



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM A trend worth following



With its sprawling mangrove forest, unbroken beaches, and lush green rolling hills, our country is a gem in the global arena. With this much diversity, we, as a nation, have the potential to be a major tourist destination. However, the rapid growth of tourism is putting pressure on the very environment and hospitable culture that attract visitors to this destination. The problem is obvious: how can tourism increase without endangering

communities and fragile ecosystems? Sustainable tourism, a radical new approach that balances expansion with the preservation of the environment and culture is the viable solution.

IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOR BANGLADESH

Environmental dangers like pollution, deforestation, and climate change are no longer 'conspiracy' theories or left-thinking ideologies. It is very real, and the consequences are already being felt all across the globe and Bangladesh is no exception: with local communities suffering from biodiversity loss, tourism speeding up pollution in delicate ecosystems, and rising sea levels

endangering coastal areas.

In a nation like ours, where ecosystems are both rich and vulnerable, sustainable tourism is not only a preference but also essential for the future.

Traditional tourism industry models focus on instantaneous profits, leaving aside the long-term consequences. Uncontrolled human intervention is already beginning to change the natural environment of its prime representative — the Royal Bengal Tiger — in places like the Sundarbans. Similarly, the uncontrolled expansion of tourism in Cox's Bazar is causing the once-pristine beaches to deteriorate. Sustainable tourism can assist in

resolving these issues by promoting eco-friendly practices, protecting the biodiversity of the area, and involving local communities in tourism development.

INSPIRING JOURNEYS

Bangladesh can learn a thing or two from various nations that have embraced the sustainable tourism concept into their development agenda and now reap the reward of thriving tourism.

The travel policy of Bhutan, 'high value, low volume,' shows how a country can balance environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and economic growth at the same time. Iceland, another country known for

surreal scenery, has passed legislation that is also environmentally conscious to protect the environment by utilising renewable sources of energy and promoting eco-friendly travel.

Costa Rica, which is quickly becoming the hub of ecotourism, with its eco-lodges nicely tucked away in the lush, verdant rainforests, is raising revenue for local communities while protecting the environment.

We can learn from these achievements and develop similar sustainable tourism models that benefit the country's economy while preserving our environment and culture.

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