

## **Problems and Prospects of Tourism Industry at Sylhet Region in Bangladesh**

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**Abstract:** *Tourism is not only a concept of enjoyment or travelling or passing the holidays, but also a development concept and it has now been placed a wider significance among the mass people, government and development planner in Bangladesh. Sylhet has a bright prospect to develop its tourism sectors as its treasures weather it is going to miserable situation in the absence of proper plan and realistic steps. The aim of the research is to investigate the problems and prospects to flourish the tourism sector in this region. Quantitative method has been used in this study to investigate the research problems based on survey method. The tourists are found very enthusiastic to get test of visiting different places and this study results some good indications for improving tourism sectors. However, in order to make Bangladesh a tourism friendly nation, a renovation of tourism policy, which should be in tune with the new national economic, social, environmental policies and trends and the government should monitor all actors and factors related to tourism sector in Bangladesh.*

**Key Words:** *Tourism, Problem, Prospect, Sylhet Region, Peoples Satisfaction*

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### **I. Introduction**

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries as well as the major source of foreign exchange earnings and employment for many developing countries. It is a leisure activity which involves a discretionary use of time and money. Recreation is often the main purpose for participation in tourism (Ghosh, 2001) either domestic or international. In domestic tourism, people move within their own country whereas in international tourism, the barriers exist in travelling destinations beyond national boundaries (Zulfikar, 1998) where both has incoming and outgoing implications on a country's balance of payments. Today, tourism is not only a concept of enjoyment or travelling or passing the holidays, but also a means of development for developed, developing and underdeveloped countries. It affects the economy of both the source and host countries, in some cases it is of vital importance. Its importance was recognized in the Manila Declaration on World Tourism of 1980 as declared "an activity essential to the life of nations because of its direct effects on the social, cultural, educational, and economic sectors of national societies and on their international relations" (Manila Declaration on World Tourism 1980). Bangladesh has an attractive natural environment and many historical-cultural places, which can be potentially utilized for the development of tourism. The country is bestowed with beautiful coasts and beaches, archeological sites, historical and religious places, hills and islands, forests and jungles and attractive countryside with innumerable water bodies and green fields of agriculture (Rahman *et al* 2010). That is why, the country is called 'blessed with natural beauty', which attracts the tourists. It has beautiful beaches including the longest beach in the world and beautiful heritage and historical relics. To make the best use of the natural gifts, the country has developed facilities of modern hotels, motels, rest houses, youth inns and restaurants, modern modes of communication, that are available at almost all tourist sites. The concept of tourism has now placed a wider significance among the mass people, government and development planner in Bangladesh. Beyond Cox's Bazar and Sundarbans, Sylhet is in the third position of the ladder of priority of tourism sector in Bangladesh. These rich natural and cultural attractions are valuable ingredients to promote tourism in the country (Rahman *et al* 2010). Tourism industry in Bangladesh is faced with many problems, such as lack of good transportation and communication system, lack of well planned accommodation, food, entertainment and other services to satisfy diverse categories of tourists. The issue of security of the tourists of both domestic and foreign origins is also very important for the development of tourism in Bangladesh (Rahman *et al*, 2010).

### **II. Statement of The Problem**

Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism plays an important role for the development of tourism in Bangladesh (Rahman *et al* 2010). Historically, Bangladesh has been an attractive destination for various categories of tourists. But at present, its position is not significant in terms of international tourism market (Islam, 2009).

In Bangladesh, tourism has not achieved the optimal level of development and status. Tourism business in Bangladesh, as measured by yearly tourist arrivals was 1 million in 2004 which constitutes about 0.125 per cent of world total of over 800 million. For a long time, the Governments of Bangladesh never gave adequate attention to the development of tourism sector. Since the early 1990s, however, tourism became recognized as an important sector in Bangladesh. In 2004, tourism contributed about 0.2 per cent of GDP of the economy. In Bangladesh, 1 in every 19 jobs is generated by the sector. The Government of Bangladesh first recognized tourism as an important industry with the framing of a National Tourism Policy in 1992. In 1999, tourism was declared as a thrust sector in Bangladesh (Government of Bangladesh, 2005). But there is no effective national tourism plan to guide the entrepreneurs and investors. Besides, there is serious lack of management in this sector at national, regional and local levels though economic benefits by tourism is seen as a way to reduce the level of dependence of local communities on natural resources.

