



# Visit Shah Porir Island and Netong, this Monsoon

**where the ocean, rivers, forests and mountains converge to become one**

Shah Porir Island is the southernmost border of Bangladesh. There is nothing beyond, except for vast waterways and the untamed waves of the Bay of Bengal. Looking afar we'd only be able to witness few fishing boats. There is nothing elsewhere; nothing at all! It's as if an excerpt from Bhupen Hazarika's song; 'the clouds speak silently, there's no one; nothing around'. Standing on a wooden shanko, these lines were constantly filling up my mind.

We sat at that point for a long time; sprinkling ourselves with the salty waters of the ocean. As we waited, the sky began to turn gloomy and the air slightly windy. We started off towards Netong immediately, before it began to rain cats and dogs. For once, I thought it would be interesting to wait and get wet in the monsoon-rain, next to the ocean, but then again my good sense prevailed and the realisation set-in a little later, that it would be far better to observe the beautiful scenery, sitting in a cozy bungalow near the Naf river.

Netong is a locality situated in Teknaf. At this heavenly place, comfortable cottages by the forest department, bungalows by the roads and highways division and motels by the tourism sector are readily available. We had a large team and so we had to break up and stay at the different options available. The ferry service for St. Martin Island is also available at this place. A lot of tourists come to Netong from Dhaka and Cox's Bazaar to travel to St. Martin Island.



With a little bit of planning, you can also stay at this place for 1 or 2 nights – at the beautiful lodging areas; enjoying a bit of the mountain forests and the Naf river. A little bit of sauntering along the curved roads will lead you ultimately to the ocean.

While returning from Shah Porir Island,

you can make a stop-over at the local bazaar. It is an interesting place, laden with all kinds of goods. The Teknaf market can easily be re-named as a mini-Burmese market for obvious reasons. But that's not the most appealing part; this superb bazaar has all sorts of grocery items, meat and fish

as-well. Anybody staying as a tourist at Netong can buy fresh fish from this place and ask the cook at the bungalow to grill it for them. Even though it might seem like a big hassle, it's worth a try; cooking the meat fresh at the bungalow and bringing it back to Dhaka.

A little bit away from the bazaar is the legendary 'Maathin's well', bounded by the tragic love story of a local girl. A lot of tourists come to this place to visit the celebrated well.

The Teknaf beach is not as busy as Cox's Bazaar, but it is no less attractive. There are many different types of colourful boats visible to the sight -- the fishermen are either painting it, drying fish on it or catching fish altogether. The Teknaf beach also has its share of markets. One can easily get a sip of fresh coconut water or hot tea and samosas, whenever they wish.

But an important warning for tourists prevails; they must be very cautious of the local people around, because a few of them

