

POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TOURISM IN CHITTAGONG HILL DISTRICTS

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INTRODUCTION

Chittagong Hill Tracts had witnessed a prolonged disorder for more than two decades. Historic Peace Accord of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) was signed between Parliamentary Committee on CHT Affairs and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS) on December 2, 1997 kindling hopes of peace and stability in the region (Kabir, 2003:1). The peace accord has not turned to be a guarantee of lasting peace but it is the springboard to turn unstable situation into stable conducive environment for development of the region. The CHT constitutes one-tenth of the size of the country with lots of potential resources having only one and half a million population.

CHT is a “Land of Promise”, having enormous and rich forest resources and a huge reserve of potential unexplored mineral resources (Abedin, 2003). CHT is a unique display of scenic beauty having a wide opportunity of promoting tourism. Promoting tourism in the Chittagong Hill Districts will pay socio-economic return to the country. It will contribute to create enough job, business opportunities and product marketing, which will further reduce the political dissatisfaction among the local people. Joint endeavor is required with Security Forces (SF), Local population and Civil Administration to address these issues for creating conducive environment and context to develop a “Tourism Industry”.

Tourism is the world’s largest and fastest growing industry (Cooper C and Wahab S, 2004: 04). It has the potential to contribute significantly to the economic development of the country. If we talk about peace and sustainable development then we can surely say that tourism promotes dialogue between Peoples and States and it helps them recognize the importance of valuing and respecting their differences. Tourism sector in Bangladesh contributed 2.3 per cent of total share of GDP in 2011. He has forecasted it’s annual growth rate from 1.5 per cent in 2006 to 6.10 per cent by 2020. To do that state level patronization is the prime to explore the tourism potentials.

CHITTAGONG HILL TRACT: AN OVERVIEW

Geography and Demography

Chittagong Hill Tracts which is comprised of three southern hilly districts of Bangladesh namely Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban. It has a total area of 13,295 sq km, which is almost one-tenth of the total area of Bangladesh (www.bbs.gov.bd, accessed 27 April 2012). It is the most diversified region in Bangladesh in respect of ethnicity and culture. Out of several ethnic groups, the Chakmas and Marma are the largest in respect of population. All the groups are having own dialect, dress and rituals. As per the statistics of 2011, the population of CHT is approximately 15 lacs. Tribal population is 7,58,580 (50.5%) and non-tribal population is 7,43,691 (49.5%) [www.mochta.gov.bd, accessed 26 April 2012]. Literacy rate of Chakma tribe is 72% as against 28% of the Bangalees. The average literacy rate of other tribes is only 12% approximately.

Socio-Political Scenario

2.2.1 The two-decade long insurgency came to an end with the signing of the “CHT Accord, 1997” between the GoB and Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS) on December 02, 1997. There are visible changes across the entire region in terms of development works and huge tourists visited to the places of natural interests over the years. The presence of military under the banner ‘In Aid to Civil Power’ has been shrinking. Till now 238 Security Forces (SF) camps have already been closed (Acharya, 2011 : 64).

Activities of Regional Political Parties. The main tribal political parties of CHT are Jana Sanghati Samity (JSS), JSS (Reformist) and United People’s Democratic Front (UPDF), while the leading Bangalee political parties are Somo Adhikar Andolon (SAA) and Parbattya Bangalee Chattra Parishad (PBCP). All these parties have different ideological stand-points over peace accord, leadership and other core issues of CHT. Internal political divide, leadership feud and illegal toll collection for meeting organizational expenses - all these aspects create instability in the political culture. However, despite their differences all the tribal political parties have common stance on some issues like land disputes, removal of Bangalee settlers, withdrawal of Army from CHT and indigenous issue.

Activities of the Tribal Population. Common people are peace loving. When the accord was signed they were enthusiastic about the peace. The tribal people are not happy about the division of JSS and UPDF. The hill people do not want another armed struggle which both JSS and UPDF are talking about. They would feel happy seeing the quick implementation of the peace accord and restoration of normal life throughout CHT.

