

# Tourism of Bangladesh: A SWOT Analysis

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## ABSTRACT

Bangladesh is a country of scenic beauty. Though it is a small country but it has been blessed with lots of tourism resources like hill track, sea beaches, island, archaeological sites, and wild life as well as it has a very rich and reputed history and culture. Tourism is a rising industry in Bangladesh. According to the WTTC report Bangladesh is holding 61th position out of 185 countries in terms of Travel and Tourism's total contribution to GDP but Bangladesh has a very good opportunity to hold a very good position in the world tourism industry by doing some small development on its tourism sector. Tourism sector will also help to the growth of country's economy by creating employment and earning foreign currency. The main aim of this paper is to find out the strengths that Bangladesh has already, the weaknesses of the tourism sector and to identify the opportunities and threats of the tourism industry of Bangladesh by doing a SWOT analysis.

## 1. Introduction

Nowadays the term 'Tourism' has become very popular to most of the people. The meaning of the tourism is temporary movement of an individual or a group of individual from his native place to another place for any particular purposes; it might be for leisure or holiday purpose, business purpose, medical purpose, religious purpose or for any interpersonal reasons like meeting with family, friends and relatives. Everyday a huge number of people make their travel plan for short duration or long duration. Tourism contributes outstandingly for the development of economy of a country, for this reason the government of every country are investing a smart amount of money for promoting their tourist sites, for developing the tourism products and the main purpose is to develop the tourism sector of that particular country. So, like the other sectors tourism has become an important part of the growth of the economy of Bangladesh. There are many tourist sites are situated in Bangladesh and out of them there has been recognised as the "World Heritage Site" by UNESCO. Bangladesh has the opportunity to become a preferred for the budget traveller who likes nature, adventure, wild life, heritage etc. BPC (Bangladesh Statutory Corporation) was established in 1973 under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism with the aim of promoting and developing the tourism sector of Bangladesh.

## 2. History and Geography of Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a small country South Asia which is bordered by India to the West and North, Myanmar to the southeast and the Bay of Bengal to the South. The total area of Bangladesh is 1, 47, 570 sq.km. Before 1947 Bangladesh was the part of Indian Subcontinent and after the partition of India and Pakistan, Bangladesh became the part of Pakistan and it was called 'East Pakistan'. The distance between East Pakistan (Bangladesh) and West Pakistan (Pakistan) was 1600 km. After a Bloody war with Pakistan, Bangladesh became independent in 1971. Bangladesh has a Tropical Monsoon Climate with the wide variations of rainfall,

temperature and humidity. There are six seasons in Bangladesh those are; Summer, Rainy, Autumn, Late Autumn, Winter and Spring. April is considered as the warmest month with the average temperature of 92°F and January is considered as the coolest month with the average temperature of 57°F to 75°F. Minimum 2000 mm rainfall is received by the most of the parts of Bangladesh.

## 3. Demography of Bangladesh

Though Bangladesh is a small country but it has a large population and the total number of population is 168 million (2018) and the total population of Bangladesh represents 2.18 percent of the world population. Bangladesh is holding the 10<sup>th</sup> position in the world in terms of population. The ratio between male and female is 50.6: 49.4. The current literacy rate in Bangladesh is 72.9%.

## 4. Research Objectives

The specific research objectives of this study are:

- To know about the current status of Bangladesh's Tourism industry.
- To examine the impact of tourism in the GDP of Bangladesh.
- To find out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of tourism sector of Bangladesh.

## 5. Methodology

The main purpose of this paper is to analyse the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of tourism of Bangladesh and the data was taken from various national and international reports, journal, books, magazines and newspaper.

## 6. Major Tourist Destination of Bangladesh

Bangladesh is rich in tourist destination and different types of destinations are available for different types of tourist.