Tourism brings in large amounts of income into a local economy in the form of payment for goods and services needed by tourists, accounting for 30% of the world's trade of services, and 6% of overall exports of goods and services. It also creates opportunities for employment in the service sector of the economy associated with tourism (UNWTO: 1995). The service industries which benefited from tourism include transportation services; such as airlines, cruise ships, and taxicabs; hospitality services; such as accommodations, including hotels and resorts; and entertainment venues; such as amusement parks, casinos, shopping malls, music venues, and theatres.

Sylhet region is growing faster in tourism industry in Bangladesh. It is located in the north-eastern part of Bangladesh, is well known for its tea gardens, lush tropical forests, different tribal communities, natural water falls, crystal clear water lakes bordered by ever green hills, *haors*, shrine of Hazrat Shahjala (R.) and Hazarat Shahparan (R.), and the region however is currently known for its business boom-being one of the richest regions in Bangladesh. This region is in an apex position in the country for remittance flow from the Europe, America and Middle East. Nestled in the picturesque Surma Valley amidst scenic tea plantations and lush green tropical forests, greater Sylhet is a prime attraction for all tourists visiting Bangladesh. Sylhet thus became a region of saints, shrines and daring but virile people. Its rich potentialities became easily attractive and the 18th century Englishmen made their fortune in tea plantation. About 80 km. from Sylhet town connected by roads and rail. ; Srimangal, which is known as the tea capital of Bangladesh, is the actual tea center of the area.

In nature, greater Sylhet is adorned with mighty rivers like Surma, Kushiara, Khwui, Monu, and Piang; hills and mountains of Moulvibazar, Jaflong, and Volagonj; waterfalls like Madhabkunda, Porikunda and Hamham; distinguished Lawacherra national park (largest rain forest of Asia with more than 500 rare species like gibbons, owls, leopard, python); spacious tea estates and gardens of Srimongal, Hobigonj, and Sylhet (Shawon, 2013). Besides, a good number of indigenous tribes (e.g. Monipuri, Khasi) live in different hilly areas of Sylhet who have different lifestyles, colorful occupations, long history and enriched culture as well. Historically Sylhet holds glorious heritage of Hazrat Shahjalal (R), Shahporan (R), and their companions who have enlightened this region with the light of Islam about 800 years ago. Their shrines are, with the increasing trend (Islam, 2010). The conventional focus on the tourist requires this promising industry where it should be a matter of great opportunity to develop this sector. Tourism sector in Sylhet region would be the best sector for the investors to make better profit as well as to flourish tourism business in this region. The economic and societal significance of tourism in Sylhet region emphasize the need to develop a more rigorous understanding of the evolving tourism industry as well as to know how it influences processes of local economic development. For this reason, this study is very important to examine the problems of the tourism sector and then to sort out its potentiality as a guideline for the development of tourism in Sylhet region.

This sector has also educational significance. The people of the Sylhet region can learn many things by sharing knowledge with tourists who come from different national and international sources. It also creates opportunities of networking for investment and business development purposes.

However, quality and quantity of research works in our country on this sector is very poor. In this situation, as a small but pleasant part of the nation, tourism sector of Sylhet region has not gained much attention in research as well as in actual development. In fact, Sylhet has a bright prospect to develop its tourism sectors as its treasures whether it is going to be a worrying situation in absence of proper plan and realistic steps. In this study, problems of the tourism sector of Sylhet region would be investigated and after this with the empirical experiences, solutions would be provided. Tourism would increase the mobilization of economic condition which will expand the scope of employment in this area. Thus, another potential area of income will be established and it will play a tremendous contribution in our national economy. If the problems can be solved and congenial situation for tourism in Sylhet area are established, it would attract the foreign visitors fabulously because this area is well known for dealings with foreigners. Thus, our socio-Economic condition and image will be boost up. Furthermore, this study would play a vital role to develop the tourism sector of Sylhet and through this it will contribute to the national development process of Bangladesh.

