the study that the tourism's contribution in overall GDP, average receipts per tourist arrival and international tourism inbound receipts have increased to a great extent.

The paper discusses about few necessary recommendations which can be taken by both private and public organizations associated with tourism to fill the existing gap in this sector. The government, BPC and Ministry of Civil Aviation have an effective role to play in the policy formulation and enhancement of the overall growth of the tourism industry. Therefore, the tourism sector will have a positive impact on the growth and economic development of Bangladesh in future.

The study concludes that the tourism industry of Bangladesh has the potential to be one of the prime sources of increased foreign currency and job opportunities. Thus, the paper reveals the demand for the formulation of a valid set of tourism policies. It is essential to ensure proper development of this sector as it has an increasing contribution in the national economy of the country.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>CHAPTER 01</b>	
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1-4</b>
1.1 Background of the Study.....	2
1.2 Problem Statement.....	2-3
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	3
1.4 Importance of the Study.....	3
1.5 Scope of the Study.....	4
<b>CHAPTER 02</b>	
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>5-8</b>
2.1 Literature Review.....	6-8
<b>CHAPTER 03</b>	
<b>METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION &amp; ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>9-10</b>
3.1 Research Method.....	10
3.2 Data Processing and Analysis Methods.....	10
<b>CHAPTER 04</b>	
<b>ANALYSIS &amp; FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>11-31</b>

4.1 Institutions of Tourism Management in Bangladesh.....	12-13
4.1.1 Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC).....	12-13
4.1.2 National Hotel and Tourism Training Institute (NHTTI).....	13
4.1.3 Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB).....	13
4.2 Tourism Policies of Bangladesh.....	13-21
4.2.1 National Tourism Policy.....	14-15
4.2.2 National Tourism Act 2010.....	15-16
4.2.3 National Industrial Policy, 2005.....	16
4.2.4 BPC as National Tourist Organization.....	16-17
4.2.5 The Tourism Master Plan.....	17-18
4.2.6 BTB Act.....	18
4.2.7 Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF).....	18-19
4.2.8 Tourism Vision 2020.....	19-21
4.3 Tourism Performance over the last decade in Bangladesh.....	21-29
4.3.1 International Tourist Arrival.....	21-23
4.3.2 International Tourism Inbound Receipts.....	23-25
4.3.3 Average Receipts per Arrival.....	25-26
4.3.4 T & T Industry GDP.....	26-27
4.3.5 T & T Industry Employment.....	28-29
4.4 Global Ranking of Bangladesh Tourism.....	30-31
<b>CHAPTER 05</b>	
<b>CONCLUSION &amp; RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>32-41</b>
5.1 Conclusion.....	33-34

5.2 Contribution of the Research.....	34
5.3 Limitations.....	34
5.4 Implications.....	34
5.5 Recommendations.....	34-41
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>42-43</b>

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: International Tourist Arrivals.....	<b>22</b>
Table 2: International Tourism Inbound Receipts.....	<b>24</b>
Table 3: Average Receipts per Arrival.....	<b>26</b>
Table 4: Travel and Tourism (T&T) Industry GDP .....	<b>26</b>
Table 5: T & T Industry Employment.....	<b>28</b>
Table 6: Bangladesh’s Tourism Global Ranking and Performance Indicators.....	<b>30</b>

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: International Tourist Arrivals.....	<b>23</b>
Figure 2: International Tourism Inbound Receipts.....	<b>25</b>
Figure 3: T & T Industry GDP.....	<b>27</b>
Figure 4: T & T Industry Employment.....	<b>29</b>
Figure 5: Tourism Visa Openness Index.....	<b>38</b>

**CHAPTER 01**  
**INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Background of the Study**

Travel for pleasure or business purpose is known as “tourism”. As UNWTO defines, “tourism comprises the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes.” People also travel for religious, sports, cultural purposes and to attend a conference or seminar. The interest in traveling may vary according to one’s age, health, energy or his/her background. However, the younger people seem to be more enthusiastic in tourism than the older ones.

Tourism has a significant impact on the economic growth of a country. Income creation and generation of jobs are the important benefits of tourism. It is one of the vital service industries, and it generates enormous revenues too. Hence, government policies aimed at increasing tourism development results in the expansion of an economy.

Bangladesh is the country of spectacular natural beauty which attracts the tourists. It has beautiful beaches as well as the longest beach in the world. The country is also endowed with breathtaking beauties, such as parks, forests, islands, hill tract areas, tea estates, wildlife sanctuaries, etc. Furthermore, the historical background includes the numerous historical places, archaeological sites, heritage, and many monuments. Museums, seaports, amusement parks, etc. have also lured people from all over the world.

As Bangladesh is a developing economy, tourism plays a crucial role in job creation, export revenue and the addition of domestic value. Tourism has a positive contribution to the rate of change of GDP. So the government, along with the partnership of private sectors, has an important role to play in the development of the tourism sector. Thus, it is particularly important to study the tourism policies of Bangladesh and also review, to what extent, tourism has contributed to the economic expansion of the country.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

According to Tosun and Timothy (2009), tourism is one of the most promising sectors for the economic growth of developing economies all over the world. Since tourism has been recognized as one of the primary sources of employment and foreign currency earning, so the government of such countries has developed policies for enhanced tourism performance.

Likewise, Bangladesh can earn a lot from its tourism sector because the country is widely known to be endowed with natural beauty and panoramic views which the tourists desire to enjoy. Former research suggested that the positive performance of tourism not only has led to creation of jobs but also higher Gross Domestic Product (Hasan & Islam, 2014). However, Bangladesh failed to get the maximum benefit from this sector. The tourism industry of Bangladesh has yet to make notable contribution in the economic development and national growth of the country (Ahmed, 2009).

Although the government of Bangladesh has taken certain measures to increase the growth of tourism, problems associated with strategic planning, policies and inefficient tourism management have resulted in frustrating scenario of the country's tourism sector (Karim, 2014).

Hence, the purpose of this paper is to review the tourism policies and performance in the context of Bangladesh and prescribe recommendations to fill the loopholes of its tourism sector.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The project paper has a general objective of reviewing the policies and performance of tourism in the context of Bangladesh. It also has the following specific objectives:

- To get an overview of tourism institutions in Bangladesh.
- To analyze the different tourism policies of Bangladesh.
- To evaluate the performance of Bangladesh tourism.
- To propose the necessary recommendations for the improvement of the tourism sector of Bangladesh.

### **1.4 Importance of the Study**

The purpose of this paper is an enrichment of knowledge and sharpening of ideas regarding the tourism sector's policies and performance in Bangladesh. This study is of great significance because it has given me the opportunity to study different strategies adopted by the government to develop the tourism industry. It also assesses how tourism plays a crucial role in the economic growth of the country.

## **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The importance of Bangladesh is gradually rising among foreigners as a beautiful tourist country. That is why the market of the tourism industry is expanding day by day too. Since Bangladesh is very rich concerning lucrative tourist spots, so the paper highlights the policies taken to develop this sector as well as analyzes its performance. This study is based on a comprehensive analysis of the secondary data collected from various online articles, such as the World Tourism Organization (WTO), Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC), etc. This study also involves some suggestions for the progress of the tourism sector of Bangladesh.

**CHAPTER 02**  
**LITERATURE REVIEW**

## **2. 1 Literature Review**

Travel and tourism has become a significant sector in the world economy over the past decades (Blanke & Chiesa, 2006). Tourism is believed to give an impetus to the economic development of developing countries and its significance is being widely recognized (Durberry, 2004). One of the largest and fastest growing sectors of the global economy is tourism. It involves numerous enterprises which thrive for success in the competitive and dynamic business environment (Yilmez, 2008).

