

HOLISTIC APPROACH TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND DESTINATION IMAGE OF CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS

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Introduction

One of the fundamental objectives of governments is to ensure socio-economic well-being of citizens. To meet this demand, governments harness resources that ensure development. Strategies employed are diversification of economy to include sectors such as tourism and agriculture. Tourism is a global force for economic development (UNDP, 2014). The sector includes aspects such as eco, cultural, business and recreational tourism. Tourism brings benefits that create income and development creating a destination image nationally and internationally.

Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is a combination of three hilly district of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban. It is approximately one tenth of the total area of Bangladesh with a population of about 1.6 million people. Local tribes are Marma, Tripura, Chakma, Taungchengya, Mru, Chak, Pankho, Bawn, Murung, Khyang, Lushai Mizo, Gurkha, Santal, Assamese and Khumi. CHT is divided into hilly and plain areas. It is endowed with hills, rivers, water falls, lakes and creepy Jungles. Its forest inhabits different species of animals and birds.

Despite the diverse natural, cultural, historical and commercial attributes of CHT, it has not developed into a tourist destination despite government initiatives and development effort in infrastructure. Reasons for the slow development were prior to now attributed to the region remaining outside mainstream development because of British colonial policy that treated it as an excluded area, remote terrain, absence of infrastructure and agitations of CHT tribal people who want to retain control of tribal and ancestral lands, nature, culture and ethnic communities.

Conceptual Discourse

Tourism Development

United Nations 70th General assembly assigned 2017 as International year of tourism development. Along with World Tourism Organization (WTO), both organizations envisaged that if tourism is developed, it would create employment, economic growth and eradicate poverty. Tourism provides tourists with multifarious experience that includes factors such as natural environment, people, culture, climate, infrastructure, supporting facilities and geographical location. Tourism succeeds if the destination is able to supply a product that can be preserved and renewed. This strengthens the image of the destination and paves way for sustainable development that is holistic and multi-sectorial.

Categories of Tourism

People travel for domestic or foreign tourism. Such travel creates tourism demands that are seasonal necessitating categorization of tourism into recreational, cultural, sports, business, religious, health and educational tourism. Contributions of different forms of tourism and travel in Bangladesh are evident in the economy. According to WTTC Travel and Tourism Economic Impact, (2015) direct contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP in Bangladesh in 2014 was BDT 296.6 bn (1.9% of GDP). This rose to 5.9% BDT 314.1 bn in 2015. The direct contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP is expected to grow by 6.1% to BDT 566.3 bn (2.0% of GDP) by 2025.

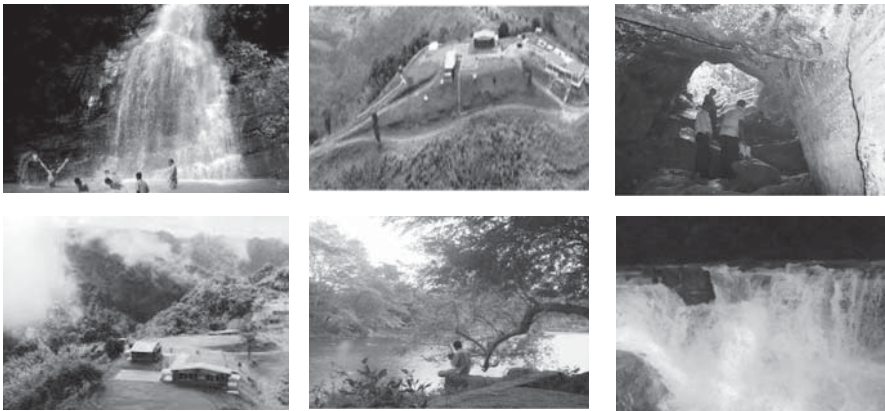
In the period reviewed, domestic travel spending generated 97.9% of direct Travel and Tourism GDP in 2014 compared with 2.1% for visitor exports (i.e. foreign visitor spending or international tourism receipts). Domestic travel spending is expected to grow by 5.9% in 2015 to BDT 517.7 bn and rise by 5.9% to BDT 917.8 bn in 2025. Visitor exports are expected to grow by 3.7% in 2015 to BDT 10.6 bn and rise by 5.7% to BDT 18.4 bn in 2025. Tourism seems a viable sector for employment and socio-economic benefits for Bangladesh and particularly for CHT.