This research may achieve general academic goals such a development of tourism, learning and identification of Sylhet region as a tourist place in tourism related further study. In addition, this study may develop

theoretical knowledge of tourism industry as a discourse resource. Moreover, it is a pragmatic issue that could lead further research to understand the actors and factors of success of tourism in Sylhet region. This project is studying what and how the factors influence people to visit and put people together in a particular area and what are the impact of their visiting and moving, and the problems regarding this while visiting. By studying these things, this project is framed to endow with better informed guidelines about how the thing should be put together for improvement of tourism in Sylhet region.

The aim of this research is to investigate the problems based on its nature and dimensions related to tourism sector in Sylhet region and what potentials are inherited to be developed and to prescribe necessary suggestions for reforms of the tourism sector to make it as a centre of tourism industry in Bangladesh.

### **III. Review of The Relevant Literature**

There is a saying that tourism is in fact constituted of 6 'S' i.e. snow, sun, sands, sea, sex and self-actualization (Chowdhury, 2009) where Bangladesh is lacked with the absence of all 'S'. However, Almighty has blessed Bangladesh with bounty of nature. Based on natural bounty Bangladesh is endowed with various tourist attractions. Tourism is one of the most important and fastest growing industries in the world. Bangladesh also gives priority in this sector where around one in 30 of the working populations are involved in an activity that supports tourism. The Government of Bangladesh formulated a National Tourism Policy in February 1992 to attract foreign private investments in this sector. Unfortunately, foreign private investments in this sector are not in satisfying level where domestic and government investment is also unsatisfactory. There are a lot of problems exist behind this situation which have been come up from different studies. These problems are image problem, misconception about tourism by the policy makers, lack of in-depth knowledge, high cost of accommodation and shortage of international standard accommodation facilities, lack of far-sightedness and sincerity on the part of the government, non-allocation of fund for the tourism in national budget, lack of proper marketing strategy and initiative, complicated visa and immigration formalities, lack of proper infrastructure and superstructure to facilitate tourism activities in the country, lack of motivation etc. These problems are common for all areas in Bangladesh. In the case of tourism in Sylhet, the reality may differ from the country case.

Bangladesh, as a vacation destination, has many facets. It is endowed with almost all the natural potentials that attract tourists (Shahid, 2004). These include: Cox's Bazaar, the longest unbroken clean and sandy beach in the world; Sundarbans, the home of the majestic Royal Bengal tigers; Dhaka, the capital known as the city of mosques and Muslim; Rangamati, the heart of the panoramic lake district; Sylhet, land of fascinating hills and tea gardens; Chittagong, the largest port city of the country and known as the city of shrines; Mainamati, Mahasthangarh and Paharpur, archaeological treasures of Hindu and Buddhist rule in the country from 300 BC to 1200 AD (Hossain and Hossain, 2002). Above all, reverie beauty, colourful tribal culture and simple village life are the main factors for attracting visitors (Hasan, 2005). These kind of things are need to be explored by the tourism marketing promotion and need to formulate tourism marketing strategic plan either by the government organization (public sector) or the private sectors.

The world thinks of Bangladesh as poor, flood-ravaged, and more of a disaster zone than a travel destination. In some respects, the world is right but hidden behind these images, Bangladesh is a country with a rich history, a strange beauty, and some interesting attractions but it is not, however, a destination for everyone (Hossain, 2006). Bangladesh is a country with rich traditions, natural beauty, beaches, forests, lakes, hills, wild lives, archaeological attractions, monuments, handicrafts, sanctuaries, religious festivals, cultural heritage, tribal culture and architecture, incredible greenery, mighty rivers and attractive river cruises, sunny beaches, colourful tribal life and attractive cultural functions that offer great tourist attractions (Haque, 2005; Hossain and Nazmin, 2006). Tourism involves travelling for pleasure, enjoy and education. It is also a business of attracting tourists and providing for their accommodation and entertainment. In many countries, tourism is an industry for earning revenue and foreign exchange (Hossain, 2007). The many businesses that grow concurrently with the development of tourism include airlines, shipping, hotels and restaurants, finance companies, tour operators, travel agents, car rental firms, caterers and retail establishments and together, they contribute significantly to the overall development of a country's economy and to its cultural diversification and adaptation (Islam, 2009).

### **IV. Research Methodology**

This research has been conducted based on explanatory and descriptive design. The explanatory research has been used because in question of tourism problems and prospects, study must lead to explain in details the phenomena of tourism that is not enough simply to describe. And this design summarizes in this study, the current state of tourism industry. Descriptive research design has been followed to provide information concerning the current status of the tourism industry and to describe "what problems and prospects exists" with reference to contemporary dimensions and quantity for ensuring successful tourism industry in Sylhet region.

