

Perspective of Religious and Spiritual Tourism in Bangladesh

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In the field of tourism although religious and spiritual tourism is fairly a new concept it may be one of the oldest forms of travel. Historical documents show that in the past people used to travel for religious and spiritual purposes. No data was found traveling for fun and enjoyment (Haq, 2006). There is a difference between religious and spiritual tourism. In a broad sense, religious tourism means travel because of religious purpose and spiritual tourism means to travel with both purposes religious and spiritual which means the development of mind and body. In short, every religious tourist is a spiritual tourist but not every spiritual tourist is a religious tourist. For example, a Muslim going for Hajj will be treated as both spiritual and religious tourism but if a Muslim visits Mathura, the birthplace of Krishna will be treated as spiritual tourism. This paper will define the concept of spiritualism as a relationship between the 'Ceature and The Creator' which is mentioned in Haq, 2006.

In this global world and before COVID-19, people move a lot and tourism was and to some extent still a very promising industry. The tourism industry is connected with the economy of the country. So, if the tourism industry of Bangladesh flourishes, the country's economy will also develop. It will add extra value to the world too. In many South Asian countries like Thailand, Nepal, Bhutan and India, the tourism industry has already been developed but Bangladesh seems a little lag behind. Government, as well as the private sector, needs to work together to promote this industry. Infrastructure in Bangladesh is one of the major hindrances of tourism in Bangladesh. It is not a very comfortable place for any tourist. To go to a foreign country, tourist generally looks for security and basic comfort. The arrival of tourists increases a lot in Bangladesh. BPC's Bangladesh forecasts at least 500,000 visitor arrivals by 2020 in Bangladesh. So an integrated approach to tourism planning is required for a notable sustainable growth of the tourism sector that will be able to meet the needs of the present tourists without compromising the future tourists in Bangladesh.

Justification of the study:

Historically Bangladesh is enriched with beautiful places of the world. As this place was

ruled by Muslims as well as by Hindus, it is full of Islamic and Hindu spiritual and religious places. The tourism sector has got ample potential to be successful. Religious tourists are increasing all over the world and Bangladesh is full of religious tourist places so it can attract many tourists from all over the world. This paper aims to explain the major spiritual and religious tourism resources in Bangladesh and also to evaluate the opportunities, challenges of this type of tourism in Bangladesh. This article will try to figure out the problems and challenges of religious tourism and will try to provide some suggestions which would be crucial questions and answers for our policymakers.

The Setting

The background of Bangladesh that follows in this section is largely based on Khan, 1994. In an ancient land, Bangladesh is a new state. Khan described Bangladesh as a country challenged by contradictions (Khan, 1994). The history of Bangladesh is often inconsistent. It is neither a well-defined historical unit nor a distinct geographical entity. Originally the word Bangladesh is derived from the cognate "Vanga". "Vanga" was first mentioned in the Hindu scripture *Aitareya* and *Aranyak* (composed between 500 B.C. and 500 A.D.). According to legend, Bengal was first colonized by prince Vanga and linguists have thought that the root of the term Vanga may be traced to languages in the adjoining areas. One school of thought argues that the word "Vanga" derived from the Tibetan word "Bans", which means "wet and moist" and thus Bangladesh refers to the wetland. Another school of thought believes that the term "Vangla" is derived from the Bodo (an aboriginal language of Assam) words "Bang" and "la", which connote "wide plains" (Khan, 1994).

During the tertiary era 1 to 6.5 million years ago, Bangladesh was formed and human habitation is very old. The area has long been regarded as a natural bridge between South and South East Asia. Thus, it played an important role in trade and commerce in the South Asian sub-continent and Far East. In Khan's words,

"It played an important part in the great cultural association between the diverse civilizations of Eastern and South-Eastern Asia which forms such a distinguished feature in the history of this great continent for nearly one thousand and five hundred years" (Khan, 1994, p. 6).

Bangladesh history is divided into three periods: Ancient Bengal (326 B.C. to 1204

A.D.), Mediaeval Bengal or Middle Bengal (1204-1757), and British Rule in Bangladesh (1757-1947). Many political and historical revolutions took place in Ancient Bengal and historical monuments built at that time.

During the Middle Ages, the Muslim rulers ruled much of South Asia, including Bengal. There are two major achievements during the Muslim rule: Bengal was politically united and linguistically homogeneous. Muslim rulers were passionate about the Bengali language and literature. Before Muslim rule began, Bengali was regarded by Hindu elites who were the promoters of Sanskrit education as a mere vernacular language full of impurities and vulgarities. During the Muslim rule, Islam expanded widely. Because of the expansion of Islam, there was a coalition between the Muslim and Hindu upper caste. Many Hindus gradually converted to Islam in Bengal, and thus there was interaction between Islam and Hinduism. Many orthodox Hindus disliked the local Muslims, however, and considered them as untouchables. The local converts faced a dichotomy between religion and language; this dichotomy is visible in the seventeenth-century poet Abdul Hakim's writing, where he mentioned: "those who are born in Bengal but hate Bengali language had doubtful parentage" and if they are not satisfied with their mother tongue they should migrate to the other lands (Khan, 1994, p. 11). So many Islamic monuments built that that time. Those can attract many tourist from all over the world.