Additionally, it has been found that travel and tourism has become one of the largest industries all over the world contributing more than 10% to the global GDP (Amin, 2008). Hence, he also argued that it is crucial to maintain an optimal balance of the natural resources in order to guarantee the constant tourists' arrival to destinations. It has been also stated that there is a strong correlation between the tourism sector and economic development. Tourism can be a substantial contributor to economic growth in the years ahead if proper emphasis is put on it and appropriate strategies are developed (Deegan & Moloney, 2007).

Elena et al. (2012) claims tourism to be one of the profitable sectors of Bangladesh. Also, this country has been famous for its scenic beauty since the ancient period as well as praised by foreign tourists for its rich cultural heritage and hospitality of the people (Ali & Mobasher, 2004). Moreover, tourism aids in poverty alleviation as well as endows with it opportunity for long term earnings, sense of ownership, cultural pride, reduced vulnerability through diversification and personal skills' development of the poor. Also, it offers different kinds of direct and indirect benefits for residents of developing countries, particularly the poor (WTO, 2002).

The significance of tourism in Bangladesh has been spotlighted since it brings with it socio-economic development. There are multidimensional advantages of tourism, such as job creation, infrastructure development, lower startup costs, foreign currency earnings, cultural development, poverty reduction, government earnings, and generation of investment opportunity, cultural development, preservation and enhancement of the country's resources (Redwan, 2014).

Siraj et al. (2009) argued that particular policies are adopted by the government for the tourism sector's enhancement. The government of Bangladesh has reformed the National Tourism Policy in 2010. This policy has aimed at increasing job creation, ensuring development of the economy,

enhancing environmental purity and maintaining sustainability. Kabir et al. (2012) stated that an Act of “Protected areas of tourism and special tourism zone” has been launched by the government of Bangladesh too.

Ali & Mohsin (2008) found that the tourists’ destinations in Bangladesh as well as the cost incurred in traveling here have favorable impact on the growth of tourism. They recommended tourism to be treated as a significant contributing factor of economic development of the country. In order to do so, there should be synergy between the tourism policies and its implementation.

According to Johannesburg Summit (2002), tourism benefits a country directly by building up of required infrastructure and other relevant facilities which not only assist the visitors but also the local people. The development of tourism is argued to be a win-win strategy as it results in job creation, infrastructure development and sustainable growth of the country. Hence, upgradation of the business environment, reduction of hindrances like easy accessibility in visa procedures, innovation in tourism products, etc. can lead to expansion of both domestic and foreign tourism (Baisakalova, 2009).

Many studies have also been conducted to examine the problems and assess the prospects for the tourism growth of Bangladesh. The tourism sector of Bangladesh, its marketing strategies and overall potential have been analyzed. Then, it has been found that, in comparison to other South Asian countries, Bangladesh has fallen behind in developing tourism and attracting large number of tourists although the country is gifted with notable, different tourism attractions (Hasan, 1992). In his study, he recommended planning the necessary strategies and creating a separate organization to carry out the marketing activities of the tourist plans and installations owned by Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC).

Moreover, it has been found in a detailed report on the Tourism Master Plan of Bangladesh that the government has attempted to make noteworthy investments for the development of infrastructure, airlines and tourism as a whole (Pannell Kerr Froster Associate, 1998). The report also highlighted the fact that the investment should be aided by effective management to achieve the policy objectives and a feasible gain from it. Furthermore, as per the report, Kerr came to the conclusion that the Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) failed to play a successful role as the National Tourism Organization as well as the architect of tourism development. So, the report has put a great emphasis on improvement of the infrastructure, facilities, service quality as well as

balanced promoting activities and proficient management to meet both current and potential tourists' needs.

In spite of all the measures taken by BPC, the government and private sectors, Bangladesh tourism sector has yet to get on a solid footing and adequately develop the overall industry (Ahmed, 1986). Plausible reasons for such backwardness involved lack of coordination, inefficient policy planning and ineffective use of resources. Thus, Ahmed advised to develop and expand the infrastructure of tourism for its satisfactory evolution.

However, according to Masud (2015), Bangladesh has an increasing trend in tourist arrivals and earnings. So, the employment of more innovative personnel in the tourism management, promotional measures would significantly enhance the growth of tourism. Better amenities, cost efficient techniques, technological advancements, and effective and highly efficient tourism services would engage more local and foreign tourists in visiting the tourism spots of the country (Ali, 2010).

Consequently, the review of literature and gathered evidences mentioned above for the purpose of this paper clearly point out the fact that Bangladesh's tourism sector has not reached its full potential yet. Although the BPC, along with the government and private sector firms, has adopted many measures for the enhancement of this sector, a lot more efforts and strategies are required to fully develop the tourism industry of Bangladesh. This, in turn, would lead to sustainability in the growth of tourism as well as overall development of the national economy.

**CHAPTER 03**  
**METHODS OF DATA**  
**COLLECTION & ANALYSIS**

### **3.1 Research Method**

The paper emphasizes the theoretical analysis of secondary sources of data. The research mainly focuses on the tourism policies and its performance concerning Bangladeshi perspective. So, the data and information have been gathered and scrutinized from various published articles and reports of tourism bodies, such as World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC), and many websites related to the tourism policies of Bangladesh.

### **3.2 Data Processing and Analysis Methods**

Different online documents, articles related to the tourism industry have been studied. Information on the different tourism management institutions, tourism policies of Bangladesh as well as how it has performed over the last 10 years have been collected and thoroughly analyzed in the paper.

**CHAPTER 04**  
**ANALYSIS & FINDINGS**

## **4.1 Institutions of Tourism Management in Bangladesh**

The following are the authoritarian bodies which have been governing and controlling the tourism sector of Bangladesh:

### **4.1.1 Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC)**

The pioneer of tourism development in Bangladesh is Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC). It is an autonomous organization which was created by the father of our nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with Presidential Order (P.O.) no- 143 in November 1972. It is also known as the National Tourism Organization (NTO). BPC started its operation on January 1, 1973. The organization operates under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism. It plays a dual role of promoting and developing the tourism industry as well as creating and operating various tourism facilities across the country.

#### **Vision of BPC**

Bangladesh has a vision to develop the country as an exotic tourist destination for both local and foreign visitors.

#### **Mission of BPC**

The organization has the following targets to achieve:

- Develop BPC as the corporation of excellence with sufficient authority and capability to monitor and facilitate tourism.
- Maintain and upgrade the international standard of tourism products and ancillary facilities.
- Assure the tourists of safety and security, simplify visa and immigration procedures for the tourists.
- Develop eco- tourism based on nature and ethnic culture, improve human resources and promote tourism products at home and abroad
- Build more infrastructure, such as road, rail, water and airlines for easy accessibility, by involving government and private sector investment.
- Create and retain a strong public-private partnership in the tourism industry, hand over the commercial units of the sector to the private.

- Boost and maintain close co-operation with regional as well as international counterparts of the industry.
- Create more jobs, reduce poverty, and stimulate balance of payment via the activities of tourism.

Thus, since its inception, BPC has been persistently attempting to accomplish the objectives mentioned above and improve the tourism industry as a whole.

#### **4.1.2 National Hotel and Tourism Training Institute (NHTTI)**

NHTTI was initiated under BPC in 1974. It is an institute which offers training for professional tourism management. Courses are offered here to ensure trained personnel for hotel and tourism industry. Furthermore, in 1994, it started a two-year long diploma course in hotel management. NHTTI also offers job training for the employees of BPC as well as arranges workshops, seminars, etc. related to the development of tourism industry.

#### **4.1.3 Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB)**

Bangladesh Tourism Board was founded in 2010 to support tourism development and meet strong demands of the private sector and tourism professionals. BTB has been playing a key role in marketing and promoting tourism of Bangladesh, both domestically and internationally. Moreover, it is affiliated with the United Nations World Tourism Organizations (UNWTO). The organization is also involved in the provision of necessary training for tourism personnel as well as in the formulation of policies and plans for tourism growth. BTB also plays a major part in attracting foreign investment in the Bangladesh tourism sector.