Deductive reasoning strategy has been followed in this study because the study started with a very broad spectrum of problem of tourism and make the way down to measures the potentiality of tourism in Sylhet region, and then leads to detect pattern of existing problems and reliable outcomes from field data, formulate some tentative suggestions; and finally ends up developing some general conclusion.

Considering the research problems and stated study aims that call for quantitative method and Its Variables of this study project are measured and yield numeric data that are analyzed statistically. Quantitative data of this study have the potential to provide measurable evidence regarding different obstacles at the time of tourist visiting or related to visiting the areas of Sylhet region, to help to establish (probable) cause and effect of problems of tourism in this region.

A survey on tourists who are from outside of Sylhet division was undertaken to identify their expectations and to share their experiences. Structured questionnaires were used to collect attitudinal and socio-demographic data. The tourists, local stakeholders, local community people are the research participants of this study. The advantage of using secondary data is the freedom from arbitration “by the interaction between the researcher and researched” (Jennings, 2001). Secondary data related to the research questions have been gathered from different books, journals, documentaries, newspapers, internet etc. Secondary data have been analyzed from the analysis of an existing dataset. For secondary data both qualitative (descriptive) or quantitative (numerical) tools has been used in this study. Public records, census data, newspapers and journals, books are consulted. On the other hand, surveys and statistics from the public records have been followed as a source of quantitative (numerical) secondary data. The reputation of organizations which are responsible for publishing these data has been strictly considered for the reliability and validity of such data. In this study 120 respondents had been selected through accidental sampling from different tourist spots in Sylhet region.

## V. Data Presentation And Analysis

**Table 5.1: Age of the respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
15-20	17	14.17
21-30	68	56.67
31-40	20	16.67
41-50	14	11.67
50+	1	0.83

Table 5.1 of shows that out of 120 respondents, the age of majority number of respondents (56.67%) was between 21-30 years. Only 14.17% of the respondents fall on the age range 15 to 20 years while rest of the respondents’ (nearly 29%) age is more than 30 years.

**Table 5.2: Sex of the respondents**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	99	82.5
Female	21	17.5

According to the figure 5.2, the majority number of respondents were male (82%), whereas only a bare minimum number of respondents were female (18%).

**Table 5.3: Occupation of the respondents**

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Government Official	12	10
Business	26	21.67
Student	59	49.17
Others	23	19.17

In this study, nearly half of the respondents were students (49%) while a significant number (22%) of respondents was businessmen and Government officials (19%).

**Table 5.4: Level of education**

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Basic Literate	7	5.83
Primary	14	11.67
SSC	11	9.17
HSC	25	20.83
Graduate	32	26.67
Post-graduate	31	25.83

qAccording to the table (figure) 5.4, more than half of the respondents have minimum graduation degree where graduate and post-graduate were 26.67% and 25.83% respectively. 20.83% respondents' educational qualifications were HSC level, whereas rest of the respondents has minimum basic and primary education.

**Table 5.5: Residents of respondents**

Residents of respondents	Frequency
Local (Who lives within Sylhet division)	76
Non-Local (Who lives outside Sylhet division)	44

Table 5.5 refers that majority number of tourists are local of Sylhet region (63%), where only 37% tourists from outside of the Sylhet have visited the tourist spots in Sylhet region.

**Table 5.6: Known tourist spots in Sylhet**

Number of Tourist Spots	Number of Tourist Know	Percentage
3 and less then	19	15.83
4 to 6	47	39.16
6 to 8	51	42.50
More then 8	3	2.50

It appears from the table 5.6 that the majority of the respondents (42.50%) were informed about 6 to 8 different attractive tourist spots of Sylhet. Besides that, 4 to 6 different spots were known by 39.16% of the respondents and less than 3 spots were known by the 15.83% of the respondents.

**Table 5.7: Number of Visited Tourist Spots in Sylhet**

Number of Visited Tourist Spots	Frequency	Percentage
Less then 3	41	34.16
4 to 6	58	48.33
6 to 8	20	16.66
More then 8	1	0.833

It's obvious from the field data that the majority of the respondents (48.33%) visited 4 to 6 different places in Sylhet region and 34.16% of the respondents were visited less than 3 different places in this region. A very few of the respondents (16.66%) was found visited 6 to 8 different places. A small portion of the respondents were found visited more than 8 different places in Sylhet region (Table 5.7).