Tourism Potentials of CHT

Community based tourism is regarded as a good form of tourism because it meet demands of local communities. It helps to reduce poverty and engages local people in conservation of resources. Tourists' attractions in CHT are spread and interconnected within Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandaban. Tourism potentials in CHT are:

- **Natural and Scenic Beauty:** CHT is endowed with natural lakes such as Rainkhanekine and manmade Lake Kaptai that has a hanging bridge of 335 feet. The region has other natural features such as the dark cave in Alutilla, the forest and Hills of Guimara and Shubhlong water falls. The region boasts of mountains, water bodies and faunas. Pictures depicting natural and scenic beauty sites in CHT are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Natural and Scenic beauty of CHT

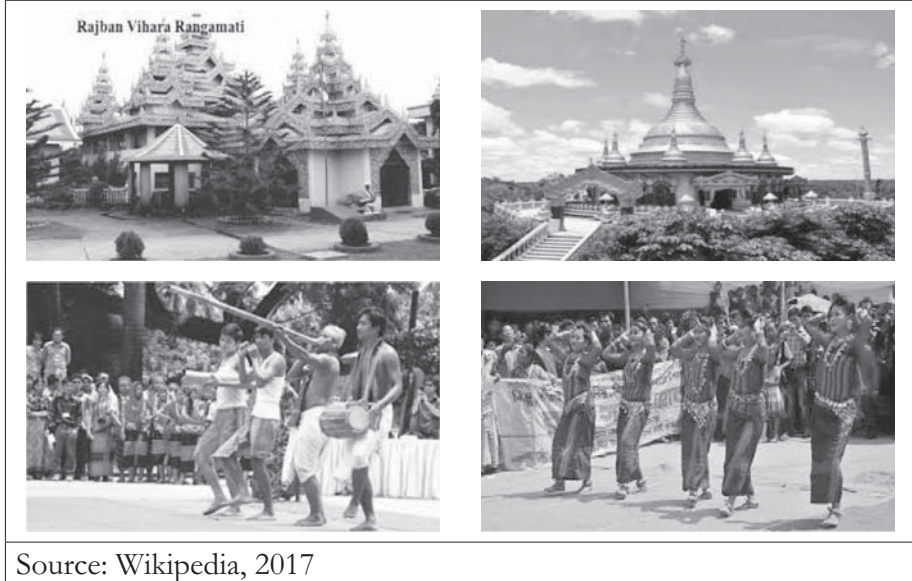


Source: Wikipedia, 2017

- **Cultural and Religious Festivals:** CHT is the most diversified region in Bangladesh in terms of ethnicity and culture . Local people have diverse cultural heritage and traditions suitable for tourism development (Bhuiyan, et al., 2014). The biggest festival in CHT is called Boisabi. Through this festival, Hill Track people observe and welcome the New Year 1st Boishakh of Bengali year (Anannya, 2015). Unique festivals held are the boat race in Karnaphully and religious occasion of Kotlin

Chibok (Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, 2013). Amazing locations of religious significance in the region are the Buddha Dhatu Jadi temple and the Patharghata church (Chowdhury, 2013). Pictures showing temples of worship and cultural festivals are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Temples and Cultural Festivals

