

## PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS OF TOURISM INDUSTRY IN SUNDARBANS OF BANGLADESH

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### Article history:

Submission 20 December 2022

Revised 24 December 2022

Accepted 27 December 2022

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### ABSTRACT

Tourism is one of the ever-growing industries not only Bangladesh but also all around the world. Meanwhile, Sundarbans has considered as one of the best nature-based tourism sites in Bangladesh whilst few local peoples participate in this tourism sector. This study examines to analyze the present scenario of the tourism industry as well as identifying the different attractive tourist spots and its problems in the Sundarbans for analyzing the opportunities. Handling a self-administered interview schedule through convenience sampling, data were collected from 120 respondents who were obtained tourist spot in Sundarbans of Khulna Division. Findings showed that 88% tourist having knowledge about different tourist Spots of Sundarbans. The majority of the respondents (34%) visited to Koromjol and the other 29% in Herbaria, even 25% in Hiron Point. The different reasons of visiting a place, here, 46% tourist stayed this place along with 25% for place relaxation, even 17% for Study tour and 8% for research as well as 4% others purposes. The study clearly showed that satisfactory level of tourist of sundarbans articulated by their ratings. 28% tourist are fully pleased, 35% tourist satisfactory level is good and 20% tourist are gratified. On the constant 13% tourist are dissatisfied and 4% tourist are very dissatisfied on the facilities on sundarbans. However, 33% tourist said developing infrastructure, 39% tourist ensuring tourist security, 17% tourist talking realistic policy as well as only 11% tourist suggested to other policy.

**Keywords:** *Tourism, Visit, Industry, Prospects, Sundarbans, etc.*

### Introduction

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries as well as the major source of foreign exchange earnings and employment for many developing countries. It is a leisure activity which involves a discretionary use of time and money. It is a travel for recreation, religious, leisure, family or business purposes,

usually for a limited duration. It can be domestic or international. Nowadays, it is one of the major source of income for many countries (Ahmed et al., 2021). Chakraborty et al., (2008) found that tourism has immense social, economic, environmental cultural benefits. It also helps in poverty alleviation programs through creating employment opportunity for the local

### How to cite:

Rimon, A. M., Akhi, N., & Aktar R. (2022). Prospects and Problems of Tourism Industry in Sundarbans of Bangladesh. *Indonesian Journal of Social Science Research*, 3(1), 121 – 129. doi: 10.11594/ijssr.03.02.08

poor. It affects the economy of both the source and host countries, in some cases it is of vital importance. Its importance was recognized in the Manila Declaration on World Tourism of 1980 as declared 'an activity essential to the life of nations because of its direct effects on the social, cultural, educational, and economic sectors of national societies and on their international relations' (Manila Declaration on World Tourism, 1980).

Bangladesh has an attractive natural environment and many historical-cultural places which can be potentially utilized for the development of tourism. The country is bestowed with beautiful coasts and beaches, archeological sites, historical and religious places, hills and islands, forests and jungles and attractive countryside with innumerable water bodies and green fields of agriculture. That is why; the country is called blessed with natural beauty which attracts the tourists. It has beautiful beaches including the longest beach in the world and beautiful heritage and historical relics. To make the best use of the natural gifts, the country has developed facilities of modern hotels, motels, rest houses, youth inns and restaurants, modern modes of communication, that are available at almost all tourist sites (Arif & Islam, 2011).

The concept of tourism has now placed a wider significance among the mass people, government and development planner in Bangladesh. Beyond Cox's Bazar and Sundarbans, Sundarbans is in the second position of the ladder of priority of tourism sector in Bangladesh. These rich natural and cultural attractions are valuable ingredients to promote tourism in the country. In Sundarbans, there are many things that can attract the visitors' attention to get the world recognition in a very short period of time. Proper planning, accurate development process can eliminate the problems that make hindrance to the development process. The reasons which are responsible in the way of the development process should be resolved for the prosperity of Bangladesh tourism sector as well as the economic growth as early as possible. Even it can easily appeal to a large number of local and foreign tourists for its exceptional features and earn a large number of foreign exchanges through tourism marketing.

Bangladesh already has taken a position as a fast emerging appealing tourist spot on the global map. Bangladesh is a country of millennium cultural heritage with diverse attractions and bountiful nature where millions of friendly people add an extra advantage to make it ahead (Islam & Akteruzzaman, 2021)

Moreover, tourism industry in Bangladesh is faced with many problems, such as lack of good transportation and communication system, lack of well-planned accommodation, food, entertainment and other services to satisfy diverse categories of tourists. The issue of security of the tourists of both domestic and foreign origins is also very important for the development of tourism in Bangladesh. The Sundarbans and its adjacent region are low-lying areas and known as Bhati for more than centuries ago. The most important physio-graphical feature around the Sundarbans is its wetlands and water bodies. But unfortunately there is no archeological evidence that could provide a reliable chronological history of the wonderful Sundarbans.