**Table 1: Tourist destination of Bangladesh**

Category	Sites name
Archaeological sites	Lalbag fort, Mughal Eidgah, Ahsan Manjil, Sonargoan, Wari Bateshwar, Mainamati, Paharpur, Mahasthangar, Kantajew Temple, Sixty Dome Mosque.
Beaches	Patenga, Parki, Cox's Bazar, Teknaf, Kuakata, Kotka.
Religious places	Mosque, Hindu Temple, Churches, Buddhist Temple.
Hills and Island	Rangamati- The lake district, Kaptai- the lake town, Bandarban- The roof of Bangladesh, Khagrachhari- The hilltop town, Mymensingh, Sylhet, Moheshkhali Island, Sonadia Island, St-Martin's Island.
Historical Places	Mausoleum of Father of the nation, National Memorial, Central Shahid Minar, Martyred Intellectual Minar, National poet's grave, Curzon Hall, Baldha Garden, Sohrwardi park, Old High court Building, Bahadur Shah Park, Dighapatiya palace, World War II Cemetery, Shilaidaha Kuthibari, Sagordari- jessor, Mujibnagar Memorial, Trishal, Gandhi Asram.
Forest and Swamp forest	Sundarbans, Ratargul Swamp Forest.
Others Attractions	National Assembly Building, Bangabhaban, Shankharibazar, Sadarghat, Ramna Park, National Botanical Garden, National Zoological Garden, National Park, Batali Hill, DC Hill, Rajshahi, Jamuna Bridge, Madhabkundu, Jaflong.

(Source: Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation)

### 6.1 UNESCO Recognised World Heritage site of Bangladesh:

There are three world heritage sites in Bangladesh which have been recognised by UNESCO.

**Table 2: UNESCO world heritage sites of Bangladesh**

Site Name	Category	Recognition Year
Historic Mosque City of Bagerhat	Cultural	1985
Ruins of the Buddhist Vihara at Paharpur	Cultural	1985
The Sundarbans	Natural	1997

(Source: whc.unesco.org)

### 6.2 Sites on the Tentative List:

- Mahansthagarh and its Environs – 1999
- The Lalmai-Mainamati Group of monuments – 1999
- Lalbagh Fort – 1999
- Halud Vihara – 1999
- Jagadala Vihara -1999

(Source: whc.unesco.org)

## 7. Growth of Tourism in Bangladesh

Generating more tourists is the main aim of the development of tourism. Though Bangladesh is trying to develop its tourism sector but Bangladesh could not able maintain the consistency of tourist's arrival growth and it has declined in the recent years. CEIC has calculated the number of tourist arrival and the percentage of tourist's arrival growth

from the year 1981-2014. According to the CEIC reports in the year of 2014 Bangladesh received total 1, 19, 161 number of tourist and in 2013 the total number of arriving tourist was 1, 48, 349 so it is seen that Bangladesh's tourist arrival growth has dropped 19.7% in comparison to the previous year.

**Table 3: Tourist arrival and their growth**

Year	No. Of Tourist Arrival	Tourists Growth in %	Year	No. Of Tourist Arrival	Tourists Growth in %
1981	49315.000	—	1998	171961.000	-5.733 %
1982	53705.000	8.902 %	1999	172781.000	0.477 %
1983	79818.000	48.623 %	2000	199211.000	15.297 %
1984	103130.000	29.206 %	2001	207199.000	4.010 %
1985	145634.000	41.214 %	2002	207246.000	0.023 %
1986	129070.000	-11.374 %	2003	244509.000	17.980 %
1987	106765.000	-17.281 %	2004	271270.000	10.945 %
1988	120782.000	13.129 %	2005	207662.000	-23.448 %
1989	128064.000	6.029 %	2006	200311.000	-3.540 %
1990	115069.000	-9.913 %	2007	249644.000	24.628 %