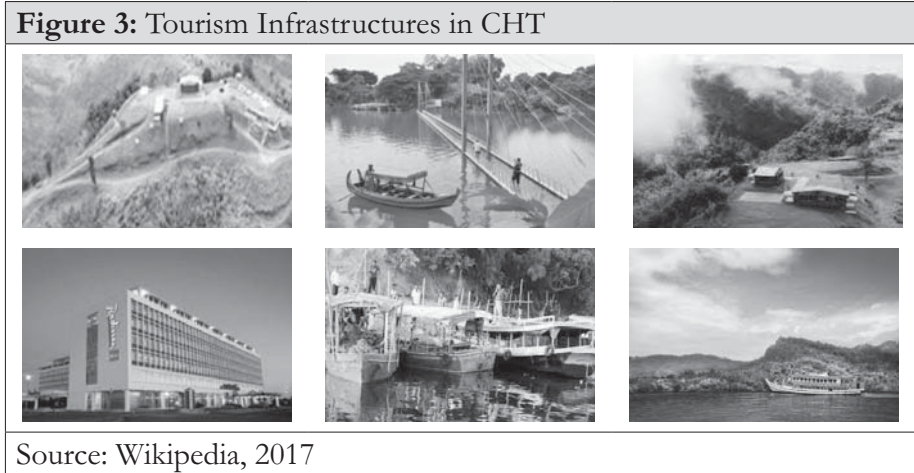


Source: Wikipedia, 2017

Shopping and Handicraft Production: The major occupation of CHT people is agriculture. The people also produce and sell their own textiles. Jute rugs, handicrafts and hand loom textiles are attractive items to buy. CHT also offers shopping at Kalpataru Shilpaniketan in Rangamati (Bangladesh Prajatan Corporation, 2013). For cheap clothes, one can visit Terry Bazaar and Tamakurdi lane (Chowdhury, 2013).

- **Infrastructure:** For tourism purposes, CHT is yet to develop infrastructures such as accommodation, restaurants, transportation and medical facilities (Bhuiyan et al. 2014). However the region has an enchanting island resort called Pedatingting that offers Leisure Park, ethnic dishes and sights of the floating fruit market. Motorboats are also available to convey tourists to natural landmarks and monuments across lakes (Anannya, 2015). Also, available are few 3 star hotels, such

as the resorts at Foy's Lake and Nilgiri. (Chowdhury, 2013). Pictures showing available hotels, hanging bridge and water transport in CHT are shown in Figure 3.



- **Historical Heritage:** CHT have significant historical heritage. Rangamati was contested by the kings of Tripura and Arakan before coming under Mughal Empire. Bandarban is the home town of the Bohmong Chief, head of Marma population. Places of historical heritage are the court building museum, ethnological museum and Zia museum (Shamsuddoha, Alam & Nasir, 2008). Other places of interest are the war of liberation monument and the tribal museums. (Bangladesh Prajatan Corporation, 2013). Pictures showing historical sites in CHT are depicted in Figure 4.



The Concept of Destination Image

Destination image is important because it influences the decision-making behavior of potential tourists (Crompton, 1979). Destination image is the expression of knowledge, impression, prejudice, imagination and emotional thoughts an individual or group have of a place (Lawson and Baud-Bovy, 1977). The image a destination conveys becomes the elements that influence tourists when choosing a destination (Ferreira-Lopes, 2011). Such images could be based on historical, political, economic and social information (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991).

Destination image is considered the most important element of a tourist destination and become critical factors for the success or failure of tourism management (Ferreira-Lopes, 2011). An attractive destination image may not apply to CHT because infrastructures and transport facilities are not developed. There are also security concerns in addition to unresolved issues of land with tribal people that restrains development. To develop tourism and create a positive image for CHT, there is a need to study countries that had similar development challenges, but were able to develop their tourism.

Case Study of Tourism Development from other Countries

The need to develop tourism and provide economic benefits for local communities brings to fore issues of land ownership by indigenous people. Countries like the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Indonesia have been able to develop strategies to overcome such challenges. In drawing lessons for CHT, It is imperative to discuss the strategies employed by these countries.

Tourism Development in the Federated States of Micronesia

FSM had a complex system of traditional land ownership that saw lands as an identity rather than economic commodities. Tourism development in FSM requires access to land. Limited land, growing population and

economic activities placed pressure on traditional land ownership. The complexity in land ownership makes access and acquisition of land difficult (ADB, 2015) stalling tourism growth in the country.

In 2000, land reform was undertaken under the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The objective was to implement development strategy for private sector-led economic growth to manage land and capital resources. Due to constrained use of private lands, the reforms were partially achieved. However, to promote tourism development, government introduced the following:

- Acknowledging that communities dictate land use, community participation was important in accessing private lands for productive use. The role of local communities in developing tourism was required. Accordingly, capacity building was provided in this regard.
- Exploring accessible lands was critical to tourism development. Some land owners were willing for their properties to be developed for tourism purposes provided they have government support and share of the investment return.
- Getting the support of traditional leaders was important in community participatory approach to tourism development.
- Access to government owned tourist sites required tourists to pass through private owned lands. To ensure harmony, there was a need to pay for right-of-way.