According to Khan, the Bangladesh region was economically affluent during the mediaeval period. It was regarded as one of the most prosperous lands in the world. Ibn Batuta, a famous traveler, visited Bengal in the fourteen century and mentioned Bengal as the wealthiest and most inexpensive land in the world and he mentioned that it is a "hell full of bounties" (Khan, 1994, p. 12). The seventeenth-century French traveler Francois Bernier is cited in Khan as follows:

Egypt has been represented in every age as the finest and most fruitful country in the world, and even our modern writers deny that there is any other land so peculiarly favored by nature; but the knowledge I have acquired of Bengal, during two visits paid to that kingdom inclines me to believe that pre-eminence ascribed to Egypt is rather due to Bengal (Khan, 1994, p. 7).

The size of Bangladesh is slightly smaller than the United States state of Wisconsin. The country's climate is tropical with cool, dry winters and hot, humid summers (March to June), with a warm, rainy monsoon (June to October). Its terrain is mostly a flat alluvial

plain with hills in the southeast. Bangladesh's primary natural resources include natural gas, arable land, timber and coal. The climate is favorable for agriculture (Bangladesh: Retrieved September 1, 2019, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bg.html>).

In the history of Bengal, the greatest despair occurred on June 23, 1757, with the advent of the East India Company, a mercantile company of England, became the virtual ruler of Bengal (Khan, 1994). Bangladesh is the Islamic Republic. The Constitution of Bangladesh begins with the name of Allah and it says, "Pledging that the high ideals of absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah" (Constitution of Bangladesh 1979: 1). This country is bordered by India on the Western, Eastern, Northern sides, on southeast Myanmar and in the south the Bay of Bengal. Islam played an important role in Bangladesh, so there are huge opportunities for religious and spiritual tourism.

This paper will focus on both religious and spiritual tourism in the context of Bangladesh. Tourism in Bangladesh is growing rapidly. Many local and foreign tourist travels all over the country and most of the places are religious and spiritual but very few of them are termed as religious and spiritual tourism. Bangladesh born in 1971 and fairly a newborn country and it has been in contact with almost all the major religions of the world. Although in the present context Islam is a major religion but religions like Hinduism, Christianity, Jainism, Buddhism have also influenced a sizeable portion of the population. Following is the religious chart of Bangladesh-

Muslim 89.1%,
Hindu 10%,
Other 0.9% (includes Buddhist, Christian) (2013 est.)
Source: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bg.html

From the east to the west and north to the south, Bangladesh is full of religious and spiritual tourist places. My previous research mentioned that there is plenty of opportunity for developing this kind of tourism. It has a glorious history of religious tourism. This place is a hub of Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and other religions. It has a glorious history of religious tourism. This place is a hub of Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and other religions.

Objectives:

This paper aims to meet the following objectives-

- a. To define the term spiritual and religious tourism in Bangladeshi context

- b. To find the major spiritual and religious tourism resources in Bangladesh
- c. To evaluate the opportunities, challenges of this type of tourism in Bangladesh and its prospect.

A two-pronged ethnographic method—(a) depth interviews with several tourists; and (b) historical document analysis—was used to meet the above objectives.

Design of the study

Qualitative Research Methods

These research projects fall in the category of exploratory descriptive qualitative methods of research. Generally, qualitative research methods are designed to focus on what people say or do; “they are about studying the experiences and the meanings of those being researched” (Doncaster, 1995, p. 23). Robinson (1993) points out that in qualitative research, theories and concepts arise from the process of doing research (Cited in Doncaster, 1995, p. 23). This project is a data-driven inquiry, with the goal of an understanding of the complexity of the social phenomena under scrutiny, namely the challenges to implement rural tourism and its prospect in Bangladesh. Primary data was collected through informal interviews and observation method, both phone interviews and face to face interviews were conducted with students, NGO workers and travel agency workers. The main sources of this secondary data collection were the data published by the Ministry of Tourism, Parjatan Corporation, Government of Bangladesh, and tourism board of Bangladesh. Other secondary data collected from various books, journals, newspapers, press releases and reports. In addition to these, a lot of tourism related websites has been reviewed for updated information. On the other hand, several foreign and local research works has been reviewed in this field.

