

Tourism year ...



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places like Sylhet more attractive. I believe the domestic tourism industry will improve in the near future, but my prime concern is: as more tourists flock to enjoy the scenic beauty, will we be able to preserve these natural treasures or lose them to pollution?" - Salma Mohammad Ali, 17, Sir John Wilson School.

"Tourism will improve as soon as nation branding efforts are taken on

in earnest. Campaigns like 'Beautiful Bangladesh' were heading in the right direction but were never carried through to completion. Branding such as 'Truly Asia' and 'Incredible India' don't happen in years; it takes decades. We need patience." - Mastura Tasnim, 21, IBA, University of Dhaka

"While most people might complain that there aren't enough initiatives to develop and sustain tourism in Bangladesh, I'd rather emphasise on

the lack of government policy and/or interest regarding it. The decisions to uphold one's country should be monitored through effective policy from the respective authorities. We all know which areas remain untapped; it's what we can do to responsibly utilise these natural resources as a community that matters." - Kazi Akib Bin Asad, 24, North South University

Beautiful Bangladesh
Bangladesh IS beautiful. You just need

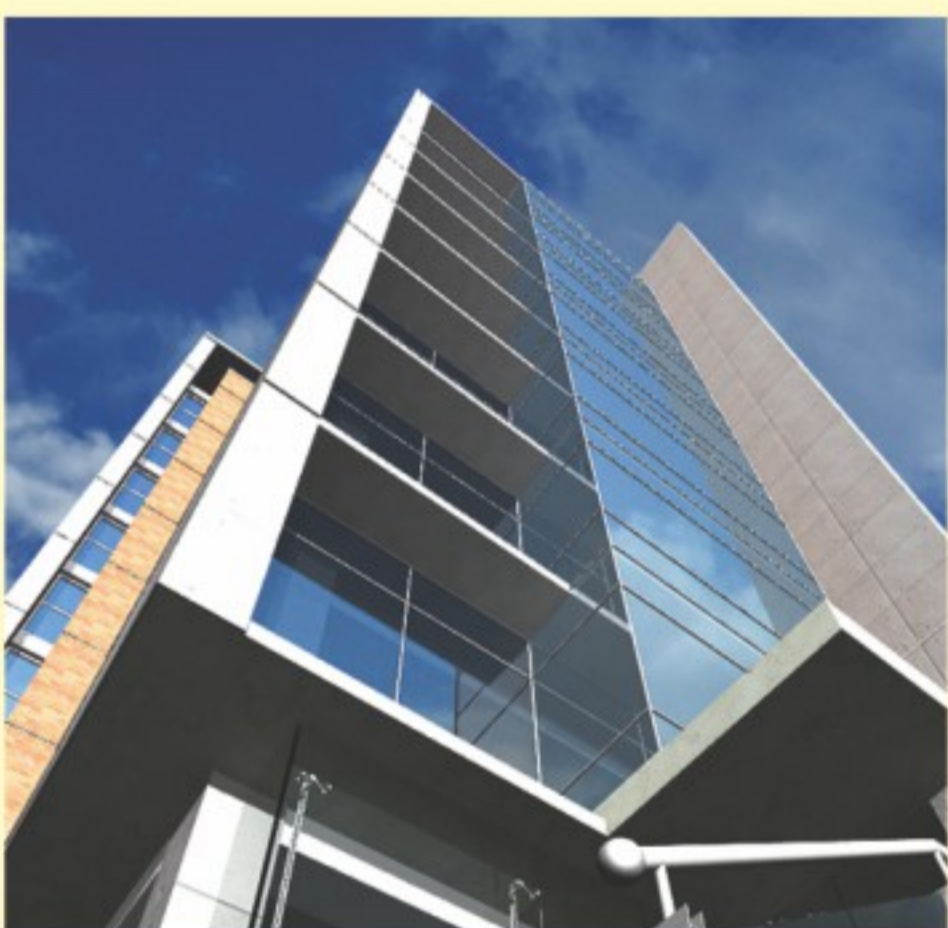
to head out of Dhaka to reinforce this perception. Here's what Lonely Planet has to say about Bangladesh: "Gorgeously green yet swamped with people, Bangladesh is a rural wonderland laden with waterways, peppered with villages and bursting with humanity... This isn't a destination to be rushed. Poor infrastructure, an undeveloped tourist industry and the ubiquitous language barrier (not as many people speak English here as you might think) mean that you'll often be left frustrated

if you're trying to travel in a hurry. Bangladesh isn't a tick-the-sights-off-the-list type of country. It's a place to relax, meet people and discover new ideas and ways of life. And for that you need time." I'd say it's an honest observation.

We need to get real as well, and work accordingly to make the "Tourism Year" campaign a success.

The writer is Editor, SHOUT (a youth publication by The Daily Star).

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