Tourism Development in Bali, Indonesia

Communities that have attractive tourism destinations are under pressure to maintain their serenity and uniqueness because of development consequences (Sutawo, 2012). In Indonesia, programs were designed to develop village tourism to make local communities enjoy benefits of tourism development. Government funds and engages local facilitators who understand tourism to implement the programs. According to World Bank (2002), Tourism development in Indonesia will not be successful

without the participation of the communities who desire to preserve their natural resources and socio-cultural legacies. Strategies employed in Bali, Indonesia are:

- Ensuring participation of communities; indigenes are given the opportunity to participate in tourism development either in planning or implementation of decisions. So doing, tourism development priorities are aligned with the aspirations of local communities.
- Stakeholders and communities are engaged and made accountable to allocate resources and disburse funds for the implementation and development of tourism projects.
- Community empowerment through tourism development is encouraged to strengthen local organization and mobilize resources. This builds capacities for the locals and provides communities platforms to advance their needs and aspiration.

Development Lessons for Chittagong Hill Tracts

Lessons learnt for CHT from strategies employed by FSM and Indonesia in their tourism development efforts are as follows:

Need to Involve Indigenous People in Tourism Development

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) acknowledged the difficulties acquiring land for tourism in FSM. A framework was developed to establish relationships between investors and land owners in communities. The policy provided that in liaison with district councils, indigenous people with the aim of preserving their lands and culture have input in determining terms of agreement for tourism development. Government of Bangladesh (GOB) could lend from this by engaging concerned Hill Tracts Councils and International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) to work in collaboration with WTO to develop a workable framework that takes cognisance of land ownership policies in designing programs that will attract tourism development and investment in CHT.

Marking Private Owned Lands against Government (Khas) Lands for Tourism Development Purposes

Developing tourism and attracting a destination image for CHT may not be achieved if private owned lands are not separated from government lands known as Khas lands. This is attributed to the clause provided on land issues in the 1997 Peace Accord. Marking would delineate land owned by tribal people. Accordingly, CHT tribal families willing to avail their lands for tourism investments are opportune to do so with defined contractual agreement. This applies in FSM. Private land owners are often willing for their properties to be developed for tourism purposes provided they have a fair share of the investment returns.

The Need for Public Private Partnership (PPP) in Tourism Development

Governments of FSM and Indonesia understood that tourism development cannot solely be done by government and local communities. Funds required for tourism development are not readily available. Involvement of PPP can widen contracts, strengthen community components within the tourism value chain and improve marketability of tourism initiatives (UNWTO, 2015). The destination image is also perceived negatively because it lacks promotional activities (Chowdhury, 2013). GoB could adopt the concept of PPP. Local people could be given the opportunity to participate in tourism development with the private sector and supporting world organisations in the implementations of decisions that enhances community aspirations.

Need to Educate and Empower People on Benefits of Tourism Development

Indonesia realised that if local communities were informed, they will be better positioned to use natural resources available in their environment. Knowledge could encourage people to offer lands for development and demand accountability from investors. GoB could adopt this approach in

its tourism development initiatives for CHT. A developed tourism sector will educate, build capacities, train communities and provide skills that will position local people to take over investments and management of the tourism sector.

