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Paharpur

Tourism development

Tourism is a very important sector for the development of a country's socio-economic condition. In the 21st century, many countries, such as Singapore, Nepal, Hong Kong, Maldives etc. earn the major portion of their national incomes from this sector. So, in that aspect we Bangladeshis are lagging behind and are isolated in a way because of not developing such an upcoming business called Tourism.

Bangladesh is a country with natural good looks. Along with its gracefulness Bangladesh is also located in an advantageous position from the tourism point of view. It is the macro Asiatic Air Traffic Corridor. Being so located it is comparatively easier for this country to share this traffic for promoting tourism.

Bangladesh undoubtedly has a lot of tourist spots which have the potential to attract the local and international tourists; but the service sectors in terms of

tourism in our country are not favourable enough for the tourists. As a result, Bangladesh is not having the expected number of either local or international tourists.

If we would like to develop this sector the government of Bangladesh, related departments and communities should consider the following steps to attract tourists (both local and international):

1. Find out the tourist spots in Bangladesh and make a list. Develop those places so that they are able to attract tourists.

2. Create and develop the roads and communications network.

3. Set up a police station at each spot.

4. Build hotels, motels and guest houses which will provide quality accommodation, and where tourists can feel free and secure.

5. Make suitable restaurants, bars, juice bars with different countries' foods and drinks.

6. Set up markets, night markets from where tourists can buy our traditional and international goods and accessories.

7. Allow international tourists to do duty free shopping.

8. Clubs and entertainment houses can be built to introduce visitors with our culture and customs through songs, dances, dramas etc.

9. There should be laws to prevent people from destroying or polluting the tourist spots like sea beaches, forests, historical places etc.

10. Make videos of spots, services and facilities which can be displayed world wide through Bangladesh embassies, agencies, foreign missions, mass media and websites as a form of advertisement.

If we are successful in converting these ideas into reality, I believe we will be able to earn a significant amount of revenue from this sector.

Ln Md Shamsul Haque Khan
Dhaka

Hospitals needed

Bangladesh is a third world country and about eighty percent people here are Muslims. Dhaka is known as the city of mosques. Mosques are a place of worship which meet our spiritual needs as well as invigorate our social spirit.

However, we also need hospitals to serve the humanity in distress. In this sector, we are lagging behind. We don't have sufficient numbers of hospitals. The treatment facilities and equipment are so poor in most of these hospitals that we don't get a minimum level of medicare. This is one area where we need to invest a lot more.

Sarwar Kamal
Dept. of philosophy CU

City Cell prepaid card

The private cell phone industry is a highly competitive one. The opera-

tors have deployed all their resources to maintain the current customer base as well as to create new ones. They call it 'market grabbing policy'. Under this policy, all types of promotion tools and means are used.

All the operators except City Cell have extended the validity of their prepaid card.

The City Cell authorities should look into the matter.
Shahin Ahmed Chowdhury
University of Dhaka

AKTEL deal

I have been an AKTEL sim user for more than 18 months now. Although the service provided by AKTEL is decent, there is one aspect which I am sure the company is well aware of but doing nothing about it, since all they want us is to refill. If customers do not

have any credit left they expect to receive calls as long as they have validity. However, this is where AKTEL has done something and now if you don't have credit then you can't receive calls.

They should do something positive about it for the benefit of the customers.

Rusho, Dhaka

Air Force training flights

This may seem a taboo subject, as anything to do with defence is a hush hush affair in Bangladesh, but considering the recent crash of an airforce aircraft in the vicinity of ZIA killing innocent civilians, besides destroying public and private property, the matter calls for detailed discussion immediately.

If we look at the number of accidents since the independence of Bangladesh, it will be quite evident that considering the small size of the Air Force fleet, the loss of aircraft during training is probably the highest in the world. Accidents may occur during a flight due to various factors related to human error, mechanical/technical problems, air traffic problems, natural phenomenon like adverse weather, etc. some of which are beyond our control. However, reducing the number of training flights would definitely contribute to lower the accident rate, the relationship being directly proportional.

In developed countries, Air Force training is done mostly on simulators. With the advent of state of the art simulators, even zero hours (of actual aircraft) training is approved and recognised in these countries. Some pilots of foreign airlines coming to Bangladesh have been surprised to see the high amount of airforce flying done, especially from a busy international airport like ZIA. Some of these pilots have even worked in advanced airforces like NATO. They have trained and flown even latest aircraft mostly on simulators with a very minimum of actual aircraft flying.