### **4.2 Tourism Policies of Bangladesh**

In order to develop the tourism industry and its facilities, the government, semi- government, non-governmental agencies including BPC have taken various steps. The government of Bangladesh also formulated policies and legislations in order to upgrade the tourism sector. Such policies are discussed below:

### **4.2.1 National Tourism Policy**

The first significant policy initiative was framed in February 1992 by the government of Bangladesh. The policy is known as the “National Tourism Policy”. The primary aim of this policy is to attract both domestic private sectors and foreign investors in order to make investments in the tourism sector of Bangladesh. Other objectives include the following:

- Develop, maintain, protect and conserve the resources of tourism.
- Create a favorable image of the country in domestic and foreign nations.
- Encourage private capital investment, arrange recreational and entertainment facilities.
- Reduce poverty through creation of jobs, and make national solidarity and integrity stronger.

Additionally, the government of Bangladesh has placed numerous incentives, such as tax exemptions, loans, allotment of land, concession rates for taxes and duties, etc. to lure private sectors’ as well as foreign investment. Foreign investment may be either based on full foreign ownership or in the form of joint ventures.

Furthermore, tourism has been promoted in Bangladesh long before this policy was formulated. After the independence of this country, promotion of tourism, by the guidance of the government, has commenced in 1972. Various cultural heritages, Buddhist heritages, world’s longest sea beach, ancient archaeological as well as eco-tourism sites, etc. are the primary charms of the tourism industry.

Hence, the National Tourism Policy was formulated due to the increasing contribution of tourism to the socio-economic development of Bangladesh. Description of the status of the tourism industry, definition of the aims and objectives, and the suggestions of how strategies should be implemented, are mentioned in the policy. Since tourism has been identified as a multi-dimensional industry in this policy, so it has become necessary to have effective and efficient co-ordination among the agencies, departments, ministries of government and the civil society bodies.

The implementation strategy of this policy includes the following institutions which have been set up to work from national to local level for the stable growth of the tourism sector:

- National Tourism Council, regulated by the Prime Minister

- Cabinet Committee on Tourism
- Advisory Committee on Tourism
- Inter-ministerial Co-ordination and Implementation Committee at divisional and local level, regulated by the Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism
- Involvement of the Embassy of Bangladesh and Mission abroad

Nevertheless, according to a report of 2010, the National Tourism Council, along with the Inter-ministerial Committee, was not adequately operated and only two meetings were held. Therefore, the policy, later, introduced some initiatives to promote tourism extensively, both within and outside the country. Some actions were not executed at all. So, there are was an urgent need to update the national tourism policy for the betterment of the tourism industry.

#### **4.2.2 National Tourism Act 2010**

The government of Bangladesh reformulated this act, along with few major changes, on the basis of the National Tourism Policy 1992. The purpose of this policy was to fill the loopholes of the previous policy in an effective manner and generate employment opportunities in the tourism industry. This, in turn, would result in socio- economic development of the country too.

This act mainly aims at developing eco-tourism through conservation of natural resources and promoting the local communities' well-being. The policy consists of a comprehensive strategic plan of action and intends to develop the following areas:

- Eco-tourism in Sundarbans mangrove forests
- Riverine and local tourism
- Religious spots
- Archaeological and historical spots
- Sea beaches
- Cultural spots and heritage
- Community or region based tourism

The government plans to work on these targets with 15 ministries jointly in order to achieve its goal by provisions of a number of facilities to the visitors, including development of the tourist sites, infrastructure, food variety, cultural functions and safety of the tourists. To boost up the

tourism at local level, the government has divided the whole country into seven regions which would operate in accordance with the seven divisions' local governments.

#### **4.2.3 National Industrial Policy, 2005**

According to this policy, tourism has been recognized as an industry and has gained widespread recognition as a “thrust sector”. As mentioned in the policy, foreign investments have been offered in various forms to flourish the tourism industry of Bangladesh. Such few incentives are stated below:

- Exclusion of tax on specific cases, such as royalties, foreign loans' interest and capital gains from share transfer.
- Income tax exemption on salaries up to 3 years for the foreign technicians who are employed in particularly approved industries.
- In accordance with the Foreign Private Investment Promotion & Protection Act 1980, guarantee is given against expropriation and nationalization of foreign private sector investment.
- Different amenities are offered as well, such as, the facilities for return on invested capital, profits, dividends. Also, on the basis of bilateral agreements, double taxation of foreign investors can be avoided.
- In addition, with the authorization of the Board of Investment and the Foreign Exchange Control Dept. of Bangladesh Bank, shares held by foreigners can also be transferred to the local partners.
- Lastly, facilities for repatriation of savings, retirement benefits and personal assets are provided, at the time of the return, as well as up to 50% remittance of the salary is given, to the foreigners employed here.

So, these are some of the ways in which foreign investments have been attracted to expand the tourism sector.

#### **4.2.4 BPC as National Tourist Organization**

As it has been discussed earlier in 4.1.1 in this paper, BPC acts as the governing body to promote and develop tourism in Bangladesh. A report of 2010 stated that it has created numerous tourism facilities at the tourist attractions of the country, for both local and foreign visitors. Till 2010, the

facilities included at least 42 tourism units, such as hotels, picnic spots, tourism center, etc. The NHTTI, which was founded under its wing, involved more than 24,000 trained human resources. In accordance with the policy of privatization, till 2010, BPC also leased out more than 11 commercial units to private sector.

The primary motive of this organization has always been to enhance the tourism sector and offer excellent services for both local and foreign tourists. This is why, BPC has set the following objectives to develop tourism and the economy as a whole:

- Promoting tourism in Bangladesh by building up positive country image abroad, improving tourism infrastructure.
- Offering high quality services to the tourists and making the best use of tourism resources which exist in Bangladesh.
- Enhancing tourism sector by diversifying the products of tourism and developing the human resources of the tourism industry.
- Creating jobs in different sectors of the industry to alleviate poverty as well as to add to the growth of the national GDP.

The fulfilment of these targets won't only develop the tourism sector but also solve unemployment problem and eradicate poverty by a significant percentage. So, the industry will have a favorable influence on the economy altogether.

#### **4.2.5 The Tourism Master Plan**

With the aid of UNDP/ ILO, a development program, known as the “Tourism Master Plan”, was established in 1988. But it involved many obstacles and many measures were prescribed to expand the tourism growth of Bangladesh. The plan was envisioned with a short, medium and long term promotion strategy of tourism. The short term strategy was known broadly as the third and fourth plans of national development. Strategies of both short and medium term were anticipated to be accomplished within 10 years though medium term was extended up to following 5 years.

There was limitation on resources of the public sector, so the plan involved the same comprehensive approach in the allocation of both short and medium term projects. The projects were financed by the private sectors. The plan was initially developed to enhance tourism activity and its growth through small-scale product upgradation made by taking short term measures.

Furthermore, to achieve long term growth in the tourism sector, major product innovations and product development strategies were set, like- Village Tourism Development, Cultural Heritage Development, River Tourism Product, Forest and Wildlife, etc.

#### **4.2.6 BTB Act**

There are different kinds of acts adopted by the Bangladesh Tourism Board for the expansion of tourism in Bangladesh. Few of them are discussed below:

- Development of the tourism industry through various planning related activities and creation of general awareness related to the protection, growth and exploration of tourism.
- Execution of responsible tourism with governmental aid in certain cases, such as the local people, local administration, NGO, personal sector, women federation and media.
- With the help of both government and private tourism organizations and other organizations related to tourism, support the small tourism institutions as well as create better communication medium for the International Tourist Organizations in Bangladesh.
- Form tourism friendly environment, improve the human resources of tourism, and attract both foreign and domestic tourists by maintenance of high quality tourism service and safety assurance of the visitors.
- Encourage involvement of physically challenged people and women in the tourism industry and make sure their rights are safeguarded.
- Create database of tourism prospects, conduct survey and research and analyze the collected information on tourism industry and international markets to enhance the overall tourism sector in Bangladesh.
- Organize tourism fairs and encourage tourism within and outside the country through different promotional activities, and build secure and strong foothold for the tourists of Bangladesh by synchronizing with various government organizations.
- Construct rules and regulations under the law of the government with which every tourism organization has to comply.