The final data set ended up being only a portion of the data we collected. This was because we realized that to analyze all the data we had collected was too ambitious a task. We did not have any hypothesis to test for this research project but we wanted to explore an area of interest. The major fieldwork for this project took place in March 2016-August 2019 in rural locations. A number of data collection methods were used: handwritten field notes, 50 hours of videotape, 14 hours of tourists, policy planners’ interviews, and field observation documents. Data collection, management and analysis began on the first day of the fieldwork and continued throughout the study. We did both participatory and non-participatory research. In participatory research we travelled with tourist in different places of Bangladesh and tried to find out the real situations and that study begins from the year 2014. Observations for the study spanned for a period of three years.

Recording the Data

We recorded the data in the following ways:

i. Audio Recording

The audio recording was an important part of the study. We took audio recordings of all the interviews with the consent of the interviewees. We used portable audiotape recorders with microphones. We used Sony TCS-60 (Stereo Cassette-Corder) and FUJI DR-II Cassette. The interviews were done at the policy planner's offices, in the park, and at the sight-seeing areas. Some of the interviews were conducted only in English, some were conducted only in Bengali and some were conducted in both Bengali and English. Bengali interviews were translated into English during transcription. Interviews typically lasted for one hour or one and a half hours. For this research, both local and foreign tourists were interviewed. The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed and analyzed after the observation period had ended. Bengali interviews were not translated. Those were transcribed into Bengali language. We translated the necessary portions of the Bengali interviews.

Analysis of the Data

The analysis of the data was shaped by the themes emerging from the observations, field notes, and interview data.

Interviewing

All interview tapes were fully transcribed. In multiples readings of the interview data, we looked for themes that both overlapped and were distinct from the observation data. In analyzing the interview we first read all the transcripts (to get a sense of whole) and coded the interviews. Then we again reread all the coded data and developed those data with the help of other sources of data like historical documents and newspaper articles. Codes were broken into smaller units of the meaning with each rereading of the data sources and as more data were gathered. Data were organized according to their relevance to the research questions. We found there are differences between the interviewers' opinions and my field observation.

Observations

The consecutive video-recorded lessons were transcribed (only the necessary portions) and analyzed after the observation period ended. The analysis of these data was shaped by the themes emerging from the observations, field notes and interview data. Data from other sources like historical documents and newspapers articles were also used to strengthen these

data. We also use new angles emerging from the cross-check analysis of the observation and interview data.

Video Recording

Some of the interviews were videotaped. After finishing the videotape we showed the video to tourists as well as to the policy planners and also ask their permission to use the videos for my research. A field assistant operated the video camera while we were observing the class. Along with the videotapes, we used portable audiotape recorders with microphones. We used Sony digital handy cam and Sony cassette. Only the key parts of videotapes were transcribed for use in data analysis. In transcribing dialogue and comments taken from interviews and observations, we have not provided phonetic representations. All the videotapes were not transcribed.

Field Notes

At the time of observations, we took field notes constantly. We also collected pamphlets and brochures during my visit to the offices as well as from the spots. Following each observation, we spoke with the policy planners, taking notes on their reaction to the problems and prospects and asking questions that had arisen from the observation. Every week, we reread all the field notes and tried to relate those field notes with the purpose of my research. After finishing my fieldwork, we tried to make a draft summary of my field notes.

Major Religious Tourist Places in Bangladesh

The Shrine of Hazrat Shah Jalal:

The Shrine of Hazrat Shah Jalal (The great Muslim Saint, Hazrat Shah Jalal (R.A.) is the major religious tourist place in Bangladesh. It is said that he came from Middle East (either from Turkey or Yemen) to spread the message of Islam to the region in the early 14th century. His shrine is located at Dargah Mahalla in the heart of Sylhet town. He came with his many disciples and Shylhet has other famous Dargah like Hazat Shah Paran (R.A.) Dargah. There are around 300 Dargah in Shylhet. This district is safe and very famous for tea garden and resorts. So tourist who will visit the place for religious purpose, they will enjoy those spots too. No tourist will visit the Shylhet to see Dargah only but they would like to see many other things too. These places are famous for Muslim saints but we saw many non-Muslim visitors also visit and place their wish. These are both religious and spiritual tourist places. Following is the list of Dargah in Shylhet-