Simulators are also used extensively to practise emergency situations, combat scenarios, missile evasions etc. without possibly endangering the safety of the aircraft itself. Using simulators increases the proficiency of the pilots and saves the aircraft life for actual combat situations. These foreign pilots were surprised at how a poor country like Bangladesh, can afford so much of actual aircraft flying. The operational hours (life) of these aircraft are finished just for training. How many of these aircraft will be left to fly actual combat sorties, to free our skies of enemies in an actual war, is questionable.

The many aircraft hung up or placed on concrete pillars at road intersections in the city and cantonments all over the country bear testimony to the number of aircraft, which lose operational life just by doing training sorties. Finally, to save innocent lives and valuable property and keep our Air

The cry of wounded people

We again witnessed a heinous crime in London. The cry of wounded people with blood-wallowed dress made the sky misty. The life of the innocent Londoners became disrupted because of this sudden bombing. Many innocent lives fell victim to this merciless killing. The criminals are laughing; for how long this massacre will continue one after another? No sane human being can tolerate this type of genocide. The people who carried out the attack have lost their identity as human beings. They are worse than beasts. Police has not yet found any clues but all fingers are pointed at the al-Qaeda.

Surely, the aftermath will increase the sufferings of the Muslims living in the UK, though the majority of them do not support killing. If the terrorists are Muslims they certainly do not represent the Muslim people. They are killers. We condemn the incident like the Imam of Briton Mosque who has strongly urged people to stand shoulder to shoulder to nab these criminals and mete out severe punishment to them. The British authorities should investigate the matter and dig out the network of these enemies of humanity without blaming the innocents.

Abdullah-al-Mujahid
Sir A. F. Rahman Hall Dhaka University

The 7/7 (July 7th) bombing of London night hit UK economically and socially on a long-term basis. Less Muslims would feel encouraged to seek jobs in the Western World, and many Muslim families in UK, EU and USA would be seriously reviewing the issue of sending their families back home to avoid unnecessary risks in daily life. It is only to be hoped that the expected backlash would be under control. The US do not believe in mercy, when self-security comes into the picture. The Islamic image in the West is paradoxical.

The high cost of living and wages in the industrialised countries are encouraging relocation of factories to the developing countries; and this trend would accelerate due to increasing labour as hostage. The West is already finding it difficult to compete with high quality but cheaper Chinese products in the export markets. France and Germany are facing persistent unemployment knots. The US might be thinking of turning India into vast factory of American products. Our EPZs would be drawing international attention from now on.

London as global trading centre would face alternative competition from future investors (choice of



safer options). The 9/11 and 7/7 flags serve as deterrents, and it is not easy to recover economically these days.

The implications of the reverse migration patterns should be studied by expert analysts for future government policies during the next ten years. As per DS report of July 9, the GoB is taking action on illegal dispatch of Bangladeshi workers, and strength-

ening the monitoring and record-keeping chores.

The job sites would be shrinking outside the Islamic world. Our embassies abroad have to be trade and labour/job oriented, with a shake-up in the Foreign Office Code of Practice and re-orientation to the realities of setting-sun scenarios in the North.

A Husnain, Dhaka

Regarding women



I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Rubaiyat Hossain for her wonderful feature titled 'I know I am a woman' published in the July 1 issue of SWM. Apparently, it was a write-up against male domination, but I think, it was quite on behalf of women. According to Rubaiyat, 'Every woman needs their third eye open.' Yes, I also think so. The incidents happening around us must be observed with our third eye. Then it will be clear to us how we are being deprived and exploited. I always think that most of our women cannot understand what they are subjected to but they are able to understand that they are weak, vulnerable, stupid, emotional and irrational. Because these things are pushed into their mind from a very early age. Moreover, they also believe the decisions or activities carried out by the males are always good and if the females try to do anything, then it will bring a lot of sufferings. So, they always keep themselves away from making any important decisions of their family.

But I think if men change their outlook to some extent, then life will be easier for women. In this respect, I want to say that men must treat women as their partner not follower, their colleague not servant.
Moontaha Muneera
Dept of English Chittagong University

(DCC, Rajuk, Wasa, BTB and innumerable committees and co-ordinating bodies, plus brimful of advisory reports from foreign agencies). Too many cooks spoil the broth. Gourmet starvation?