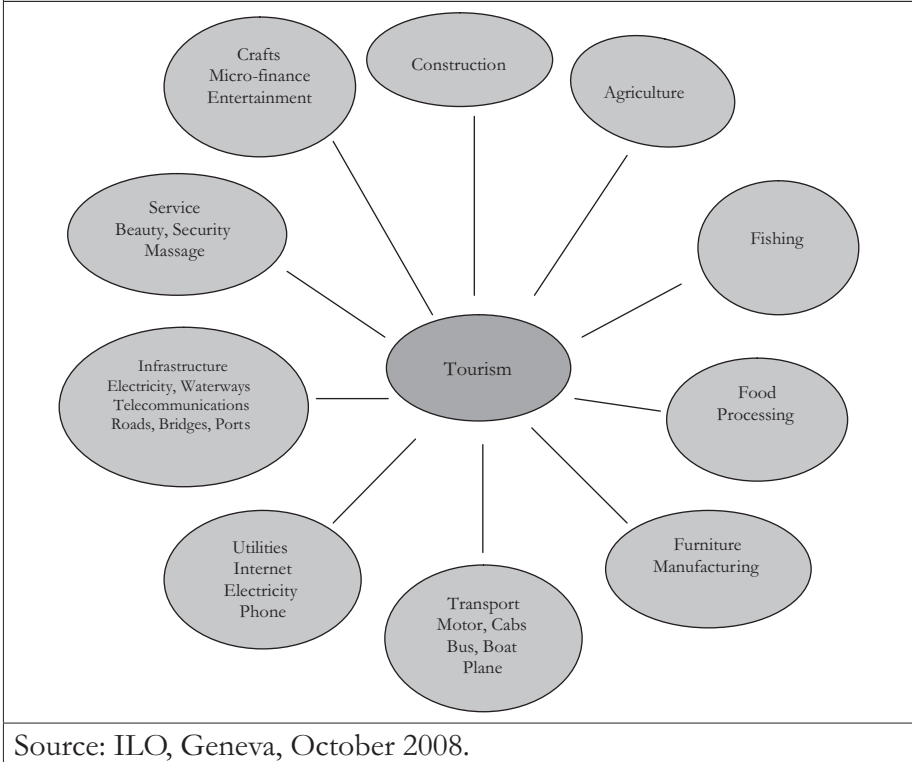
Tourism Development in CHT

Overview of Tourism Development in CHT

Tourism in CHT has immense potentials due to its beauty and bio diversity. GoB through tourism development is making efforts to address macro-economic issues. One of such initiatives is using the Bangladesh Army for development projects such as constructing roads to encourage tourism related activities. Major efforts are the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development that took cognizance of the unique socio-cultural issues, geographical problems and opportunities of ethnic communities in CHT. This is in addition to Government 7th five year plan (2016-2020) and the 2010 national industry policy that gave preference to women entrepreneurs in service industries such as tourism.

The projects designed to promote tourism development and economic security facilitates access to local communities, creating job opportunities that enhances national employment status and income (World Tourism Organization 2014). This establishes strong links between tourism and local economics that fosters community participation in promoting tourism development (Inclusive Tourism Programme, 2011) thus interconnecting various productive sectors of the economy (International Labour Office) reflected in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Tourism Development Links to Productive Sectors of Economy



Source: ILO, Geneva, October 2008.

Policies on Tourism Development of CHT

To end insurgency, GoB signed a Peace Accord with Parbattya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti, on behalf of the inhabitants of CHT in 1997. Part of the objective was to expedite socio-economic development, address grievances of ethnic minorities and build institutions that promote a peaceful society. The accord recognized CHT as a tribal populated region allowing it a unique political and administrative unit with special institutional arrangements.

In ensuring good governance, Bangladesh 2010 National Tourism Policy effected changes in the 1992 tourism policy. Prominent on the 2010 policy was socio-economic development of remote communities by developing products such as CHT. Tourism in CHT a Buddhist populated region was

similarly boosted when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged all Buddhist populated countries to work out a road map to develop tourism (Bangladesh Awami League 2015). Other development initiatives are the Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM) conceptualized for connectivity to enable investment in infrastructure and facilitating closer people to people contact required for tourism development (Wikipedia 2017). Despite these policies, tourism developments initiatives in CHT could not be wholly implemented due to unresolved clauses in the Peace Accord, security concerns and reluctance of tribal people to relinquish land for tourism development (Tripura, 2016).

Influence of Destination Image on Tourism Development in CHT

Destination image is important for visitors to choose a destination (Bashar, 2014). According to Chen and Hsu (2000), destination image can be classified into three categories. Pre-trip which is driven by experience and motivation, during trip which involves tourists' perceptions of service quality and the amount of money spent in trip and post-trip that results in satisfaction, intent of return and the impact of tourism on the community. Information sources such as social media and personal interactions have great influence on the formation of either a positive or negative destination image in the minds of people. Tourism development in CHT needs to satisfy tourist requirements of pre-trip, during trip and post trip. This would inspire development and choice of CHT as a tourist destination.