Table: List of Dargah in Shylhet and places

1. Hazrat Haji Yusuf (RA) (Adjacent to the Dargah of Hazrat Shah Jalal (RA)
2. Hazrat Haji Khalil (RA) Adjacent to the Dargah of Hazrat Shah Jalal (RA)
3. Hazrat Muhammad Ziauddin (RA) Panch Pir Maktum, Old Lane, Sylhet
4. Hazrat Hazi Gazi (RA) Adjacent to the Dargah of Hazrat Shah Jalal (RA)
5. Hazrat Sheik Ali (RA) (Previous Prince of Yemen) EidGah Moidan, Sylhet
6. Hazrat Kazi Jalal Uddin (RA) Kazitola, Sylhet
7. Hazrat Sheik Zaki (RA) DhopadighiPar, Sylhet
8. Hazrat Saiyad Umar Samarkondi (RA) Zindabazar, Sylhet
9. Hazrat Zindapeer (RA) South west of Marwari patti, Bandar Bazar, Sylhet
10. Hazrat ShahChat (RA) alias Hazrat ShahNoor (RA)
11. Hazrat Kazi Goila (RA) Kazitola, Sylhet
12. Hazrat Shah Yateem (RA) Badur Lotka, Shahtoli, Sylhet
13. Hazrat ShahPur (RA) South of Bandar Bazar, Sylhet
14. Hazrat Saiyad Hossain (RA) Hossain Mohallah, Sylhet
15. Hazrat Hossain Shahid (RA) Hossain Shahid Mohallah
16. Hazrat Shah Mokhdum (RA) Daptori Para, Sylhet
17. Hazrat Shayakh Khizir Khan Dabir (RA) Khan Dobir Mohallah, Sylhet
18. Hazrat Saiyad Muktar (RA) Saiyad Muktar Mohallah, Sylhet
19. Hazrat DadaPeer (RA) Muktar Khaki Mohallah, Sylhet
20. Hazrat DariaPeer (RA) Adjacent to the Dargah of Hazrat Shah Jalal (RA)
21. Hazrat Shah Sobur (RA) Barudkhana lane, Sylhet
22. Hazrat Khizir Sufi (RA) Barudkhana lane, Sylhet
23. Hazrat Shah Bagdar Ali (RA) Barudkhana lane, Sylhet

Source: <https://bangladeshmazar.webs.com/mazarsinsylhet.htm>

City of Mosques:

Dhaka is the capital of Bangladesh and it is famous for mosques. It is called the city of mosques. Hundreds of mosques are there and most prominent ones are the Sat Masjid Mosque which in English known as Seven Domed Mosque (17th century), the national mosque known as Baitul Mukarram - National Mosque, and the Tara Mosque which is known as Star Mosque (18th century), Chawkbazar Mosque and Huseni Dalan Mosque. Along with these mosques every local has mosques and those are full of elegant architectural values. Old Dhaka has also got many mosques. Following is the list of Mosques in Dhaka-

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Table: List of Mosques

<u>Baitul Mukarram</u>		<u>Dhaka</u>	1960s	<u>Sunni</u>	National mosque. It is the 10th largest mosque in the world, accommodating more than 40,000 people
<u>Kakrail Mosque</u>		<u>Ramna Thana, Dhaka</u>	1952s	<u>Sunni</u>	The center of the country's <u>Tablighi Jamaat</u>
<u>Lalbagh Fort Masjid</u>		<u>Lalbagh, Dhaka</u>	1678	<u>Sunni</u>	Also known as "Lalbagh Kella'r Tin Gombuzwala Shahi Masjid" and previously "Killa-e-Aurangabad-er Tin Gombuzwala Shahi Masjid". It is part of the <u>Lalbagh Fort</u> .
<u>Khan Mohammad Mridha Mosque</u>		<u>Lalbagh, Dhaka</u>	1705	<u>Sunni</u>	
<u>Star Mosque</u>		<u>Armanitola, Dhaka</u>	Late 18th Century	<u>Sunni</u>	Locally known as <i>Tara Masjid</i>
<u>Kartalab Khan Masjid</u>		<u>Begum Bazar, Old Dhaka</u>	1701	<u>Sunni</u>	Also known as " <i>Begum Bazar Masjid</i> "
<u>Baitur Rauf</u>		<u>Fayedabad, Dhaka</u>	2012	<u>Sunni</u>	Designed by <u>Marina Tabassum</u> for her grandmother, <u>Sufia Khatun</u>

<u>Sat Gambuj Masjid</u>		<u>Mohammadpur, Dhaka</u>	Late 17th century	<u>Sunni</u>	Means “7 dome Masjid”
<u>Shaista Khan Masjid</u>		<u>Mitford, Old Dhaka</u>	1664	<u>Sunni</u>	
<u>Qassabtuly Masjid</u>		<u>PK Ghosh Road, Koshaituli, Old Dhaka</u>	1919	<u>Sunni</u>	Officially <i>Qassabtuly Jam E Masjid</i>
<u>Musa Khan Masjid</u>		<u>University of Dhaka, Dhaka</u>	18th century	<u>Sunni</u>	
<u>Shahbaz Khan Masjid</u>		<u>Shahbag, Dhaka</u>	1679	<u>Sunni</u>	Also known as <i>Hazrat Haji Khwaja Shabbaz Khan Mosque</i>
<u>Chawkbazar Shahi Masjid</u>		<u>Chawkbazar, Lalbagh, Dhaka</u>	1676	<u>Sunni</u>	
<u>Nakhalpara Sapra Mosque</u>		<u>Nakhalpara, Tejgaon, Dhaka</u>	1961	<u>Sunni</u>	
<u>Allakuri Masjid</u>		<u>Mohammadpur, Dhaka</u>	1680	<u>Sunni</u>	Earliest known square single-domed Mughal-style mosque in Bengal.