Signing of Peace Accord

The CHT Accord was formally signed on 02 Dec 1997 between Govt and PCJSS in Dhaka. This is an instrument using which the 'Local Govt Council Act 1989' was amended and five acts namely 'Regional Council Act' and three 'Hill District Council Acts' and 'Land Dispute Settlement Act' have been enacted and ratified by the National Parliament during 1998-2001 (www.mohta.gov.bd, accessed on 24 May 2011). Currently CHTRC, HDC and CHT Land Commission, are functioning based on these ratified Acts.

Implementation of CHT Peace Accord

In the post peace accord scenario GoB has attached highest priority for the sustained socio-politico and economic uplift of the region. These are (Acharya, 2011: 58-68):

- a. A full-fledged Ministry named 'Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs' (MoCHTA) has been established in 1998.
- b. A 25-member Regional Council (CHTRC) and 5-member interim Hill District Councils (HDC) each headed by a tribal person has been formed.
- c. So far 21 out of 32 subjects have been handed over to the Hill District Councils.
- d. A Task Force for the rehabilitation of repatriated refugees and identification and rehabilitation of IDPs has completed rehabilitation of 12,223 tribal refugee families.
- e. 'Peace Accord Implementation Process Monitoring Committee' has been formed headed by the Deputy Leader of the Parliament of Bangladesh.
- f. A 'Parliamentary Standing Committee' has been formed.
- g. A Land Commission has been formed headed by a retired Justice as the chairman of the commission.
- h. A total of 715 surrendered *Shanti Bahini* members have been recruited in the Police Force.
- j. Since the signing of the accord a 238 camps out of 556 'SF' camps have been closed.

Statistics Depicting Comparative Situation- Before and After the Peace Accord Statistics showing a gradual trend of improving situation at CHT :

a. Members of SF Killed and Injured in Action (KIA) with *Shanti Bahini*.