However, prospects and problems of tourism industry in Sundarbans of Bangladesh including several studies around the world. Many academics have published numerous books and essays in various magazines and journals. The same image may be seen all across the globe and Bangladesh is no different. As a result, the focus of this study is on the the present scenario of the tourism industry as well as identifying the different attractive tourist spots and its problems in the Sundarbans for analyzing the opportunities.

## Materials and Methods

Identifying the survey research design, the nature of this study is descriptive as well as this study was carried out on respondents who were the tourist who came here Sundarbans in once or several times. The researcher collected tourist interviews from koromjol, Herbaria, Hiron point & Dublar Chor forest office in Khulna division. The interview schedule containing both open and closed questions in English as well as designed for data collection. According to the aforesaid a criterion by the research, 120 respondents were identified from tourist spots selected through purposive sampling

method. Here the researcher use Convenience Sampling Techniques because there is a large number of population along with primary data were collected from the respondents directly. Those data collection conducted from 15 February, 2017 to 10 January, 2018. The aims and objectives of the study were clearly explained to the participants and they were assured that their information was only used for study purpose and their permission was taken before interview and recording of the interview. However, the raw data were edited, coded, classified

and cleaned by the researcher before analysis started. After data processing, data analysis and interpretation were done through using statistical techniques by using different software like (MS-Word and MS- Excel).

**Results**

This quantitative research design including survey method was very helpful for me to find out the real thought. I wanted to observe the main prospects of tourism industry.

**Tourist Knowledge about Different Tourist Spots of Sundarbans**

knowledge about Sundarbans	Tourist	Percent
Yes	106	88
No	14	12
Total	120	100

From this above table 1, it is illustrated that 88% tourist knowledge about different tourist Spots of Sundarbans. They have clear

knowledge about this forest. Otherwise, 12% tourist have not any knowledge about different tourist Spots of Sundarbans.

**Frequency of Traveling (In a Year)**

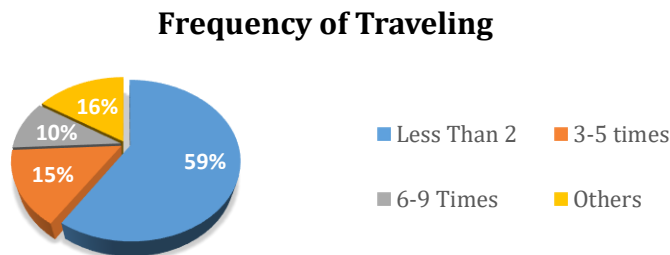


Figure 1. Frequency of Traveling (In a Year)

The pie chart evaluates that tourists traveled in different tourist spots where 59% of the respondents were found visited less than 2 times and 3-5 times were visited by only 15%

of the tourists. There is a significant number of tourist visited more than 6-9 times places but less than 10 times. Only 16% of the tourists were found visited more than 10 times.

**Tourist Spots that you stayed in Sundarbans**

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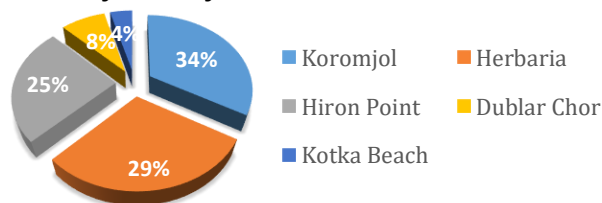


Figure 2. tourist spots you stayed in Sundarbans

It's obvious from the field data that the majority of the respondents (34%) stayed to Koromjol and 29% Herbaria in this region.

Even, a small portion of the respondents 8% was found visited Dublar chor.

**Main Reason for visiting Sundarbans**

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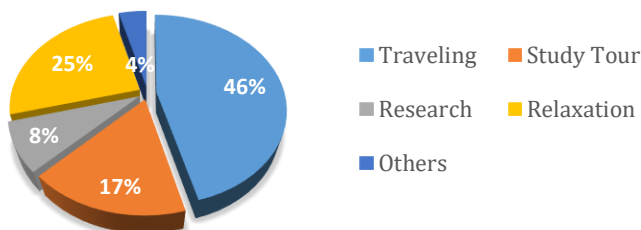


Figure 3. Main Reason for visiting Sundarbans

The graph shows five different reasons of visiting a place. Here, 46% tourist went to see this place and 25% visited for place relaxation,

even 17% for Study , 8% for research and 4% others purposes.