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<u>Azimpur Masjid</u>		<u>Dhaka</u>	1746	<u>Sunni</u>	Last existing example of a structure with a single dome & a flanking half-domed vault on both sides.
<u>Katabon Masjid</u>		<u>Shahbag, Dhaka</u>		<u>Sunni</u>	Officially named the “Bangladesh Masjid Mission Complex Central Mosque”.
<u>Binat Bibi Masjid</u>		<u>Narinda, Dhaka</u>	1454	<u>Sunni</u>	

Barisal Division [edit]

<u>Name</u>	<u>Image</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<u>Bibi Chini Masjid</u>		<u>Bibi Chini, Betagi, Barisal</u>	17th century	<u>Sunni</u>	Built by Shah Neyamat Ullah
<u>Masum Khan Masjid</u>		<u>Kamalapur, Gournadi, Barisal</u>	16th century	<u>Sunni</u>	Also known as Kamalapur Masjid
<u>Nasrat Gazi Masjid</u>		<u>Sialguni, Bakerganj, Barisal</u>	16th century	<u>Sunni</u>	Built by Nasrat Ghazi during the reign of Nasiruddin Nasrat Shah
<u>Guthia Masjid</u>		<u>Wazirpur, Barisal</u>	2003	<u>Sunni</u>	Officially “ <i>Baitul Aman Jame Masjid Complex</i> ”

Name	Image	Location	Year	Denomination	Remarks
Momin Mosque		Akonbari, Burirchar, Mathbaria, Pirojpur	1913	Sunni	
Miah Bari Mosque		Miah Bari, Karapur, Barisal	1700s	Sunni	Established by Hayat Muham- mad

Source: Wikipedia 2020

Bayazid Bostami Majar is a very popular religious and spiritual tourist place in Bangladesh. This holy place in Chittagong attracts a large number of visitors and pilgrims. At its base there is a large pond with several hundred huge tortoises and fishes floating on the water). Bayazid Bostami was a famous Persian Sufi born in Bostam, Iran. Chittagong district is also famous for religious and spiritual tourism. There are many Hindu temples and Buddhist temples in Bangladesh and following is the list of them. Among them, the most famous temple is Kantawji Temple. It is the most ornate and medieval Hindu temple in Bangladesh. Every inch of the temple surface is beautifully embellished with exquisite terracotta plaques, representing flora and fauna, geometric motifs, mythological scenes and an astonishing array of contemporary social, and favorite pastime.

The authors visited six districts in Bangladesh from March and early April 2016 to July 2019. After visiting and observing areas they found that the environment of these places varied greatly. This chapter will summarize my findings and discuss their significance.

In Bangladesh, two different types of religious tourist are available-i. Domestic religious tourist; ii. Foreign tourists who are believers of a different religion. Domestic tourists travel to religious places because of their religious faith and at the same time this tour gives them mental and spiritual peace. Religious tourism means religion and tourism. So it fulfills both purpose religious purpose and traveling purpose. Foreign tourists also come for a religious and spiritual purpose. It gives them knowledge of different cultures, religious peace, and at the same time, it helps their spiritual development. Religious tourism can be divided into several categories-

1. Pilgrimage (Tablig Jamaat/ Biswa Iztema)
2. Faith in Mazars
3. Faith in Temples (Hindu and Buddhist)

4. Leisure
5. Research

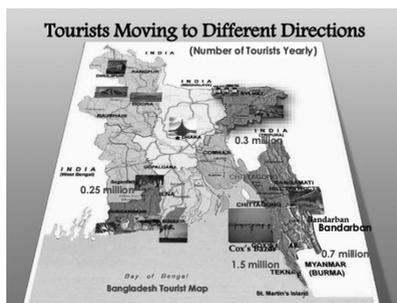
Pilgrimage (Tablig Jamaat/ Biswa Istema)

Bangladesh is a Islamic state. Islam is the monotheistic religion of the world. All Muslim people believe in Allah and Islam is a teaching of Allah. Tablig Jamaat is also an Islamic group who travels from one place to another place. The main aim of the Tablig Jamaat is to invite Muslims towards mainstream of Islam (Sultana et al. 2017). Tablig Jamaat is completely religious tourism and during this research, I have interviewed several people who were willing to join the Biswa Istema 2020 and most of them said there is no relation between spiritualism in this practice. It is a completely religious practice. Biswa Istema is one of the biggest Muslim gatherings of the world and members of Tablig Jamaat gather there to teach the mainstream practices of Islam. There are more than 10 million followers of Tablig Jamaat in more than 200 countries. It brings Muslims all over the world more closely. This is popular in South Asia and in Bangladesh, it is popular in the mosque around Dhaka. Not all the members who joined in Biswa Istema is a member of Tablig Jamaat but a sufficient numbers of Tablig Jamaat members attended in Biswa Istema. From the interviews I came to know there are several problems in Biswa Istema. –i. the unhygienic toilet, poor infrastructure and poor traffic system. All give tourist painful experience. But as it is a religious gathering for 3 days, tourist devotes themselves to Allah and they talk about religion and good deeds. Only Muslim tourists attend this gathering. This paper will try to mention the problems of Islamic tourism in Bangladesh and will also provide some measures to develop this field which can be helpful for the economic growth of the country.