#### **4.2.7 Medium Term Budget Framework (MTBF)**

This framework has been first introduced in fiscal year 2005-06 in Bangladesh. Under the provision of sections 10(4) and 11 of the Public Money and Budget Management Act 2009, MTBF

has been formulated. Every year, this document is presented, along with other budgetary documents, in the parliament of Bangladesh. It consists of the estimates of the budget years and projection of two outer years. Additionally, the document comprises the strategic targets of ministries/ divisions of medium term, data on performance, etc.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism includes the following factors in this framework for the development of tourism:

- Construction and execution of policies and laws related to the civil aviation. Procedures for modernization and rationalization of air routes, services and airports are also mentioned here.
- The framework also states the rules, policies, and laws formed, executed and upgraded for tourism, with paying close attention to the global perspective. The rules and regulations also apply for registration of travel agencies and monitoring of the agencies' operations.
- Activities like air space control, safe take-off and landing of aircraft, aeronautical assessment, and issuance of licenses for airplanes and pilots, etc. are observed and regulated too.
- Survey and research are conducted for progress of the tourism industry, creation of adept tourism personnel and its modern management.
- Contracts regarding civil aviation and tourism with domestic and foreign organizations are signed and all activities related to the operation are monitored.
- Lastly, service-oriented corporations, i.e., the ones associated with tourism are established, directed and regulated for the positive growth of the overall tourism industry.

#### **4.2.8 Tourism Vision 2020**

A detailed plan, known as, "Tourism Vision 2020", has been drafted by BPC which makes an anticipation of more than 1 million visitors by 2020. This is the study which represents the immense potential growth of tourism in Bangladesh. The plan has been made to assist the tourism industry to earn 4-5% of the annual GDP by 2020. While the corporation makes an estimation of 0.9 million foreign visitors, WTO (World Tourism Organization) predicts that foreign visitors would be 0.5 million in Bangladesh. BPC expects that domestic tourism as well as international tourism would increase because of the improvement in infrastructure, such as highways and hotels, and the emerging trend to go on pleasure tours by the local people.

This plan has been claimed to be the absolute guideline for the tourism industry, the government and private investors. It has been formulated on the basis of a study report on the recent condition of the tourism industry. After considering the strategies of tourism of India, Thailand and New Zealand, and interviewing visitors, tour operators and professionals of tourism, etc., it had been found that there was a significant lack of proper plans and strategies only because there was no clear vision to promote tourism of Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation has adopted policies to develop the products of tourism, marketing, promotion, public relation and the reformation of the corporation. The cultural heritage and archaeological sites, such as Paharpur, Mahasthangarh, etc. require proper maintenance and conservation. Proper supervision and protection against illegal trespassers by coordinating with the Forest Ministry have to be made for eco-tourism destinations, for example, the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Tanguar Haor, Sundarbans, etc. The vision 2020 also recommended development of Cox's Bazar, St. Martin's Island, etc. as special tourist areas, in addition with appropriate infrastructure, entertainment facilities, like water spots and casinos. There should be promotion of rural tourism, riverine tourism, health and education tourism.

Moreover, short and long term marketing plans should be developed and some countries should be targeted as potential markets. Various activities, such as full display ads, brochures, and promotional activities, such as packages with free airline tickets, tie-in sales promotion, and many other related steps are mandatory to accomplish the mentioned objectives.

In this study, it has also been stated that BPC should be converted into an effective controlling body, along with the autonomous power to deal with private sectors, ministries and governmental departments. There should also be a strong marketing division and the corporation should be able to monitor and control all the lucrative islands and archaeological sites with potential growth of tourism.

The study discusses the critical factors on which Bangladesh has been determined to cash in. The factors are illustrated below:

- Enhancement of favorable image of the country as well as maintenance of political stability.

- To ensure that Bangladesh become a single destination like Maldives, Malaysia and Singapore.
- Development of marketing system, the communication network system (internal and external), diversification of tourism products and increase in investment from both private sector and government.
- Ease traveling procedure for the tourists, ensure that tourism visits in Bangladesh exceed 1 million every year following the year 2020 and sustain the increasing growth.

If the prescribed steps are taken, then average annual growth rate has been forecasted by WTO Tourism 2020 vision to be of 6.10% between 1995 and 2020. Also, according to BPC's estimation, visitors' arrival would be at least 500,000 by 2020.

So, it can be concluded that the policies and legislations mentioned above would not only enhance the sector of tourism but also develop the economy as a whole.

### **4.3 Tourism Performance over the Last Decade in Bangladesh**

Tourism has a great influence on the economic growth of Bangladesh. It is quite essential to measure how it affects the overall economy, so 5 key indicators have been established here to show the overall performance of the tourism industry. For each element, information have been accumulated from the source of “**The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report (TTCR)**”. The reports are prepared by the **World Economic Forum (WEF)** and published after every two years. The analysis has been conducted on the basis of the last decade's data and the years included are 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015 and 2017. Each of the factors is discussed in details here.

#### **4.3.1 International Tourist Arrival**

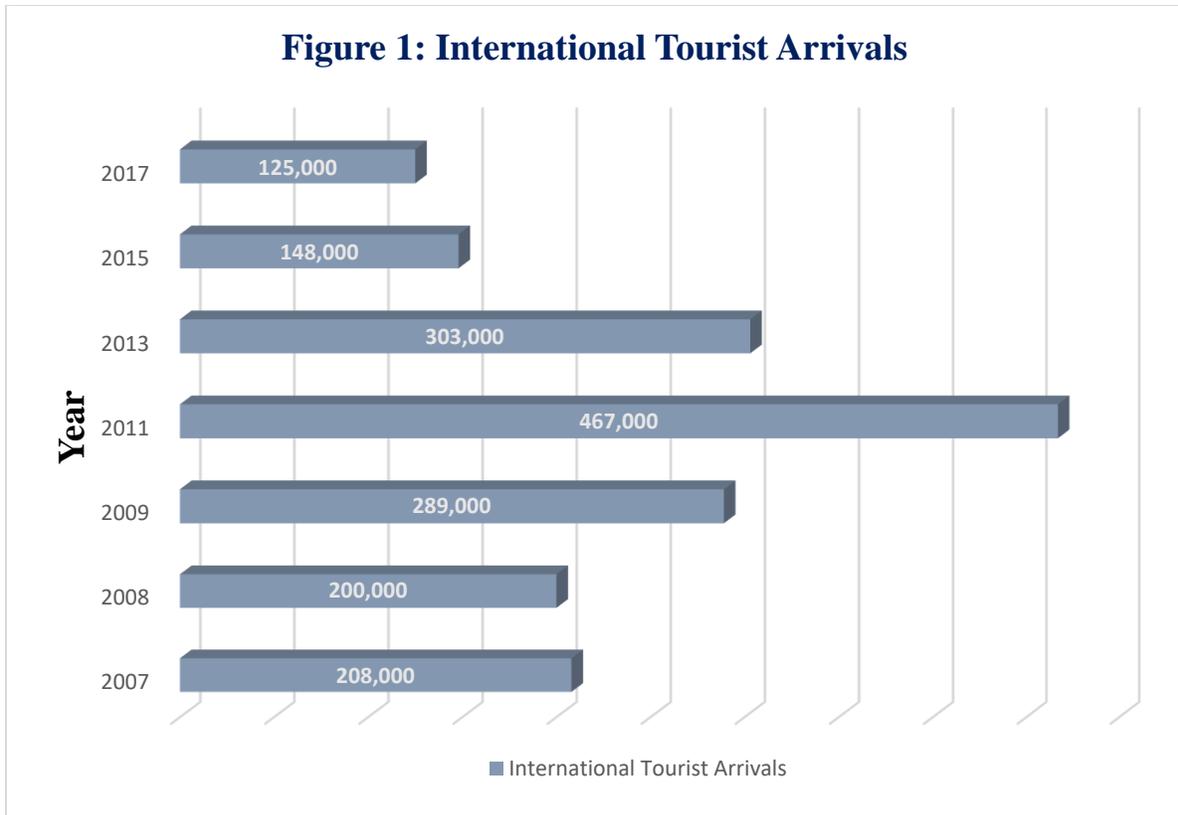
The term “International Tourist Arrival” refers to the entrance of a foreign visitor who stays for a minimum of one night in a collective or private accommodation in the country visited. More precisely, it is the number of arrivals of foreign tourists, including same-day and overnight visitors to the country. The table below indicates the last 10 years' data (2007-2017) on international tourist arrivals (in thousands) in Bangladesh:

**Table 1: International Tourist Arrivals**

<b>Year</b>	<b>International Tourist Arrivals</b>
2007	208,000
2008	200,000
2009	289,000
2011	467,000
2013	303,000
2015	148,000
2017	125,000

**Source: TTCR 2007-2017, WEF**

From the table above, the trend of the arrivals of the foreign tourists in Bangladesh is depicted in the following bar diagram:



The figure above illustrates that as years have passed, Bangladesh couldn't progress sufficiently in terms of attracting foreign tourists. It reached the maximum number of international tourists in 2011, i.e. 467,000. The second highest was 125,000 in 2013. The least number of International Tourist Arrival was in 2017 and it was only 125,000. So, it can be concluded that, the tourism sector of Bangladesh has not been able to lure adequate foreign tourists in the country.

#### **4.3.2 International Tourism Inbound Receipts**

International inbound tourists are the number of tourists who travel outside their own country for a year at most. They can also be known as the overnight visitors and their primary objective in visiting is other than an activity remunerated from within the country visited. The data on such tourists refer to the number of arrivals, not the number of people travel. So, anyone who goes for numerous journeys in a foreign country during a certain period of time is counted every time as new arrival.

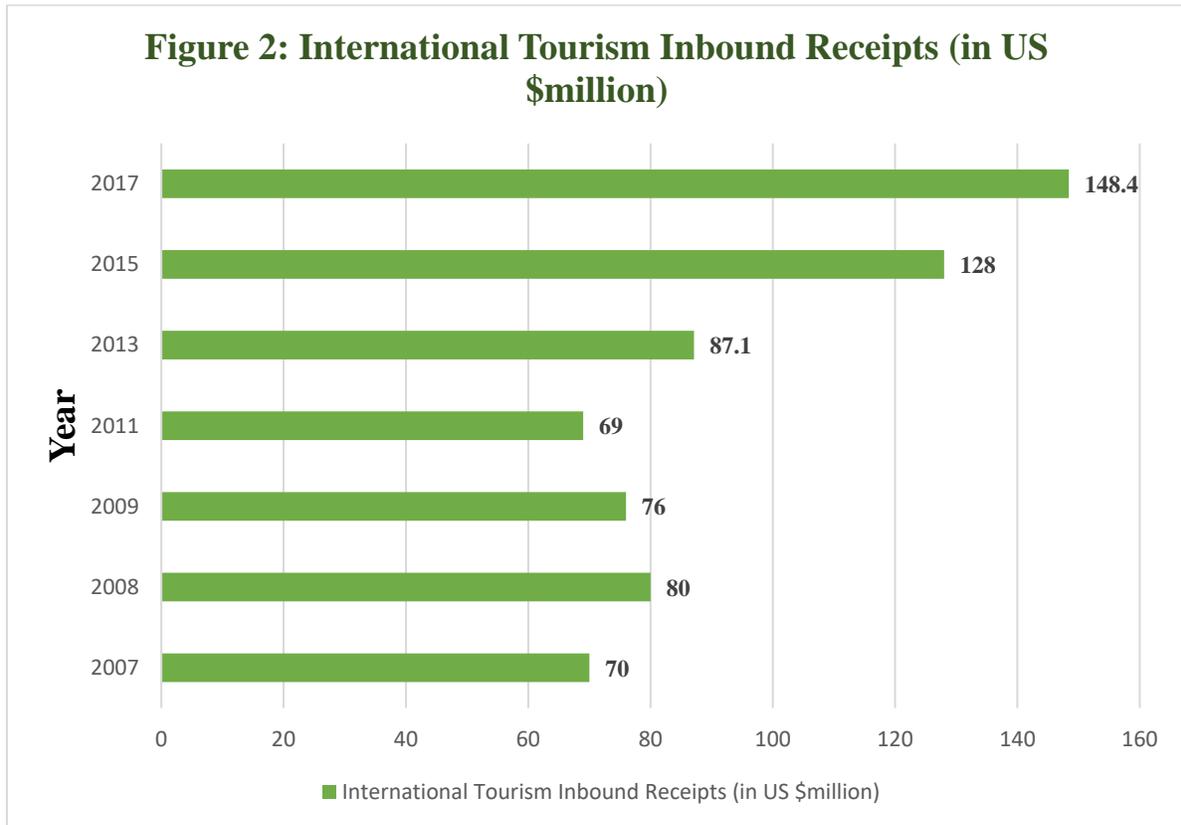
Hence, as per the definition of WTO, international tourism inbound receipts are denoted as the expenditures made by the international inbound tourists. These also include the payments they make to national carriers for the international transport as well as any other pre and post payments made for goods or services obtained in the destination country. The following table illustrates the receipts of inbound foreign tourists in US \$ million:

**Table 2: International Tourism Inbound Receipts**

<b>Year</b>	<b>International Tourism Inbound Receipts (in US \$ million)</b>
2007	70
2008	80
2009	76
2011	69
2013	87.1
2015	128
2017	148.4

**Source: TTCR 2007-2017, WEF**

The following bar chart has been drawn from the table above:



The chart above demonstrates that the expenditures of inbound foreign visitors has kept increasing from 2007 till 2011. The least expenditure was US \$ 69 million in 2011. However, the trend is an upward one since the receipts enhanced again after 2011 and went on rising. The maximum receipt was evidently in 2017, that was, US \$ 148.4 million. Thus, it can be inferred that, in terms of the receipts from foreign visitors, Bangladesh tourism sector is in a favorable position.

#### **4.3.3 Average Receipts per Arrival**

This term is defined as the average earnings gained from the foreign visitors who travelled in Bangladesh. The data on this particular factor was not available online for the years 2007-2013. Only two years' information were obtainable which has been shown in the table below:

**Table 3: Average Receipts per Arrival**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Average Receipts per Arrival (in US \$)</b>
2015	864.9
2017	1,187.2

**Source: TTCR 2015 & TTCR 2017, WEF**

On the basis of the presented figures, it can be stated that the average receipts' from the foreign visitors have increased gradually in the recent years. Thus, the tourism sector of Bangladesh has a positive growth in this specific criteria.