**Transportation you prefer most**

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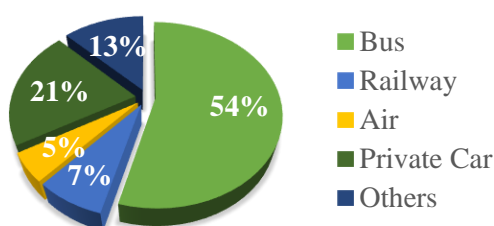


Figure 4. Transportation you prefer most

It is identified that 54% tourist preferred bus for their transportation and 21% for private car, even, 13% others types of personal

transportation and rest of tourist use air and railway for traveling.

**5.1.7 Direct communication system to the Sundarbans by road.**

**Direct communication system to the Sundarbans by road**

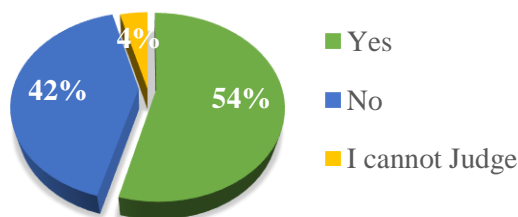


Figure 5. Any Kind of problem choosing transportation

From the analysis researcher found that 54% tourist wanted to direct communication system to the Sundarbans by road. On the

constant 42%, do not need this system and least 4% they cannot judge their opinion.

**Day want to visit Sundarbans**

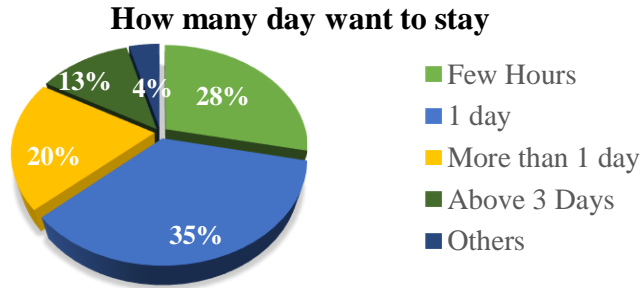


Figure 6. Day want to visit Sundarbans

After a long journey tourist want to stay Beside Sundarbans Hotel, Resort and Motel. But in there no enough accommodation facilities in this area. Tourist want to stay in quality full

Hotel or Motel. However, 35% tourist want to stay for 1 day, 28% for few hours. 20% tourist wanted to vacation more than 1 day and 13% for above 3 days.

**Accommodation problem during visiting Sundarbans**

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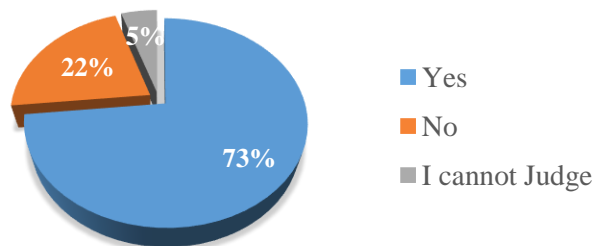


Figure 7. Accommodation problem during visiting Sundarbans

A lot of tourist had excused and difficulties to visit Sundarbans. 73% tourist have problem when they travel to Sundarbans. Moreover,

22% tourist have no problem and only 5% tourist do not express their opinion.

**Faces food problem during visiting Sundarbans**

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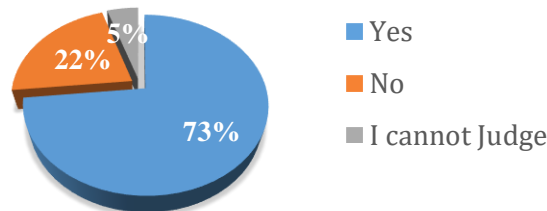


Figure 8. Faces food problem during visiting Sundarbans

It is mentioned that 73% tourist had problem when they traveled to Sundarbans. 22% tourist had no problem and only 5% tourist do not express their opinion.