Faith in Mazars Or Mazar Tourism:

Mazar is Arabic word which means the place to visit. Its synonymous word is *dargah*. Generally, tomb of a saint or dervish is known as Mazar. The basic tendency of Mazar is to show the respect of to the saints and to pray for the departed soul. Many people are working on Mazar as *Khadim* which means caretaker. In Indian Sub-continent, many dervishes came from different countries to promote Islam and after the liberation war some Mazar became part of Bangladesh and since then they are playing an important part in religious tourism. Among them some of the important Mazars are Hazrat Shah Jalal (R) in Sylhet, Khan Jahan Ali (R) in Bagherhat, Makhdum Shah (R) in Rajshahi and Shah Amanat

(R) in Chittagong, and Shah Ali Baghdadi (R) in Dhaka. Chittagong, where there are the Mazars of twelve saints, is called the city of Mazars (Banglapedia, 2020). Mazar comes with a term called *Manat* which means fulfilling a wish. Many people believe that if they pray for the saints and at the same time they pray for their wish, it will come true. Common wishers are getting bride or groom, in other words, wants to get married soon, infertility, family problems like incompatible husband–wife, business loss etc. Mazar tourism is also religious tourism. It is based on Islamic principles but during my research I saw non-Muslim came with their Manat. Many foreigners are there to do research as well as for sightseeing. Unlike Tablig Jamaat it has got both religious as well as spiritual aspects. Many businesses developed because of Mazars. It can have a big impact on the economy of Bangladesh if it is maintained properly. Bangladesh is a developing country and tourism can be one of the easiest ways to earn money. Islam is one of the fastest-growing religions in the world. This concept can draw the attention of many people from around the world.



From the above map, we can see Bangladesh is full of religious tourism spots. From the north to the south and east to the west, it is full of Islamic tourist places. This research reveals that there is ample opportunity for Islamic tourism in Bangladesh as it has a lot of natural beauties, Islamic heritage, cultural and archeological heritage, historic heritage, which might be potential tourism destinations. There are many Islamic organizations and they may help to improve this business. Especially Mazar tourism will attract many people of the world, especially from South Asia.

Faith in Temples (Hindu and Buddhist):

There are huge opportunities for Hindu and Buddhist religious tourism in Bangladesh. Hinduism is one of the oldest religions in the world. Hindu temple is the place for Hindu believers. The word 'Temple' means 'God's House' for the Hindu believers. In Bangladesh,

many Hindu temples are the religious and spiritual center for Hindu people as well as the spiritual center for many non-Hindu people. During our research, we saw many non-Hindu tourists are visiting the place for research, tourism, or spiritual purpose. Although Hinduism originated in India, this religion is spreading in Europe and America. Followings are the top six Hindu Temples in Bangladesh-

1. Dhakeshwari Temple, Old Dhaka:

Dhakeshwari Temple, one of the oldest and historical temples, is located in Dhaka and it is the national temple of the Hindu religion of Bangladesh. The meaning of 'Dhakeshwari' is the 'Goddess of Dhaka' and many people believe that Dhaka is named after this temple. King Balla Sen of the Sen Dynasty built this temple in the 12th century. Many renovations had made to this temple and many mentioned that this temple has lost its original beauty because of the changes over the years. This temple organizes the biggest Hindu *puja* and festival in Dhaka.

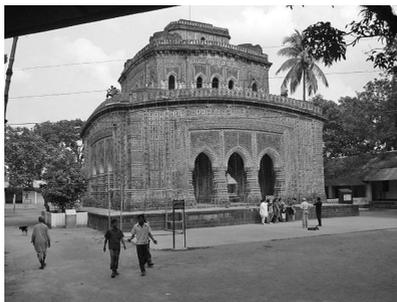


Dhakeshwari Temple

2. Kantajew Temple, Dinajpur:

There are several names for this temple- Kantajew Temple or *Kantanagar Temple*. Some call it *Navratna Temple*. This is a very old temple with the traditional architecture of Bangladesh in it. This temple was built in the 18th century at Kanta Nagar Village on the bank of the river *Dhapa*. It is near to the city of Dinajpur. The actual height of this temple was 70 feet high but it was damaged after the 1897 earthquake. There is 15,000 terracotta tile written from the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, and various myths. Historical data mentioned that Maharaja Prannath Roy started this temple in 1922 and his adopted son *Maharaja Ramnath Roy* completed the construction of the temple in 1752. Along with Hindu people many tourists, a researcher from all over the world visits every day there. Maintenance of this temple

is better than other tourist places but the government can open a yoga center and also clean modern guest houses near the temple. Access to this place is easy too.