The structural reforms of DCC and Rajuk are a must, with more professional inputs, and less political interference. Who obey Rajuk directives, and bother to tackle DCC indolence?

There is a persistent bad image around: the elected politicians cannot deliver. And, the political leaders always skirt the issue of political continuity in successive regimes. The ready answer (mantra) is: corrupt deals in the preceding regime. Where is the self-cure project?

Political election of mayors do not seem to work in developing countries in a consistent and reliable way. Personality and nepotism interfere with public interest criteria. The Chittagong CC set a new trend it remains to be seen whether the pious intentions would last a couple of years. Something rotten in the state of Bangladesh, and the top leaders are not pointing to solutions, but only dabbling in problems (to quote Tony Blair).

Unless the foundation (base) and the structures are modernised, the infrastructure and co-ordination just won't work. Our society lacks discipline and formality, and back doors are preferred to front entrances. In addition, now there is the addition of

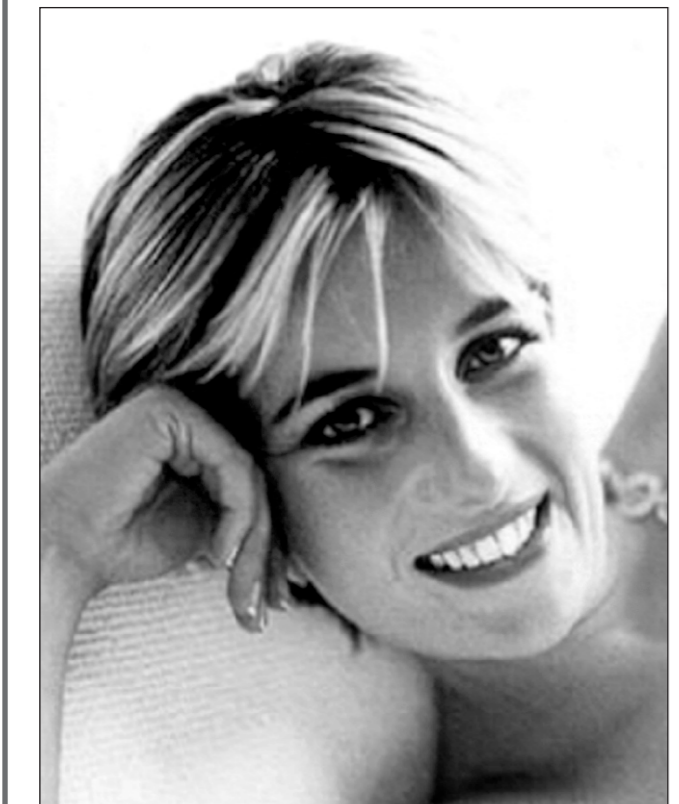
a new culture dependence on the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). Why the role of the government secretariat has been down-graded? There is no explanation to political whims and preferences.

The British Raj had one secret: the regular transfer system. The municipalities perhaps need a cadre service to keep officials on the move; providing no scope for building up mini-empires or zamindaris. Pull up the roots of corrupt practices. There are no jawar-bhata (tides) in the closed bureaucracy and public offices; plus lack of fresh change of air. Also, Dhaka is overloaded with too much centralisation, a typical under-developed syndrome. How to break the vicious circle?

Opening ceremonies and public speeches will not reduce the systems losses in public administration. There is a breakdown in the mechanism for tackling problems at the daily routine level, without noisy interference from the top.

This is ad hoc administration, through knee-jerks. Foreign advice cannot solve local human problems. We are bogged with the 'human' element at each and every step. It needs something extra at the top leadership level. Independence, or dependence on sycophants?
Abdali, Dhaka

Princess Diana



Another book titled 'Diana: The Last Word' by Simone Simmons, has publicised some odd facts (or fiction) about the late Princess Diana who was killed in 1997 in a car accident in Paris. The book also revealed the unfortunate incident which led Diana's younger son to take a DNA test. In my opinion, since Princess Diana is dead, the Diana chapter should be closed. The scandal-ridden British Royal Family should be given some space to deal with their own problems privately and peacefully.