Analysis of Findings

Analysis shows that there is a direct relationship between tourism attributes of CHT and the destination image of the region. The connection between these two variables emphasized the effect tourism attributes has on development and image of CHT. While acknowledging infrastructure and other development challenges as impediments to the image and tourism development of CHT, it is envisaged that if the issues are addressed, it would change visitor's perception, attract development and bring socioeconomic

benefits to the Hill Tracts. Such developments would increase the net worth of the region, having increased employment rate in Bangladesh by 3.8% in 2016 (by about 2,187,000 jobs), and rising by 2.7% in 2017 with a projection of 3.8% jobs in 2027. It also increased national income in 2016 by 4.3% GDP with growth rate of 7.2% in 2017 and a projected growth of 4.7% GDP by 2027 (WTTC Report 2017).

Challenges and Strategies for Tourism Development in CHT

Issues Militating Against Tourism Development in CHT

Several factors have been mentioned in the 6th and 7th five year plan as impediments to tourism development in Bangladesh. These are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Inaccessibility to Land for Tourism Development

Land issues between tribal people and Bengalis in CHT hinders tourism development. Agitations for control and ownership of land between tribal people and Bengalis are areas of disputes (ICIMOD, 2016). Demands of tribal people to retain control of tribal and ancestral lands (Tripura, 2016) contribute to the slow pace of tourism development. Difficulties associated with acquiring land for infrastructure and tourism activities outside Khas lands frustrate development efforts in CHT.

Inadequate Infrastructure

CHT is yet to develop appropriate facilities and infrastructure for promoting tourism. Infrastructure such as accommodation, communication, roads and river transportation systems are not sufficiently developed to attract tourists. To develop tourism, PPP should focus on infrastructural development that would promote the industry, create a positive image and facilitate economic development in various sectors of the economy.

Issue of Visa

Issuance of Visa militates against tourism development in CHT. Prior to now, regulations for acquiring Visa for tourist were tough in addition to regulations restricting foreign tourists from visiting CHT. Though there are improvements with the introduction of Visa on arrival for business visitors, the privilege has not been extended to most tourists (Bangladesh Tourism Board, 2014). Restrictions associated with traveling to CHT influences the formation of a negative destination image in the minds of people.

Negative Image of the Country Abroad

International perception conveyed by foreign media is that Bangladesh is a country of natural disasters and extreme poverty. While such information is not entirely correct, they contribute to poor tourism development because it influences tourist choosing Bangladesh as a destination. Also, there are reports of kidnaping and harassment of tourist at tourist sites in CHT. These issues discourages tourist from visiting CHT impacting negatively on tourism development.

Lack of Foreign Direct Investment

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is required for tourism development (ICIMOD, 2016). Information on tourism investments opportunities in CHT are not provided by government agencies. Similar information is also not available on websites of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) and Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB). Marketing efforts directed to attract stakeholders to invest in tourism is equally absent. As a result, FDI required to develop tourism in CHT is lost due to lack of information on investments opportunities available in the region.

Security Issues

Security is a challenge hindering tourism development in CHT. There are safety concerns of lives and properties of tourists visiting CHT because of

activities of dissident groups. To provide security, government deployed Bangladesh Army in aid to civil authority. Despite the deployment, there are reports of kidnaping and harassment of tourists. Such security concerns negatively impact on the minds of domestic and foreign tourists

Lack of Skilled Manpower to Manage Tourism

Tourism in CHT lacks institutions and facilities for human resource development. Tourism can only be sustained if it is beneficial to the people (UNWTO, 2015). Local people should be equipped with knowledge that empower them secure employment opportunities in the industry. This is not the case in CHT. Some of the poorest people in Bangladesh are found in this region (Barkar, et al., 2009) due to lack of institutions required to empower local people with appropriate skills. The setback affects development creating a negative destination image.

Economic Issues

Tourism is regarded as a labour intensive industry with wide-ranging employment opportunities for skilled and low-skilled workers. The industry inter connects various sectors of the economy with national economic priorities such as rural development and poverty alleviation that promotes growth. In spite of the benefits associated with tourism, local people in CHT do not support the initiatives due to lack of knowledge on the potentials of the sector to economically empower them.

Conservation of Environment and Culture in Development

The beauty of CHT place tribal people as custodians of ecological diverse areas in Bangladesh. The remote location of CHT in addition to the inaccessible terrain constitute a challenge for government to develop tourism and preserve the environment in line with government commitment to recognise the culture of indigenous people and take steps to protect and develop their unique culture and traditions. Promoting cultural diversity and protecting ecological diversity (Tripura and Chakma, 2016) are issues in conservation of environment and culture in CHT.