Kantajew Temple

3. Chandranath Temple

Chandranath temple is one of the most popular religious tourist places for Hindu people from all over the world. It is located at the peak of Chandranath hill which besides the Sitakunda, Chittagong. It is very difficult to climb on the Chandranath Temple. This hill is about 1,153 feet high. It takes 1.30 hours to reach the top. It is better to keep some food and drinks while climbing.



Chandranath Temple

4. Adinath Temple, Maheshkhali

Adinath Temple is located at Thakurtala village of Gorakghata Union under Maheshkhali Upazila which is in the Southern part of Bangladesh under Cox's Bazar District. It is 85 meters above sea level and located at the top of the hill of Mainak. In past, it was difficult to reach at this temple but now it is not that difficult to go there. There are 69 stairs

to reach the temple. It is said that in a forest one farmer found the statue of Mahesh and it is another name of Hindu God Mahadev. He built a temple in the name of this deity and placed the shrine there. This is known as Adinath Temple. This temple is complex and interesting. It consists of several things- a mosque, a Rakhine Buddhist monastery, and a statue of Adinath Shiva in the east, and in the west room, there is a statue of Durga. Thousands of visitors attend this temple every year on the occasion of *Shiva Chaturdasbi*. This is a very popular tourist place in Bangladesh. If the government wants, they can establish an *Asbham* for yoga or other religious activities. It will attract many tourists from all over the world.



Adinath Temple Maheshkhali

5. Puthia Temple Complex

Putia temple complex is under the Rajshahi district. This complex was built in Puthia Dynasty in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. This is also one of the most important tourist spots and one of the main architectural buildings in northern Bangladesh. Raja Pitambor established Puthiya as the capital. It is also a symbol of secular consciousness. Several mosques are around the complex.



Puthia Temple Complex

6. Sri Sri Lokenath Brahmachari Ashram, Bardi, Narayanganj

Sri Lokenath Brahmachari Ashram is a wonderful Ashram which is known as green Ashram. Lokenath Brahmachari built this ashram. This is located in Sonargaon Upazila of Narayanganj district. This is a huge green Ashram. There are five-storied buildings and tourists can stay overnight for free and have a meal for free. It is not only a Hindu pilgrimage but also attracts people from every religion.



Sri Sri Lokenath Brahmachari Ashram

Leisure and Research:

Thousands of tourists visit these religious places to pass their leisure time and to do their research. So, there is a huge prospect of this sector of tourism.

Findings:

The paper aims to meet the following objectives-

- a. To define the term spiritual and religious tourism in the Bangladeshi context
- b. To find the major spiritual and religious tourism resources in Bangladesh
- c. To evaluate the opportunities, challenges of this type of tourism in Bangladesh and its prospect.

The findings of the research show that there is a huge perspective of religious and spiritual tourism in Bangladesh but religious dogma is one of the biggest hindrances for spiritual tourism. Religious people are unwilling to the places which do not belong to their religion. Most of the tourist are visiting their place with their purpose but seems unfamiliar with the term religious and spiritual tourism. It also discusses problems that religious tourism is facing in Bangladesh such as safety, cleanliness, and infrastructure, etc. This paper calls for policy and planning for spiritual tourism and religion. At present religious and spiritual

tourism seem to be a challenging sector but if the government, as well as the private sector, gives importance, this sector can bring huge economic benefits to the country. This concept is a popular neighboring country like India and also contributing to the economy of the country. The positive impression of the tourism sector is necessary.

Recommendation

To make the Islamic tourism popular and fruitful, my suggestion is as follows-

Infrastructure:

Poor infrastructure is one of the major hindrances to the development of any tourism. There are many nice and historical mosques, temples in Bangladesh, and building a proper infrastructure can encourage many tourists in Bangladesh. During my interviews, several tourists mentioned to me that they want to visit Bangladesh but it is not comfortable for low-budget tourist to travel in Bangladesh, and before reaching the tourist spot many tourists get tired. Sense of hygiene is very important. Most of the toilets are unclean and do not meet international standards. It is very difficult to find a clean and hygienic toilet in Bangladesh. One of the biggest hindrances is corruption. Although the government has the budget, the money does not use for the proper purpose. So ethical teaching is also necessary.