**Sundarbans is a safety Tourist spot**

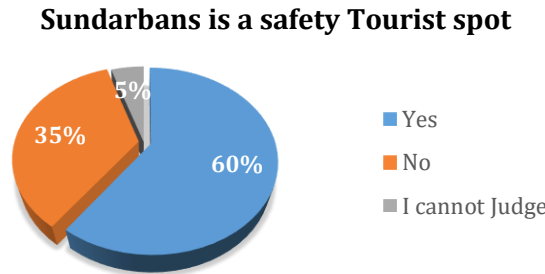


Figure 9. Sundarbans is a safety tourist spot

60% tourist says Sundarbans is a safety tourist spot from previous time. Because of monitoring of Bangladesh forest Department, Bangladesh Coast Guard, Bangladesh Police, Rapid Action Battalion (RAB). On the other side 35% tourist said that its not a safety place.

**Facilities that tourist deserved in future**

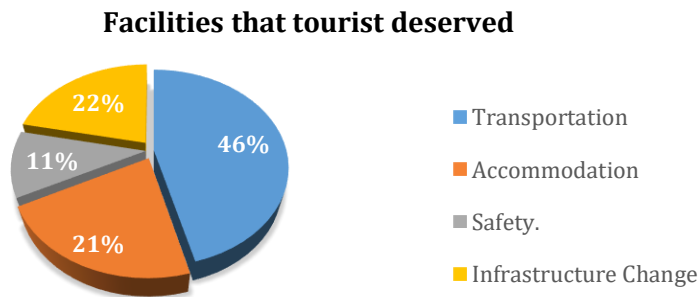


Figure 10. Facilities that tourist deserved

Tourist of Sundarbans deserved different types of facilities. 46% for transportation facilities, 22% for infrastructural changes, 21% for improving accommodation quality changes, rest of the 11% tourist justified safety issue.

**Govt. should takes necessary action against river crossing in future.**

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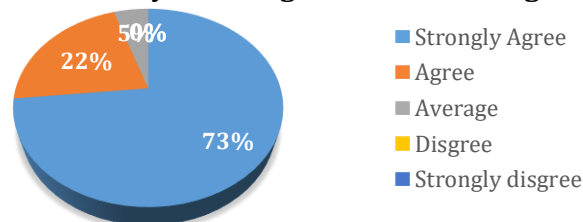


Figure 11. Govt. should takes necessary action against river crossing in future

Tourist of Sundarbans believed that more safety of Sundarbans increased in future by taking government. Here, 71% tourist was strongly agree, 22% tourist agree, only 5% tourist were average in their opinion.

### More Safety increase in future

More Safety increase in future

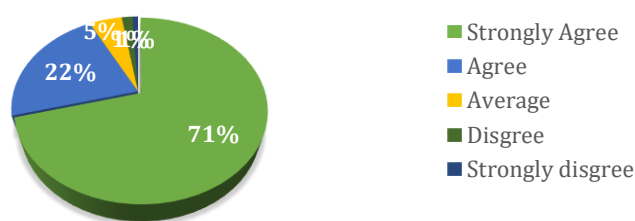


Figure 12. More Safety increase in future

Tourist of Sundarbans trusted that government should take necessary actions against river crossing in future. Here, 73% tourist was strongly agree, 22% agree, only 5% tourist

were average in their opinion. A few number of tourist were disagree because they wanted to increase safety from this time.

### Rating the Facilities of Tourist Spots (Sundarbans)

Rating the Facilities

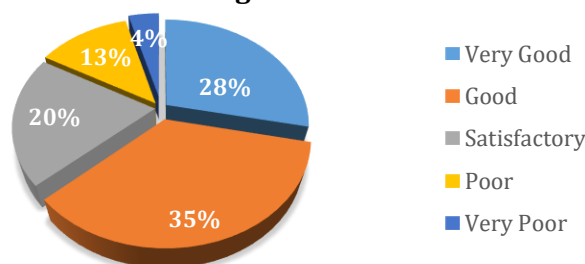


Figure 13. Rating the Facilities of Tourist Spots (Sundarbans)

Satisfactory level of tourist of sundarbans expressed by their ratings. 28% tourist were fully pleased and 35% tourists satisfactory

level was good. On the other hand, 13% tourist were dissatisfied and 4% tourist were very dissatisfied on the facilities on sundarbans.

### Suggestion for Improvement of tourism in Sundarbans

Suggestion for Improvement of tourism in Sundarbans

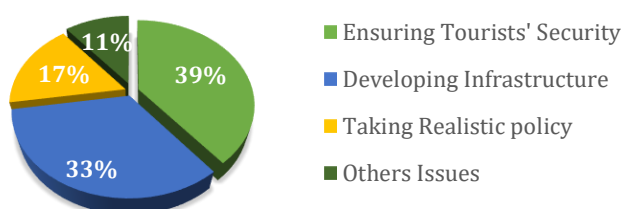


Figure 14. Rating the Facilities of Tourist Spots (Sundarbans)

Tourist gave some suggestions to improve tourism in Sundarbans. 33% tourist said developing infrastructure, 39% tourist for ensuring

tourist security, 17% tourist suggested to taking realistic policy, only 11% tourist proposed to other policy.