Strategies for Developing Tourism in CHT

Several strategies have been suggested to develop tourism in CHT. These include addressing some of the already identified problems, while developing new policies to promote tourism in CHT. These are discussed below:

- **Accessibility of Lands for Tourism Development**

To address the challenge of accessibility of land for tourism development, investors should be aided to liaise with Hill District Council (HDC) (Roy, 2014). The aim is to facilitate participation of the local community in development effort in line with Article 64 in the land use act.. MCHTA in liaison with Bangladesh Ministry of Lands could facilitate investors obtain requirements to acquire land for tourism development.

- **Visa Issues**

To attract tourist to Bangladesh, regulations for acquiring Visa and policies restricting foreign tourists from visiting CHT should be reviewed. Tourists who acquire Bangladesh visa should be given the privilege of visiting CHT without additional permission from the home ministry. Other measures that could encourage tourist to visit Bangladesh are the introduction of the Australian type low-cost online tourist visa application. Additional options could be the regional tourism visa schemes in connection with the Asian Development Bank (WTO, 2014).

- **Address Negative Image of CHT Abroad**

Strategy to promote tourism development is to correct the negative image of CHT in the view of tourist. According to Ali and Parvin, (2010), this requires a holistic approach and massive marketing campaign to improve the image of CHT. Bangladesh can develop her tourism by trying different branding strategies with the aim of reaching out to a target foreign tourists group whose opinion could largely influence tourists from a broader group of countries. The uniqueness of the country should be aggressively marketed to convey the image befitting the country.

- **Provision of Infrastructure**

Modern infrastructure is required for sustainable tourism development in CHT. Government could encourage entrepreneurs to invest in infrastructure by formulating policies that attract private and foreign sectors investments in development projects (Bhuiyan, 2014). Government could regulate tourism related industries by engaging services of persons from the private and public sector. This would help in planning infrastructural development and policies by removing barriers currently obstructing tourism development in CHT (Ali and Parvin, 2010).

- **Human Resource Development and Involvement of Locals in Tourism**

The success of tourism in CHT would largely depend on the involvement of local people going by the success model of FSM and Indonesia. To participate in tourism activities, local people require skills and knowledge. Universities and human resource development institutions in Bangladesh need to develop capacities for the multi-billion tourism industry (Ali and Parvin, 2010). Involvement of local people generates employment and protects the industry while developing infrastructure and creating business (Bhuiyan, 2014).

- **Economic Benefits**

Tourism interconnects various productive sectors of the economy (International Labour Office, 2008). Despite the benefits, indigenous people are determined on retaining land. Efforts could be made to enlighten them on benefits accruable in tourism development. Jobs generated by tourism spans across the hospitality sector, infrastructure, transportation, construction, agriculture, entertainment and small and medium scale enterprises. These sectors, in attaining Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets additional areas for development and employment generation. Tourism in CHT can contribute to the attainment of the SDG that in turn provides social security and improve living standards.

- **Conservation of Environment and Culture in Development**

Conservation of environment and culture requires management of natural resources, maintaining culture and areas of nature. (ICIMOD, 2016). Tourism development in CHT should recognize values and culture of tribal people and Bengalis by enacting regulations for tourist and local people aimed at protecting culture and the environment. Tourism development initiatives in CHT should adopt ecotourism friendly regulations that protect the inhabitants and the region. Emphasis should be on conserving the environment and improving the well-being of the people.

- **Tourism Development and National Security in CHT**

Tourism development interphases policy and national security issues (Tschirgi, N, 2005). Addressing the issues reveals development challenges that obstructs economic growth required to achieve national security (Tschirgi, N, 2005). Issues of extreme poverty, environmental security, women and children empowerment, safety, security of energy and natural resources in parts of CHT are national security concerns. Government could channel tourism development initiatives in sectors such as food, human, economic, political, environmental and community security. Government needs to invest in projects that address land and population pressure, inadequate infrastructure, poor service delivery, remoteness of the region, weak market linkages and natural resource degradation (FAO 2017). Such initiative increases private investments that results in employment opportunities, income of local population, GDP and social security that dovetails to attaining national security.

Recommendations

The recommendations arising are categorized into infrastructural development, community participation and capacity development, investment and branding and provision of security.