Like many other developing countries, it is difficult to get a taxi outside of Dhaka. There should an arrangement for a tourist taxi. Islamic resorts and Islamic restaurants can be implemented. If it is properly maintained, foreign tourists, as well as local tourists, would be attracted to that destinations. Different types of tour package can be implemented like Islamic tourism, cultural tourism, and historical tourism. Tourists would not like to visit the Islamic tourist spots only; they would like to have some cultural knowledge as well as historical knowledge. That's why promoting an attractive tour package is necessary. To implement this tourism, skilled, motivated people are necessary too.

Improvement of political situations:

There are always some political problems in South Asia. That demotivates tourists to come to Bangladesh. The traffic condition of Dhaka is extremely poor. It takes two–three hours to travel from one place to another place. The distance is not more than 2-3 kilometers. Traffic condition needs to be improved. Media can play an important role to

promote religious tourism. Facebook and twitter can also plan an important role promote tourism in Bangladesh. Promotion of tourism is very poor in Bangladesh. The tourist does not know the name of many historical places even though they visited the placed. So it is necessary to implement tourist centre in every district of Bangladesh.

Sense of Hygiene:

Many tourist complained that Bangladeshi people do not have sense of hygiene. They do not flush the toilet after using and they do not wash their hands when they cook food. It is true that proper sense of hygiene is absent in Bangladesh. Lack of education is also one of the reasons and also lack of internationalism is also another reason. They do not want to change the culture and adopt new or developed things.

Conclusion:

In the world tourism industry is growing and people are interested to know many unknown world and Bangladesh has got a huge potential of tourism. Needs proper marketing and a serious approach to promote this industry. Nowadays private sectors are trying to promote this tourism sector a lot but the government sector seems a little slow to the promotion. The government needs to take proper action against this industry.

Developing Institutional Framework:

Department of tourism of different universities should give importance to religious tourism. Religious tourism is a traditional thing. So the tradition should be maintained. Globalization should affect too much in this sector. Although the situation improved a lot of Government should think of tourists' safety and security.

Limitations of this Study

Like other studies, this study has also some limitations. The findings of this study can be generalized after considering certain limitations. The study is mainly based on secondary data. Moreover, enough literature was not available to relay the area of study regarding Bangladesh's perspective.

1. Time was not adequate to collect comprehensive longitudinal data and no complete lists of subject-based results of the religious and spiritual tourism could be located.
2. Interviewees gave answers on the spot. Thus, there is a chance that we received over-

spontaneous information from tourists.

3. There were some mismatches between the Governmental data and public data.
4. No complete lists of government and non-government religious tourist places were nationally available. The scarcity and ambiguity of data was one of the biggest hindrances to this research.

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バングラデシュにおける宗教的・スピリチュアル観光の展望

タニア・ホサイン、アドナン・アリフ・カーン

観光という分野において「宗教的・スピリチュアル観光」というものはかなり新しい概念ではあるものの、旅行としては最も古い形式の一つであろう。歴史的文献では、過去、人々は宗教的あるいはスピリチュアルな目的の為に旅をしているが、楽しみや娯楽として旅をしている資料は見あたらない (Haq, 2006)。宗教的観光とスピリチュアル観光の間には違いがあり、広義には、宗教的観光とは宗教的な目的の為に旅行であるが、スピリチュアル観光とは宗教的・スピリチュアルな目的の為に旅行であり、それは心身両面の成長を含意している。つまり、あらゆる宗教的旅行者はスピリチュアル旅行者であるが、すべてのスピリチュアル旅行者が宗教的旅行者である訳ではないのだ。例えば、ハジ（メッカ巡礼）に赴くムスリムはスピリチュアルおよび宗教的観光の両方として扱われるが、ムスリムがクリシュナの生誕地であるマトラ（ヒンドゥー教の聖地）を訪れる場合はスピリチュアル観光として扱われる事になるであろう。本稿では、スピリチュアリズムの概念を、Haqが2006年に示した「被創造物と創造主」間の関係として定義していく。

このグローバル社会の中で人々は頻繁に移動しており、観光は大きな成長産業であって、観光産業は国家経済とも関連している。その為、バングラデシュの観光産業が成功すれば、国家経済もまた発展するであろうし、それはまた世界に対しても新たな価値をもたらすことになる。タイやネパール、ブータン、インドといった多くの南アジア諸国では、既に観光産業は発展しているが、バングラデシュはわずかに後塵を拝しているようであり、政府も民間セクター同様にこの産業を盛り上げる為に協同する必要がある。バングラデシュにおける観光においては、そのインフラ状況が主要な障壁となっており、旅行者にとって十分に快適な場所とは言えない。海外渡航の際には、一般的に旅行者は安全と快適をもとめるものである。バングラデシュにおける旅行者の流入は激増しており、BPCは、2020年までにバングラデシュで少なくとも50万人が訪問すると予想している。その為、将来のバングラデシュ旅行者を阻害することなく、現在の旅行者のニーズに応えることが出来るよう、観光部門の多大な継続的成長のためには観光業の計画に対する総合的アプローチが必要とされているのである。