Zahidul Haque
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University
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Force pilots proficient, as well as, to keep more aircraft in operational status should the need arise, the Bangladesh Air Force may adopt economically feasible modern training methods of advanced countries, after detailed study.

S. K Ahmad
Dhaka

Global focus on South Asia

With the signing of a 10-year defence pact between US and India, politics takes a global focus in South Asia (Saaarc region), as the United States competes with mighty China to woo the rich market and huge natural and human resources, providing enough sustenance to predatory foreign controlling nations for the next 100 years.

Pakistan and India are already in US camp. How tiny (but potentially rich naturally) neighbour Bangladesh is going to survive 'neutrally' (cannot sit on the fence with a tabiz)? China would like to have a foothold in the region through friendly overture to Dhaka. But there is no indication of political maturity and forces...right in our projected foreign policy stances for the coming decades, due to absence of political consensus..... at the national level. Why our political leaders are so callous and indifferent to national priorities? It is always too late! We need more public debates for awareness and generating political support.

The region is embedded with peculiar situations, with religion playing a crucial background role, however direct or indirect (note poverty and illiteracy as breeding grounds in millions of minds). Vast Hindu majority India is facing Muslim majority countries in the East and West. The North is protected by a huge long Himalayan wall, with forests and hilly terrain in the East, while the south is protected by the seas. Myanmar as neighbour has plus and minus points, with energy resources, and isolated communist regime.

The US is very sensitive (and covetous) to the presence of energy resources anywhere in the world, and it is very difficult to fight this bullying menace (take a look at

ravaged Afghanistan [for oil route to the seal, and Iraq]. Hence Myanmar is also under the US binoculars. Bangladesh is sandwiched in a hot spot! What type of diplomacy is suitable for Dhaka? Where are the indicators?

Thus strategic Bangladesh is at a crossroad in this battle of global control by the two big powers US and China, with India potentially emerging as a big industrial powerhouse. The factories are shifting to the developing countries, and EU cannot dictate terms to have a piece of the pie. The ineffectiveness of the OIC is monumental. The above stray points are enough to unsettle the peace of mind. What next?

A Mawaz, Dhaka

Regime not power-sensitive!

The powerful ministers (five dozen) talk a lot about the development projects, but the powerful cabinet (read PMO) cannot overcome the great nuisance of low voltage and irritating voltage fluctuations even in the capital city of Dhaka. Why demand credit for non-performance?

It is all the more intriguing when we are floating in gas, and our coal reserves could last several decades. Why regimes develop the miser's mentality--hoard, and do not use? PID (Press Information Department of the Government of Bangladesh) has to goad the ministries to offer info and data on the grey areas for issue of news stories of the negative kind to the mass media, on a regular basis (it needs guts and moral courage--tell us why you cannot do something). It is so easy to gloat over micro projects.
A. Abad, Dhaka

Mega-city's problems

The newspapers are full of monsoon water-logging in the streets (there are few 'roads') of Dhaka metropolitan city, lorded by City Father, the Mayor of Dhaka. He is searching for alibis all the time, and seeking more power for city governance. Say something different!

The water-logging is a symbol of the load-logging in the metro offices

Paheli- the triumph of a folktale

When I was becoming bored with university strike and continuous postponement of my exams, then the movie 'Paheli' appeared to me a source of pure entertainment and refreshment. This Hindi movie though based on a famous novel has a touch of Indian folktale. While enjoying the movie, I felt like returning to those days when my grandma used to tell us fairy tales. In this movie actresses and actors are not using mobile phone, they don't go to Switzerland for choreography, don't wear short dresses or very modern dresses, but still their makeup and getup are so gorgeous that you cannot turn your eyes from them. They look like pure Rajastani people. Shahrugh Khan and Rani Mukherjee have performed very well. The dialogues are very simple. For example when the real Shahrugh asks the

ghost Shahrugh "who are you?" Then the reply comes, "I am the love of woman's heart."

Though the background of this movie is not modern but still their notions are not conservative. In this movie the actress loves a ghost though she has a husband, which is the expression of a woman's freedom to choose their love. The director has depicted the whole tale before us so naturally. After watching the movie, I was thinking how beautifully Indians have brought their enriched rural culture before the whole world, and how deplorably we are failing to make our culture revered even in our own country.

Recently, I watched the Bangla movie-' Hazar bochor dhore'. It is different, but, honestly speaking, does it have any great appeal?

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