To facilitate access to land for infrastructural development, GoB should:

- Ensure MCHTA develop the capacity of HDCs to implement requirements on tourism development in the 7th five year plan and facilitate investors to have access to land for infrastructural development.
- Ensure it provides a favorable environment that facilitates PPPs and attract private investor to invest in tourism opportunities in CHT.

Community participation and capacity development, GoB should:

- Ensure that stakeholders involve local people in tourism development in CHT.
- Ensure that investors and stakeholders train and develop capacities of local people by employing them in relevant sectors of the tourism industry and developing capacities to manage the industry.
- Ensure stakeholders in liaison with Universities in Bangladesh establish tourism training institutes in CHT to train local people and educate them with skills to develop and sustain tourism services.

Investments and branding, GoB should:

- Ensure that tourism and hospitality sectors are rated high value sectors with capacities to attract domestic and FDI.
- Ensure that tourism attributes of CHT are promoted and branded through a coordinated marketing strategy.

Provision of Security, GoB should:

- Ensure that Bangladesh Police is adequately trained and equipped to protect lives and properties in CHT.
- Introduce community security and neighborhood watch that will serve as incentives for local people to provide services such as tour operators, guides and community security in liaison with appropriate authorities.

Conclusion

This study set out to assess the holistic approach to tourism development and its impact on the destination image of CHT. The study reveals government efforts to develop tourism in CHT in an attempt to expedite socio-economic development, address grievances of ethnic minorities and build effective institutions. These efforts have not yielded desired results. CHT still lags in development indicators such as employment, poverty, health, education and access to roads and infrastructures. These issues militate against its tourism initiatives creating a negative destination image for the region.

Also established were issues involved in CHT tourism. On the issue of land, agitations for control and ownership of land by tribal people militate against tourism development. On infrastructures, CHT was yet to develop infrastructure for promoting tourism. Infrastructures such as accommodation, communication and transportation systems are not sufficiently developed to attract domestic and international tourists. The negative image of the country and security issues like kidnaping and harassment of tourist were also challenges. This negatively impacts on the destination image discouraging tourists from visiting. To develop tourism, policies that provide security and PPP to invest in infrastructural development should be implemented in addition to employing strategies that brand's the country. Implementation of the 7th five year plan would facilitate FDI and encourage private investment in tourism development in CHT.

In examining tourism development, the study established that policy issues contribute to slow development of tourism in CHT. The 1997 Peace Accord recognized CHT as a unique political administrative unit with special institutional arrangements. Nevertheless, tourism development initiatives in CHT could not be wholly implemented because of unresolved clauses in the Accord which frustrates attempts to implement the 2010 National Tourism Policy and the 7th five year plan.

The study further established a relationship between tourism development and national security. Issues of extreme poverty, environmental security, women and children empowerment, security of natural resources and safety issues in CHT are national security concerns. To address the issues, government could channel tourism development initiatives towards promoting national interest in sectors such as food, human and environment security, while investing in development initiatives that addresses infrastructure, service delivery, remoteness of CHT and natural resource degradation.

To address the issues militating against tourism development, strategies were proffered. Policies should be formulated to allow investors liaise with HDC. The aim is to get the participation of local communities in development efforts. To create a positive destination image, efforts should be channeled towards promoting tourism attributes of CHT. The uniqueness of CHT should be branded and aggressively marketed to convey the image befitting the country.

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Colonel Mohammed Idris Abdulkadir was born on 19 April 1971. He was commissioned into the Nigerian Army on 17 September 1995. Colonel Abdulkadir has attended several military and academic courses some of which are the Junior and Senior Staff Course at the Armed Forces Command and Staff College Jaji, Nigeria. He holds Masters Degrees in Development Studies and in Conflict Security and Development.

Colonel Abdulkadir has participated in various military operations within and outside Nigeria. He has also participated in United Nations Missions in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Sudan in addition to various multinational training exercises.

The senior officer has served in various capacities in staff and command appointments. Prior to joining NDC 2017, Colonel Abdulkadir was the Deputy Chief of Staff Training and Operations at NACMP. Colonel Abdulkadir has been awarded the Forces Service Star and the Meritorious Service Star for his unblemished service to the nation. He enjoys reading and traveling.