#### **4.3.4 Travel and Tourism (T& T) Industry GDP**

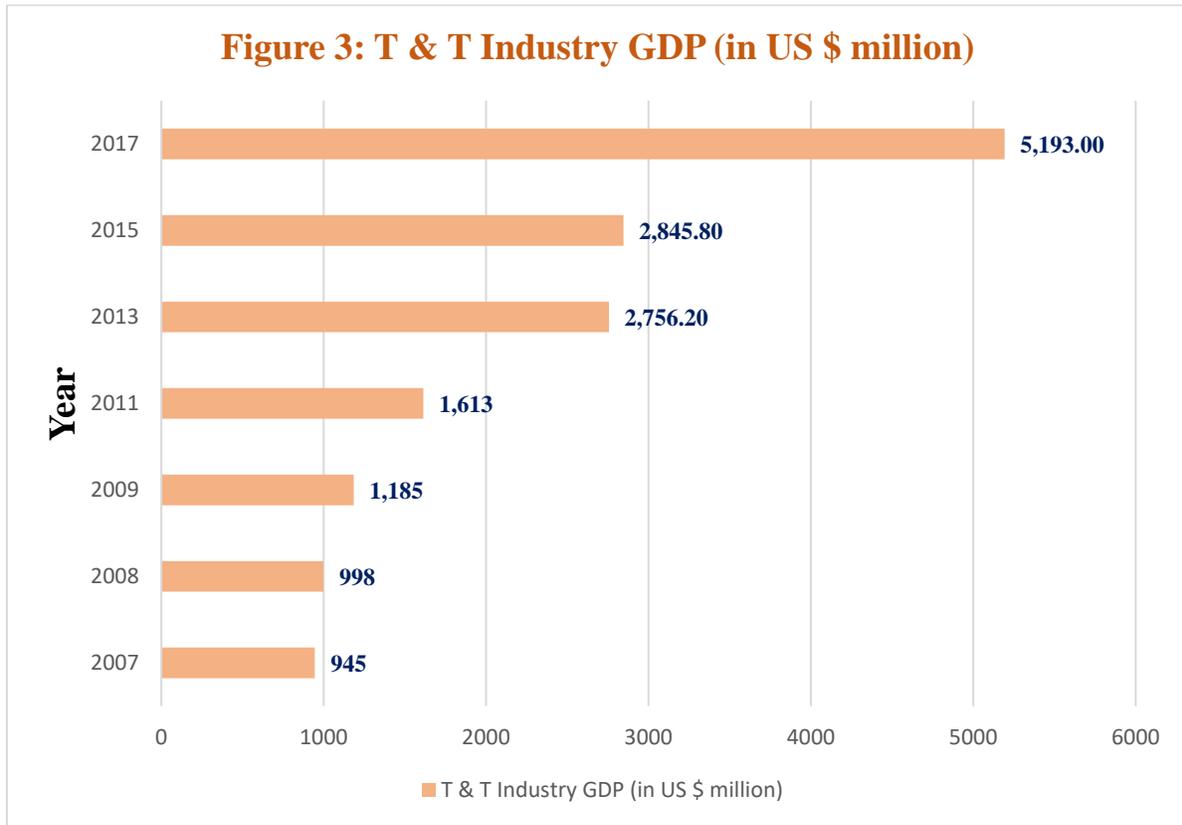
The term here is referred to as the GDP generated by the travel and tourism sector of Bangladesh. The tourism industry's total contribution to GDP is shown in terms of US \$ million in the following table:

**Table 4: Travel and Tourism (T&T) Industry GDP**

<b>Year</b>	<b>T &amp; T Industry GDP (in US \$ million)</b>
2007	945
2008	998
2009	1,185
2011	1,613
2013	2,756.2
2015	2,845.8
2017	5,193.0

**Source: TTCR 2007-2017, WEF**

The following bar diagram has been derived from the table above:



The figure above demonstrates that the tourism's contribution to GDP of Bangladesh increased as years went by. The least contribution was in 2007, i.e. US \$ 945 million and the most contribution was in 2017, i.e. US \$ 5,193.0 million. Thus, it can be observed that the tourism sector has a gradual positive impact in the GDP of the country.

#### 4.3.5 T & T Industry Employment

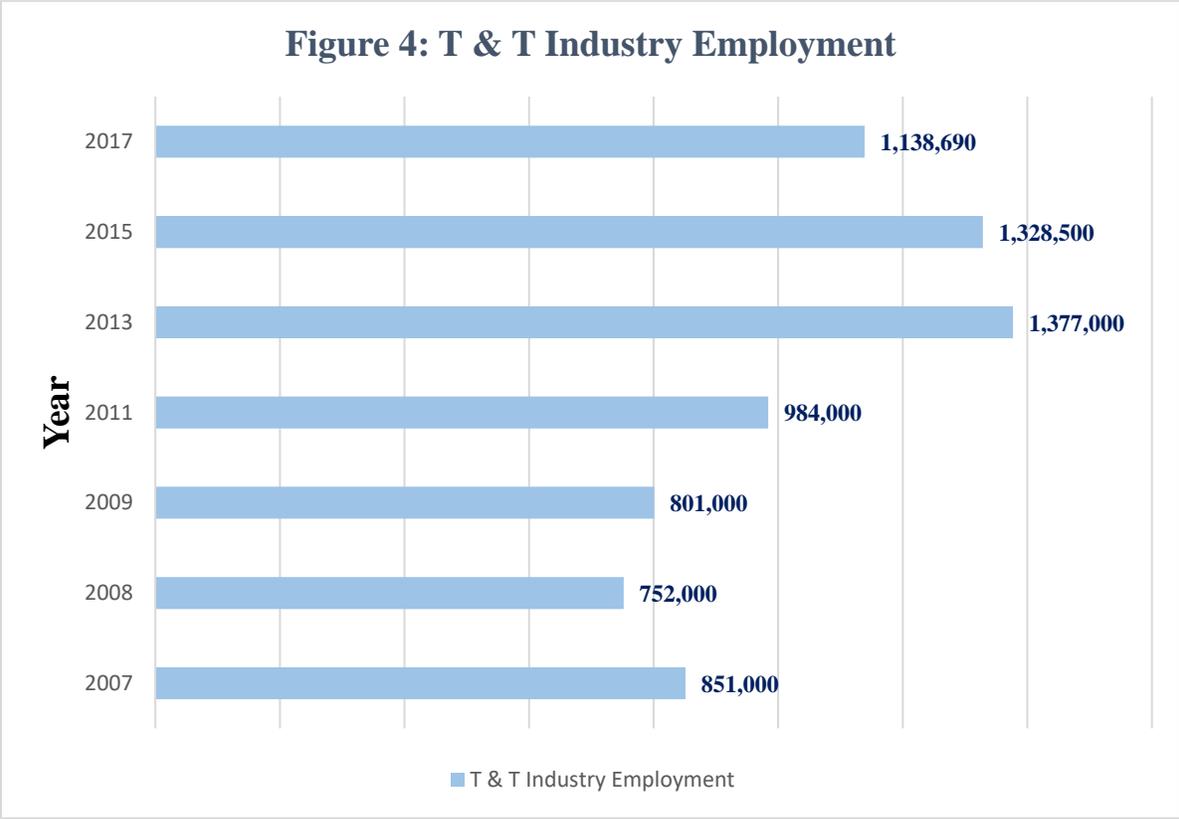
The T & T Industry Employment can be defined as the number of jobs created in the travel and tourism industry of Bangladesh. The quantity of jobs generated are shown (in thousands) in the table below:

**Table 5: T & T Industry Employment**

<b>Year</b>	<b>T &amp; T Industry Employment</b>
2007	851,000
2008	752,000
2009	801,000
2011	984,000
2013	1,377,000
2015	1,328,500
2017	1,138,690

**Source: TTCR 2007-2017, WEF**

From the table above, the trend of the industry employment produced by the tourism sector in Bangladesh is illustrated in the following bar chart:



According to Figure 4, the employment opportunities generated by the tourism sector fluctuated over the years. For instance, the minimum number of jobs was in 2008, i.e. 752,000. Then, it subsequently rose but it decreased again in 2017, i.e. 1,138,690. The most contribution occurred in 2013 involving 1,377,000 jobs. Therefore, it can be implied that there has been an unsteady growth in terms of the industry employment.

To sum up, the tourism sector of Bangladesh is rising upward in the context of its performance. Yet, the country has failed to play a steady role in the enhancement of its tourism industry. Special attention should be paid for the advancement of each of its contributing factor. Consequently, the tourism sector will be able to achieve favorable expansion at a significant level.

#### 4.4 Global Ranking of Bangladesh Tourism

In order to show a comparison of the tourism sector between other South Asian countries and Bangladesh, a table has been constructed below. It shows the global ranking as well as the performance indicators of tourism, only for the year 2017.