**Table 5.8: Knowing about tourist Spots of Sylhet**

Information about tourist Spots	Frequency
Government Sources/Websites	14
Daily News papers/Magazine	26
Friends & Family	89
Social Media	12
Others/Word of Mouth	62

Most of the respondents (44%) tell that they have got information about the tourist spots in Sylhet through their friends and family members, while 30% respondents gave answer in favor of government sources. News papers and social media have little contribution regarding this matter.

**Table 5.9: Main Reason for visiting a spots**

Reasons of Visiting Spots	1	2	3	4
Sightseeing	Visits of Tourist Attractions (96%)	History (37%)	'Archeological Relics, (26%)	Cultural (54%)
Relaxation	Recreation (83%)	Stay in the Countryside (11%)	Walks (5%)	Removing Job Stress (56%)
Health	Rehabilitation (17%)	Healing (0%)	Spa (0%)	Removing Depression (34%)
Work	Business travel (33%)	Training (1%)	Conference (0%)	Tour Guide (0%)
Fun	Social Activities with Friends (72%)	Night life (7%)	Academic Life (64%)	

The table 5.9 shows five different reasons including sub-reasons of visiting a place. As the reason of 'Sightseeing', 96% of the respondents was attracted by the place and 37% of the respondent by the 'History' to know, and 26% of the respondents was came to visit 'Archeological Relics, 54%. As a part of 'Relaxation', 83% of the respondents was found came to visit for 'Recreation; and 11% of the respondents was for 'Stay in

countryside' and 5% of the respondents was for 'walks' and 56% of the respondents was for 'Removing fob stress'. As a part of 'Health', 17% of the respondents was found for 'Rehabilitation', 34% of the respondents was for 'Removing depression'. As a part of work, 33% of the visitors came for business and only 1% of the respondents was found for 'Training. As a part of most common reason, 'Fun', 72% of the respondents was found for 'Social Activities' with friends and 64% of the respondents was found came for 'Academic Life' and surprisingly 7.0% of the respondent came for enjoying 'Night Life'.

**Table 5.10: Frequency of Traveling (In a Year)**

Freq. of Traveling (In a Year)	Number of tourist	Percentage
Less than 4	71	59.17
4 to 6	18	15.00
6 to 8	12	10.00
More then 8	19	15.83

The table 5.10 shows that tourists traveled in different tourist spots, where 59.16% of the respondents were found visited less than 4 different places in Sylhet region. More than 8 places were visited by only 15.83% of the tourists in Sylhet. There is a significant number of tourist visited more than 4 places but less than 7 places. Only 10% of the tourists were found visited 6 to 8 places in Sylhet region.

**Table 5.11: Causes of selecting Sylhet as tourist place**

Causes of selecting Sylhet as tourist place	Percentage (out of 100%)
Sylhet has many beautiful places and shrine of Religious leader	73
Sylhet is near than other Places	26
Sylhet is more secure then other Places	35
Transportation is better other Places	56
Others	12

It appears from the table 5.11 that, there are many regions to visit Sylhet. Some 73% of the respondents was found visiting to get flavor of beauty, 26% of the respondents was visiting due to closeness of to them, 35% of the respondents was feeling secured, 56% was found satisfied with transport system. Only 12% of the respondents could not specify the reasons what was listed to know.

**Table 5.12: Frequency of Traveling Sylhet (In a Year)**

Freq. of Traveling Sylhet (In a Year)	Number of tourist (these data are in frequency mode)
less than 4	62
4 to 6	28
6 to 8	21
More then 8	9

The majority (62%) of the tourists was found visited Sylhet more than once but less than four times. Besides, 28% respondents were found visited Sylhet 4 to 6 times and 21% of the respondents was found visit Sylhet 6 to 8 times. Very few of the respondents (9%) were found visited Sylhet more than 8 times in Sylhet region in a year.