## Discussion

Tourism sector in Bangladesh has potential market and marketing strategies (Hasan, 1992). This study demonstrated that tourist of Sundarbans having knowledge different types of tourist spot. In Sundarbans included Koromjol, Herbaria, Hiron point, Jafor point, Dublar chor, kotka beach, e.t.c. In this study obtained that tourist came to several times to visit Sundarbans or other purposes, even in winter season tourist gather more and more. At present, it is very important to preserve the places and develop necessary infrastructures for attraction of travelers from different regions within the country and also from foreign countries (Latif, 2016). Some of them were stayed Sundarbans only for travelling, some for study or family tour; some of respondents for relaxation of personal purpose. This study highlighted that roads and personal cars to the tourists were found very popular as a means of communication and traveling to Sundarbans. However, it's a matter of surprise that airways were not found suitable to the tourist. Tourists could be increased at any places if the attractive resources were available. Tourists were found, from the observation, very enthusiastic for frequent visiting Sundarbans. The majority part of the respondents visited Sundarbans area more than once in every year. It is a great sign to boost up this trend of staying and their eagerness as well. Tourist preferred railway for their transportation that railway is a safest way to reach Sundarbans. Infrastructure facilities were not adequate for this sector of the country. Accommodation facilities were not at satisfactory level at different tourist spots in Bangladesh (Latif, 2016). Some were highly expensive which were not affordable to both domestic and international tourist and some were in poor condition. Transportation linkage i.e. road, rail air and water is not good. The success of tourism sector mostly depends on marketing promotion tools like advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and public relations (Latif, 2015). Tourism sector of Bangladesh is facing many obstacles (Arif, 2011). This study also mentioned different types of problem. The accommodation system near the Sundarbans is not in a good shape. Some tourists had faced food problem and some were not. Now a day

Sundarbans is a safety place. They felt its safe for them and some were not. Tourist deserved various facilities such as transportation, accommodation, safety, infrastructure changes etc. Satisfaction of tourist is very important for improvement of tourism in a large extend. The study found that most of the tourists were satisfied. Government of Bangladesh launched an act of "Protected areas of tourism and special tourism zone (Kabir et al., 2012). Bangladesh is the country in the region that have the least arrivals and revenue earned from tourism industry (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010). Tourism is one of the profitable sectors in Bangladesh (Elena et al., 2012). The empirical data shown that as a tourist attraction, the potentiality of Sundarbans is satisfactory as the majority of the visitors agreed with this view.

## Recommendations

Following measures are essential for the development of tourism sector in Bangladesh:

- a. Up-to-date the current tourism policies promoting the Sundarbans in Bangladesh associate with the world tourism market.
- b. Tourism spots and related institutes should be activated by the private sector.
- c. Tourism-associated disciplines like tourism and hotel management should be started at all universities in Bangladesh.
- d. Infrastructures related to the tourism sector should be constructed and maintained. The rail connection between all the tourist places is mandatory.
- e. Political stability should be preserved to appeal the foreign tourist.
- f. To provide medical services for the tourist's ships.
- g. To confirm the openness of the tourist guide.
- h. Government should take the movements about the safety system at the tourist place.

## Conclusion

Bangladesh has many scenarios to appeal to foreign travelers especially Sundarbans as well as development internally. But this opportunity can be changed into reality through dynamic marketing of tourism products and services. The Sundarbans which is globally acknowledged as a heritage site for many years can be



an easy getaway for the economic enlargement of Bangladesh. Tourism sector comprises fascinations, accommodation mediators, transportation, public sector & policy, and destination. Bangladesh's tourist attractions include archaeological sites, historical mosques and monuments, resorts, beaches, picnic spots, forests and tribal people, wildlife of various species. The benefits that are received from tourism should be fairly distributed and sustainable. Finally, as tourism development involves multi-dimensional activities, visionary leadership at national, regional and local levels is of utmost necessity. To make it conclude, the government should be demonstrative enough and strict to make sure the expansion of the Sundarbans with the suggested planning and proposals from the tourism experts.

### Acknowledgements

In accomplishing this research over the last several months, many people supported me in various ways. Among them first and foremost, I am greatly obliged to Sundorbans forest office in Khulna division for their intellectual motivation, valuable advice and continuous guidance.

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