**Table 6: Bangladesh’s Tourism Global Ranking and Performance Indicators for 2017 relative to selected South Asian Countries**

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Rank (2017)</b>	<b>International tourist arrivals</b>	<b>International tourism inbound receipts</b>	<b>Average receipts per arrival</b>
Bangladesh	125	125,000	US \$148.4 million	US \$1,187.2
India	40	8,027,133	US \$21, 012.7 million	US \$2,617.7
Sri Lanka	64	1,798,380	US \$2,980.7 million	US \$1,657.4
Bhutan	78	155,121	US \$71.2 million	US \$458.7
Nepal	103	538,970	US \$481.3 million	US \$892.9
Pakistan	124	965,498	US \$317.0 million	US \$328.3

**Source: The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017, WEF**

In 2017, the global ranking of tourism has been made involving 136 countries. According to table 6, Bangladesh has ranked in 125<sup>th</sup> position whereas the neighboring countries of South Asia ranked higher in position. In terms of the performance indicators, India seemed to be in a much better position than Bangladesh. Also, the number of the foreign tourist arrivals is relatively the lowest in Bangladesh.

Thus, in the context of tourism growth, Bangladesh is lagging behind the neighboring countries. So, a high-powered board must be appointed by the government to regulate and improve this industry. The board will do so by comparing its policies with those of other South Asian countries which will help to find out the shortcomings of the overall tourism sector. This will ultimately assist in policy formulation and aid in boosting the sector of tourism by removing all the hindrances that is currently hampering its smooth growth.

**CHAPTER 05**  
**CONCLUSION &**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

## 5.1 Conclusion

From the above discussions, it is obvious that tourism is one of the lucrative sectors all over the world. Likewise, tourism in Bangladesh is an expanding industry which can act as a major contributor, in future, for the development of a balanced economy. Through its significant contributions in employment opportunities, foreign exchange earnings, and poverty alleviation, the country can continue to reap the benefits of tourism in the years ahead. Some of the businesses that grow alongside the tourism industry are airlines, hotel, restaurants, tour operators, travel agencies, and many others. All of these businesses together play a key role in the overall economic development of the country. The tourism growth will not only add to the GDP but also lead to the country's further economic opportunities, social cohesion and pride.

In this project paper, the policies associated with tourism sector of Bangladesh and the extent of its performance over the last decade have been examined in details. After doing so, one can come to the conclusion that Bangladesh has great potential to harness, both individually and jointly, for the enhancement of tourism.

Although, in case of tourism, Bangladesh has not yet reached the take-off stage, it can be hoped that this sector will add notably to the national economy in the future. In addition, the obstacles standing in the way of Bangladesh developing into a vibrant International tourist spot include inadequate and ineffective tourism policies, political instability, insecurity, low managerial skill and negligence of both private and public tourism authorities and organizations.

The profitability of this industry depends mostly on the collaboration of different players in this sector and their unique vision as well. Therefore, the tourism industry can attract more tourists and meet their expectations only through organized and structured development policies of tourism and the efficient management of the whole industry.

Bangladesh is likely to be able to boost its tourism competitiveness all over the world by taking a more holistic and innovative approach which would involve teamwork of all the tourism and travel agencies, businesses, ministries and government. The sustainability of the tourism industry also needs to be maintained so that it can serve the future tourists too.

Lastly, if proper tourism policies are not adopted, then the sector will lag behind in keeping up the positive contribution in the national economy of Bangladesh. So, it is hoped that the government of Bangladesh will learn its lessons from other tourist countries around the world and take vital measures to eradicate the obstacles standing in its way to be a world player in the tourist industry.

## **5.2 Contribution of the Research**

This project paper will aid in the enhancement of the theoretical knowledge regarding the tourism sector of Bangladesh. No research has been previously conducted or reviewed on the tourism policies of Bangladesh neither has the performance of tourism been analyzed. So, this paper will help in formulating plans for the development of the overall tourism sector of Bangladesh from the extent to which it has contributed so far to the national economy.

## **5.3 Limitations**

Though I have successfully prepared the study, there were a few issues that I had to deal with. They are as follows:

- Secondary data sources may not be adequate or entirely accurate.
- Many information was inaccessible in the websites of Bangladesh tourism, such as BPC, BTB, etc.
- All the statistical data were not available online, so required information was inadequate.
- WTTC publishes regional reports every two years, so the financial data had to be collected by those reports only.

## **5.4 Implications**

This project paper will not only help the tourism policy makers of Bangladesh but also assist the tourism practitioners and professionals in the practical field of tourism. Such as, tour operators, tourist guides, travel agencies, etc. who arrange different tour packages and work in the tourism industry, can use this research paper to study and improve their performance too.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

Tourism offers vast potentiality for the economic development of the country. So, the government should work on planning appropriate tourism policies for sustainable progress of the tourism sector. Such few strategies are suggested below for tourism sector's betterment so that the economy of Bangladesh can squeeze absolute benefit there from.

### **❖ Ensure good governance**

The government should make precise tourism policies which are simple and easy to implement. Decentralized and quick decision making processes should also be introduced in the tourism industry. The government should also make sure that the country has political stability because it is one of the significant preconditions to attract foreign visitors. At the same time, the tourists should be assured of safe and secure visits to each tourist destination of the country. Furthermore, the procedure for commencing new tourism business should be made simpler and easier. A businessman must be freed from taking approvals from numerous departments and different ministries. As a result, the private individuals will be encouraged to make huge investments in the field of tourism.

### **❖ Strengthen the authoritative bodies of tourism**

The government should regulate the activities of the travel agencies, all of which should be registered with the Tour Operators of Bangladesh (TOAB). Initiatives should be taken so that no travel agency can operate without TOAB's affiliation. Furthermore, Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) should be provided with sufficient fund, skilled tourism personnel and technical proficiency so that it can run its organization smoothly and effectively.

### **❖ Upgrade the tourism policies of Bangladesh**

The policies of tourism set by the government of Bangladesh earlier should be improved before implementation. For instance, the "Tourism Master Plan" which was developed by UNDP/ILO and later updated by WTO should be executed for sustaining growth in the tourism sector. Besides the master plan, integrated tourism planning should also be introduced to develop tourism in a comprehensive manner. This will improve the social, cultural, economic as well as environmental

aspects. In order to facilitate this policy implementation, the government must ensure a positive balance between the needs of the current and potential tourists.

#### ❖ **Increased co-operation**

This involves coherent partnership between the public authorities and private sectors for delivering commercially successful tourism products which would benefit everyone. Public Private and Community Partnership (PPCP) can be regarded as an efficient instrument for the socio-economic growth in different parts of Bangladesh through the development of tourism. More investments, along with required initiatives by the government, should be made for further development of the tourism infrastructure. Collaboration between private and public sectors should be escalated to offer better quality services to the visitors. As a result, such a partnership will not only be advantageous for the tourists but also for the local communities. The natural, social and cultural environments of the country will also have a sustained growth in the long run.

Moreover, it is high time that Bangladesh analyzes the policies of its neighboring countries in order to plan in such a way that it will ultimately develop the overall tourism industry and its performance. The following are the guidelines which have been extracted from the successful policies of few neighboring countries of Bangladesh:

#### ❖ **Develop Innovative Marketing**

Malaysia is one example of innovative promotional campaign. In order to achieve its target every year, the country uses extensive promotion along with various promotional mix. For instance, in 2014, Malaysia used “Visit Malaysia in 2014” as a campaign for promoting its tourism sector. Likewise, Bangladesh should focus on effective marketing as well. A single agency is not solely responsible for promoting Bangladesh as a tourism destination. Every organization associated with the development of this industry must work to promote the tourism sector. Few such organizations and parties are mentioned below:

- Tour operators, travel agencies.
- Owners of facilities, such as transportation, accommodation, food & service establishment, tourist attractions, etc.

- Media, and travel, recreation and tourism related agencies, government establishment, etc.
- Local government institutions, such as BPC, BTB.