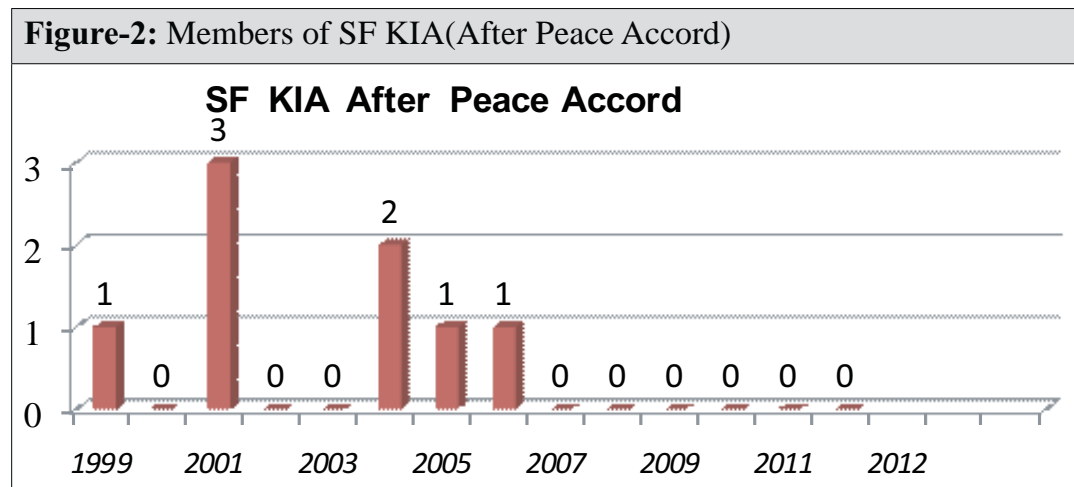
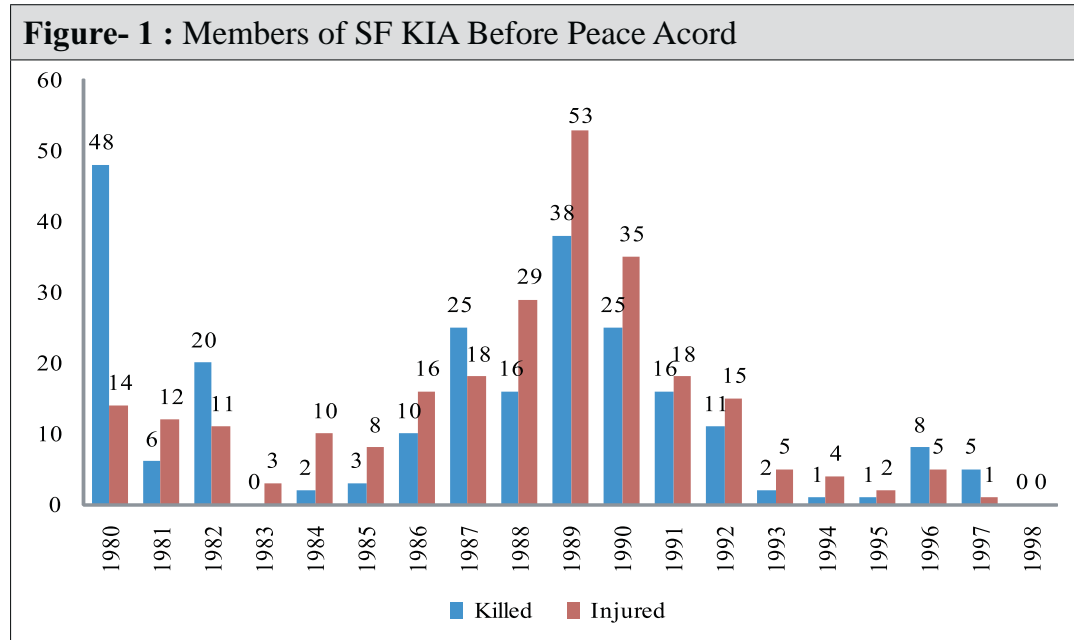
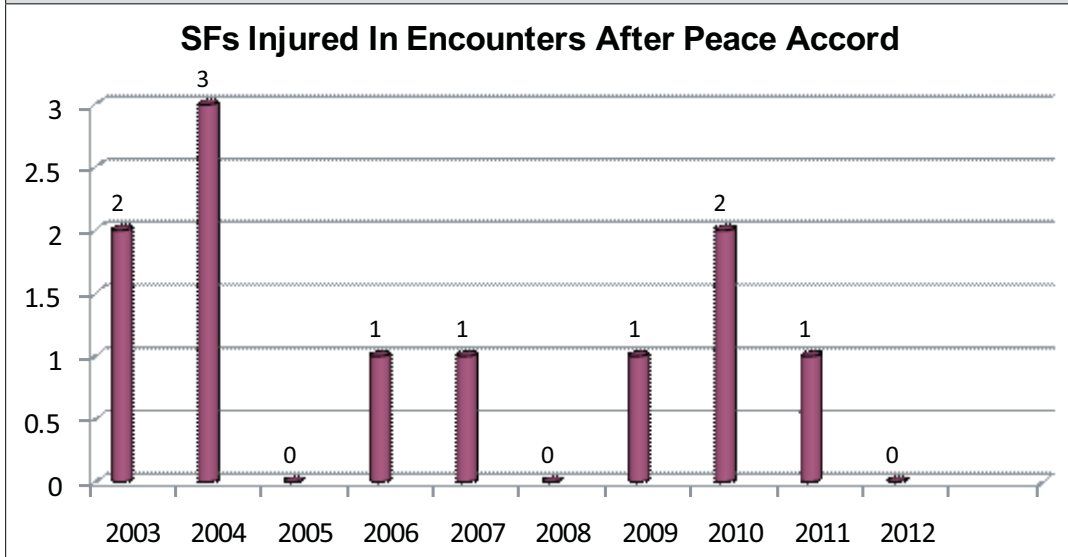


Figure-3: SF Injured in Encounters (After Peace Accord).