**Table 5.13: Types of Transportation**

Types of Transportation	Frequency	Percentage
Roads	83	69.17
Airways	0	0.00
Railways	15	12.50
Both roads & Railways	17	14.17
Others	5	4.17

The data table 13 shows that majority (69%) of the respondents was used to coming Sylhet by road as convenient. Both roads and railway was the second most (14.00%) using ways to visit Sylhet by the tourist and a very few portion of the tourist was found common through other means.

**Table 5.14: Difficulties during Visiting**

Facing Difficulties During Visiting	Frequency	percentage
Yes	69	57.5
No	49	40.83333333
Not Given	2	1.666666667

It appears from the table 5.14 that 57.5% of the tourists faces difficulties during visiting in Sylhet at some points on the other hand, 40.83% of the respondents was found visiting Sylhet area without any harassment or any difficulty. A significant portion of the respondents did not response with the issue of difficulties.

**Table 5.15: Rating the Facilities of Tourist Spots:**

Types of Response	Range & availability of food facilities	Availability of Public Transportation	Comfortable Accommodation	Attitudes of Local People	Transport infrastructure	Opportunities for entertainment
Very Good	22	18	1	13	22	21
Rather Good	71	57	61	31	24	52
Rather Poor	4	22	14	25	23	15
Very Poor	2	3	20	17	31	12
I cannot Judge	1	0	4	14	0	0
<b>Total Percentage</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100

According to Table-5.15, tourist spots were rated with different aspect from the view of the visitors where ‘Rather Good’ was the view of the majority response as 71 % for ‘Range and availability of food facilities’, 57% for ‘Availability of public transport’, 61% for ‘Comfortable accommodation’, 31% for ‘Attitude of local people’ and 52% for ‘Entertainment opportunities’. But the majority 31% of the respondents was found noticed ‘Very Poor’ transport system in this area. However, a significant number of respondents was found could not judge what could they noticed here. .

**Table 5.16: Level of satisfaction**

Level of Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Very High	14	11.67
High	56	46.67
Medium	27	22.50
Low	13	10.83
Very Low	10	8.33

Table 5.16 shows the level of satisfaction is very high among the tourists. Among the respondents, the majority’s (46.67%) satisfaction level was found ‘High’ and 11.67% was found ‘Very High’. Moderate level of satisfaction was found among the 22.5% of the respondents. In contrary, 10.83% and 8.33% of the respondents’ satisfaction level were found ‘Low’ and ‘Very Low’.

**Table 5.17: Potential Benefits in Bangladesh**

Types of Response	Employment	Economic diversification	Improvements of Infrastructure	Social Benefits	Environmental benefits	Development of Health Care Service	Residential Development
Yes	42	32	83	59	44	21	62
No	26	28	13	33	51	52	24
Partially	29	21	4	4	3	16	5
I cannot Judge	3	19	0	4	2	11	9
<b>Total Percentage</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Tourism industry offers and generates various sorts of facilities. From the field data table 5.17 shows that the facilities were found positive. Where 42% of the respondents opined that ‘Employment potentiality’ would be increased, 32% of the respondents was answered for ‘Economic Diversification’, 83% of the respondents noticed ‘Improvements of Infrastructure’ 59% of the respondents noticed ‘Social benefit’ and 62% of the respondents noticed ‘residential benefit’ as potential outcomes of tourism industry. But majority 51% of the respondent noticed tourism may destroy the soundness of natural environment and 52% of the respondent was found not favor of improvement of health care facilities as an outcome of improved tourism industry.

**Table 5.18: Sylhet Compare to other tourist places**

Sylhet Compare to other tourist places	Frequency	Percentage
Very Good	29	24.17
Good	41	34.17
Similar	36	30.00
Bad	10	8.33
Very Bad	4	3.33

From the field data it is found that 24.17% of the respondents were agreed with this statement that ‘Sylhet is ‘Very good’ for tourism compare to other areas’ and 34% of the respondents responded that Sylhet is just ‘Good’. Another 30% of the respondents considered it as similar as other tourist places. On the other hand, Sylhet region noticed as ‘Bad’ for tourism by 8.33% of the respondents and ‘Very bad’ judged by 3.33% of the respondents.