Therefore, the government should prepare a proper guideline to plan, develop, advertise, and market its tourism sector. This will not only result in ample employment opportunities for the local citizens but also earn foreign currency for Bangladesh. So, the tourism sector will aid the government to decrease unemployment as well as act as a source of increased revenue collection.

#### ❖ **Formulation of tourism- friendly policy**

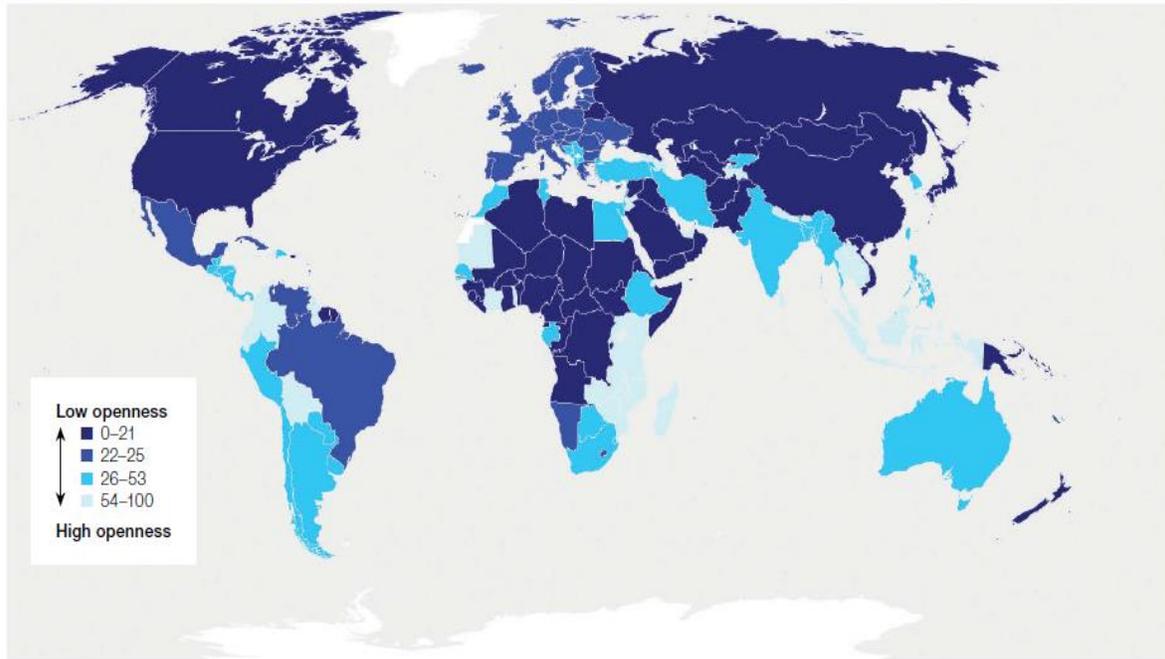
Various tourism- friendly policies are taken for its development by the neighboring countries like, Malaysia, Maldives, etc. The following important areas are spotlighted for improved co-operation in these countries:

- Visa facilitation and taxation.
- The development of convergent rules for the tourists.
- Enterprise protection.
- Modernization of the regulations of aviation.

All these factors, together, can be termed as “openness”. It indicates the extent to which a destination is facilitating tourism. According to the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017, Bangladesh (as shown in the following figure) is not as open as its neighboring countries which have a more developed tourism sector than ours. Such few countries are Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Maldives, etc.

The figure below has been derived from the “tourism visa openness index”. It illustrates the position of Bangladesh in terms of openness:

Tourism Visa Openness Index 2016



Source: UNWTO, 2017

**Figure 5: Tourism Visa Openness Index**

From the index above, it can be concluded that Bangladesh should proactively ease the process of visa and other procedures related to it to increase its visa openness. The officials of immigration need to be friendly too. This, in turn, will encourage more tourists to visit Bangladesh.

Furthermore, Bangladesh can also adopt visa liberalization which is viewed as an effective tool for enhanced competitiveness rather than a hindrance to development. It may also employ other methods, such as the improvement of the nature and longevity of the issued visas and reduction of the administrative burden in applying for them. These will finally boost the competitiveness of the country’s tourism sector and its growth will be positive too.

#### ❖ **Encourage foreign investment**

According to the report of 2014, it can be stated that different neighboring countries, such as Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, etc. are open to foreign direct investments. Seminars, exhibitions, meetings and invitation for investment are organized in other countries by the Embassies or High

Commission of these countries. Similarly, Bangladesh may also conduct such seminars, meetings, etc. with the aid of its Embassies and Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism for attracting new foreign investment in the industry of tourism.

The events should focus on the following objectives:

- Review opportunities open for foreign business in the tourism sector of the country.
- Discover the feasibility of collaboration with other countries in order to promote tourism between the two economies.
- Make information available on the country's new tourism developments and products of tourism.

The government should aim to achieve these objectives to expand the overall tourism industry of Bangladesh.

#### ❖ **Engage different representatives for enhanced acquaintance**

Representatives of UNWTO, journalists, photographers and foreign tour operators should be involved for the familiarization trip. For instance, Bangladesh may invite tourism experts from UNWTO, renowned journalists of news media, such as BBC, CNN, etc. Furthermore, the following should also be encouraged to take a tour of the country and give reviews:

- Travel writers of magazines such as, Wall Street, Times, etc.;
- Famous tour operators including TUI, Kuoni, etc.;
- And many such individuals from the targeted countries.

As a result, after they return to their own countries, these individuals would efficiently recommend our country to the readers, travel agencies as well as foreign tourists to visit Bangladesh.

#### ❖ **Enhance allocation of budget for tourism sector**

One of the many reasons behind the current successes of our neighboring countries lies in their generous allowance of budget for the development of tourism. After realizing the significance of budget allocation, India, for example, has distributed approximately 0.72% for their 10<sup>th</sup> plan while it was merely 0.16% from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> plans. Therefore, the government of Bangladesh should have a grip on reality by now and distribute the necessary sum for its tourism growth.

### ❖ **Preserve the tourism database and research**

The countries around Bangladesh are well aware of the market, tour operators, foreign governments, investors, potential stakeholders, constructors as well as prospects of their products of the tourism sector. They are very rich in terms of the statistics and data associated with their countries' tourism activities. The reason behind this is their constant maintenance of tourism database and study of the relevant data.

On the contrary, the tourism database of Bangladesh is not adequately maintained. Consequently, the lack of insufficient tourism statistics leads to the failure of a proper analysis which also cause complexities in creation of policy planning. Thus, in order to have clear tourism knowledge about the global trends, Bangladesh must keep track of all the social, political, economic data associated with tourism. Furthermore, it should also contribute immensely to the research and development sector of tourism as well as fund for conducting a thorough analysis on this sector.

### ❖ **Collaboration among the governmental departments**

All the relevant departments of the government of Bangladesh should work together to boost the process of tourism growth. From the analysis in chapter 4, it can be inferred that the National Tourism Council headed by the Prime Minister combines various ministries and departments related to tourism. Nonetheless, the council has failed to perform effectively in the development of the tourism industry.

So, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism should co-ordinate all the activities of the following ministries which have both direct and indirect involvement in the tourism sector of Bangladesh:

- Ministries of land, Chittagong hill tract affairs, environment & forest;
- Ministry of local government, rural development and co-operative;
- Ministries of different Affairs, such as, cultural, religious, home affairs;
- Ministries of communication, education, information;
- Ministries of foreign affairs, youth and sports;
- Ministries of planning, shipping and railways.

All these departments, along with the co-operation of the National Tourism Council, should play a vital role in expanding the tourism industry of Bangladesh or else all the piecemeal strategies

will go in vain. Therefore, all the individuals, including private and public sectors, associated with tourism should become active players in the endeavor to attain sustainable development in the tourism sector of Bangladesh.

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