1991	113242.000	-1.844 %	2008	185724.000	-25.604 %
1992	110475.000	-2.443 %	2009	165215.000	-11.043 %
1993	126785.000	14.764 %	2010	173183.000	4.823 %
1994	140122.000	10.519 %	2011	154617.000	-10.720 %
1995	156231.000	11.496 %	2012	124943.000	-19.192 %
1996	165887.000	6.181 %	2013	148349.000	18.733 %
1997	182420.000	9.966 %	2014	119161.000	-19.675 %

(Source: [www.ceicdata.com](http://www.ceicdata.com)|ceic data)

## 8. Revenue From the Tourism Sector

Tourism plays an important role in the economy and it is the major revenue source for many countries. CEIC has recorded the total revenue and revenue's growth of Bangladesh from the year 1995-2016. According to the CEIC report, in the year of 2015 the total revenue from the tourism

sector was 148 million USD and in 2016 Bangladesh earned 175 million USD from the tourism sector and Bangladesh's tourism revenue grew 17.925% in comparison with the previous year (2015).

**Table 4: Revenue from tourism sector and growth**

Year	Revenue from tourism in USD (million)	Tourism Revenue growth in %	Year	Revenue from tourism in USD (million)	Tourism Revenue growth in %
1995	25.000	—	2006	79.000	-3.659 %
1996	33.000	32.000 %	2007	80.000	1.266 %
1997	62.000	87.879 %	2008	59.000	-26.250 %
1998	52.000	-16.129 %	2009	95.000	61.017 %
1999	50.000	-3.846 %	2010	104.000	9.474 %
2000	50.000	0.000 %	2011	97.000	-6.731 %
2001	48.000	-4.000 %	2012	105.000	8.247 %
2002	59.000	22.917 %	2013	131.000	24.762 %
2003	59.000	0.000 %	2014	154.000	17.557 %
2004	76.000	28.814 %	2015	148.400	-3.636 %
2005	82.000	7.895 %	2016	175.000	17.925 %

(Source: [www.ceicdata.com](http://www.ceicdata.com)|ceic data)

## 9. SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heaven for budget traveller.</li> <li>• Rich of arts and culture.</li> <li>• Archaeological sites.</li> <li>• Beaches and Island.</li> <li>• Adventure Tourism.</li> <li>• Sports Tourism.</li> <li>• Religious tourism.</li> <li>• Bengali cuisine.</li> <li>• Wild life and Hill tracks.</li> <li>• Friendliness and Hospitality of the Bangladeshi people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of Promotion.</li> <li>• Insufficiency of good quality accommodation.</li> <li>• Insufficiency of Transportation.</li> <li>• Lack of Safety and Security.</li> <li>• Lack of Awareness.</li> <li>• Insufficiency of Tour Guide.</li> <li>• Communication Problem.</li> <li>• Low quality services.</li> <li>• Lack of investment.</li> <li>• Lack of innovation.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the tourism by Social media.</li> <li>• Promote the tourism by sports.</li> <li>• New tourism products and innovation.</li> <li>• Implementation of Eco-Tourism and Spiritual Tourism.</li> <li>• Making the tourist sites more attractive.</li> <li>• Organising the international event.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political Instability.</li> <li>• Threats of security.</li> <li>• Natural Disaster.</li> <li>• Language barrier of the Bangladeshi people.</li> <li>• Absence of proper tourism policy.</li> <li>• Corruption.</li> </ul>

## 10. Conclusion

Tourism is a very raising and promising sector for Bangladesh. Tourism not only helps to earn foreign revenue but also it has some other economic benefits also like;

generating employment, increased TAX revenue, improvement of infrastructure, rural development promoter, increased gross domestic product. Bangladesh is rich of tourist sites so the tourism sector can play the vital rule in the growth of country's economy. The ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism of

Bangladesh and the authority of BPC (Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation) need take some initiatives for the development of tourism sector. Bangladesh has many opportunities to grow up this sector and these scopes should have to be used properly.

If it is possible to turn the weaknesses of tourism sector into strengths and to take some necessary steps to reduce the chances of threats then for sure the tourism sector will be the highest contributor to the country's economical growth.

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