**Table 5.19: Rating the measure to be taken based on necessity**

Types of Response	Realistic Plan/Policy	Allocation of Money	Special Security Post	Tourism-related Infrastructure	Tourism Investment	Arrange tourism related tradeshows	Marketing initiatives
Very Urgently	70	57	82	16	21	19	32
Immediately	23	31	12	67	68	26	35
Could be Later But Must	7	12	6	15	5	45	13
Positive But not Must	0	0	0	2	6	10	20
No Need	0	0	0	0		0	0
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5.19 shows the rating about what measure could be taken and it broken down into five different categories, some measures were identified as very urgent by the visitors. These are as ‘Realistic Plan/Policy’ (70%), ‘Allocation of money’ (57%), ‘Special security force’ (82%), ‘Infrastructural Development’ (16%), ‘Investment’ (21%), ‘Arranging trade show’ (19%) and ‘Marketing initiatives’ (32%). Immediate measure must be taken in ‘Infrastructural development sectors’ and ‘Tourism investment’ as responded by 67% and 68% of the respondents respectively. The majority (45%) of the respondents advocated that ‘Tourism related trade show’ could be organized later but must be taken for improvement of tourism in Sylhet region.

**Table 5.20: Suggestion for Improvement of tourism in Sylhet**

Suggestions	‘Yes’ Percentage
Taking Realistic policy	81
Ensuring Tourists’ Security	92
Developing Infrastructure	67
Others Issues	31

According to table 5.20, several suggestions were approached from the visitors. Security was the first to the visitors as 92% of the respondents went for it. Then they kept emphasis on a realistic plan and policy (81.0%) and the infrastructural development (67.0%) is found as third important suggestion and then they noticed other facilities what usually part of visiting a place.

## VI. Findings And Discussion

It has been obvious from the observation that least amount of female visit tourist spots in Sylhet region in comparison with male tourists. Majority number of the tourists comes to Sylhet region are students. Highly educated people have frequently visited the tourist spots in Sylhet region. It is found from the observation that most of the visitors have information about different attractive places in Sylhet region mostly from friends and relatives and words of peoples. In this regard, Government sources are not working enough to flourish the tourist spots in Sylhet.

Sylhet region has different attractive places to visit as the tourists are very keen to get test of visiting these places. It’s found more than four different places were easily coverable to visit at a time. The reason for visiting any place must have some particular facts and logical ground otherwise people may not spend their time and money behind it. A place must have different attraction to different sorts of people as many mind has many views and expectations. Sightseeing, Relaxation, Health, Work, and Fun were identified as reasons of visiting. were people were found vary affirmation to on these ground. Although at some points, the reasons were varied but as a whole tourists suggested that Sylhet region has a great potentiality of expanding tourism as it has ability to fulfill the purpose of the tourists.

From the observation it is understood that travelling places is not yet popular to the tourist and obviously tourist visiting places is found limited in a range of a few only. It’s not a positive syndrome found to extend the spaces of tourism in Sylhet region due to limited number of availability to the visitors.

Reason of visiting a place may have several direct or indirect factors but most of the tourists found in Sylhet came for visiting the shrines of religious saints simultaneously visiting beautiful places near in Sylhet as well.

Tourists were found, from the observation, very enthusiastic for frequent visiting Sylhet. The majority part of the respondents visits Sylhet area more than once in every year. It's a great sign to boost up this trend of visiting and their eagerness as well.

Roads and railway to the tourists were found very popular as a means of communication and traveling to Sylhet. But it's a matter of surprise that airways were not found suitable to the tourist. Tourists can be increased at any places if the attractive resources are available. In spite of having every resource in a place, tourists may not be increased at some points because of harassment, hassle and difficulties during visiting. Sylhet region has natural and other recourses but needs to ensure more congenial surroundings to the visitors to boost up potentiality of tourism.

This study results some good indications for improving tourism in this region. People who are visiting Sylhet were not dissatisfied with the facilities but not found fully satisfied. Tourist facilities are rather good in this area but in some cases they are not satisfied. However, tourism industry must have some unique facilities what offered through organized ways. Professional body or those who are involve in same profession could be promoted thus to be developed professional tourism management sector. Professional management refers to administering the organization where the top management positions and even the lower management position are held by professional people whose who have professional qualifications, administrative and technical skills and also the good amount of experience in managing business affairs (Islam, F.2015). So, at this point, facilities are not up to the mark and sometimes found worse. Satisfaction of tourist is very important for improvement of tourism in a large extend. The study found that most of the tourists were satisfied.

Tourism industry carries both positive and negative aspects if it is established at any area. From positive aspects, it is revealed that if the tourism industry being boosted various aspects of development will be available in Sylhet region such as employment opportunities would be expanded, diversification in earning would be visible, infrastructure would be developed, people from different area will have chance to interact with each other and with the local people thus it would improve social culture, and at last housing and accommodation facilities will be improved to arrange safe staying for the tourists. On the other hand the majority of the respondents don't think tourism could bring any positive thing for natural environment and they were in hesitation that it would destroy our natural settings. Moreover, they are not confirmed that tourism industry will improve healthcare service facilities in this area.

The empirical data shown that as a tourist attraction, the potentiality of Sylhet region is satisfactory as the majority of the visitors agreed with this view. At some point it's similar to other areas. But however, it small or big, the negative image for any place is harmful for sustainability for longer period of time. So, it is a matter of concern and wary about the bad image of Sylhet region.

In order to make an outward appearance of Sylhet as a tourist attraction, several measures must be ensured with very urgency like a realistic plan and policy for encouraging tourism, allocation of money for the development of this sector and a special force for a particular period of time for ensuring security and safety of visitors. However, investments in tourism and development of infrastructure have to be ensured immediately as these will led the expansion of tourism.

## **VII. Conclusion And Recommendation**

The significance of tourism is viewed from many angles like economic, social, cultural, political, etc. Tourism is now the fastest growing and single largest industry in the world. The industry has attained impressive growth world-wide in terms of tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earnings which has led the ever increasing competition among the destination countries and gained top priority in most of the destination countries. Tourism in Bangladesh is a slowly developing foreign currency earner. The country has much to attract international and domestic tourists. Bangladesh's tourist attractions include archaeological sites, historical mosques and monuments, resorts, beaches, picnic spots, forests and tribal people, wildlife of various species. Bangladesh offers ample opportunities to tourists for angling, water skiing, river cruising, hiking, rowing, yachting, sea bathing as well as bringing one in close touch with pristine nature. Lonely Planet ranked Bangladesh as the best value destination for the year 2011 (Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2011, Lonely Planet, 2011, ISBN 978-1-74220-090-3). It should be noted that 'development of tourism industry does not mean only an increase in earning of foreign currency from this sector'. Rather, the number of foreign tourists that arrive to a particular country is taken as the yardstick worldwide for measuring the development level of tourism judged by any standard. Therefore, it is essential to rightly recognize and explore the potentials of this industry in Bangladesh immediately. Bangladesh needs to establish domestic tourism which is socially and psychologically acceptable, environmentally and ecologically sustainable, and economically viable. The benefits that are received from tourism should be fairly distributed, and then only will tourism be participatory, and, thus, the rights of local residents will be properly recognized, and tourism will be responsible and sustainable. Finally, as tourism development involves multi-dimensional activities, visionary leadership at national, regional and local levels is of utmost necessity. It is hoped that Bangladesh will quickly move forward to exploit the potentials of

tourism in favor of its national development. To make Bangladesh a tourism friendly nation following recommendations must be implemented:

- a. Plan to make a renovation of tourism policy, which should be in tune with the new national economic, social, environmental policies and trends. The government has to play a key role for preparation of policy guideline for planning and development, advertising, regulation and marketing of tourism sector, because it provides ample employment opportunities to the citizen and earns foreign currency for the country. It will also help government to solve unemployment problem and as well as act as source of revenue collection.
- b. The government should be monitoring the activities of travel agencies which are involved in tour operations. Bangladesh tourism faces many problems including areas of marketing, management, infrastructure, policy, safety, regulation and image. All problems are not unique and similar to the reality of worldwide tourism destinations. Solutions should be found out considering every aspect carefully and valuable suggestions should be provided based on experience, opinion of experts and relevant knowledge of others. The new policy should recognize the roles of both the public sector and the private sector in the development of tourism.
- c. The development of tourist facilities should be taken up in a planned manner at government and non-government levels. Tourism should be integrated with all the national events, either cultural or religious and it should be prepared more dependable and attractive publicity items, including tour itinerary, for distribution.
- d. Local community should be properly educated to preserve their natural resources and tourist spots should be calm, untouched but as well as it should have fun, exciting, relaxing, educative, informative and accurate information of tourist spot should be delivered to the tourists.

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