b. Civil Casualty Before and After Peace Accord

Figure-4: State of Civilian Killed Before Peace Accord

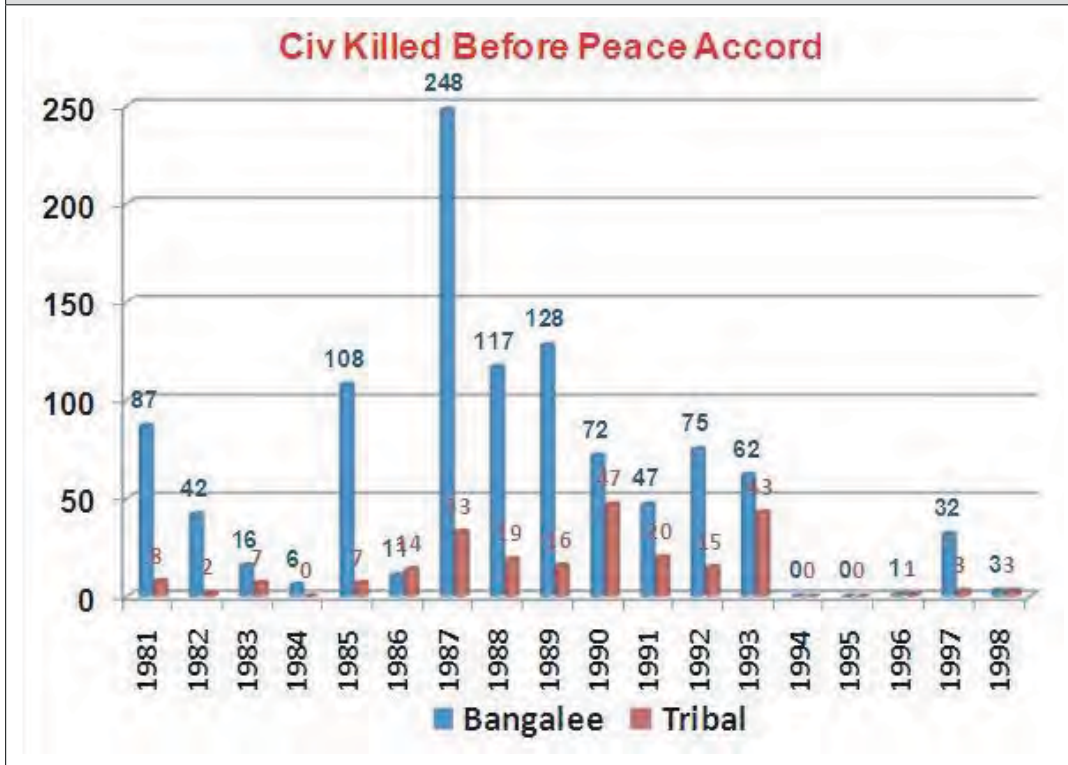
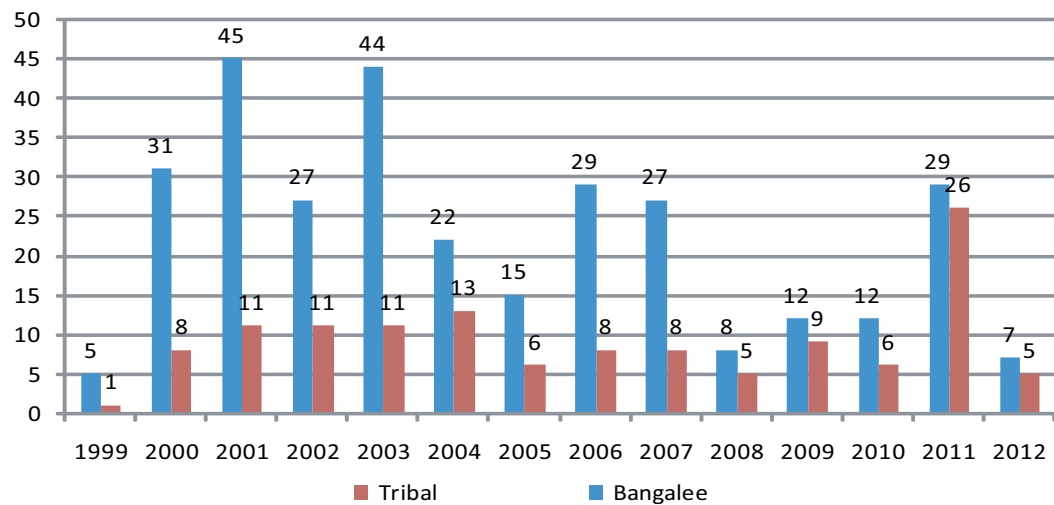


Figure-5 : State of Civ Killed After Peace Accord

Source: Author

Importance of the Accord

The Peace Accord has been appreciated at home and abroad that ended a bloody ethnic strife, which looked uncontainable for decades. It has consolidated our national integrity, strengthened our sovereignty and enhanced our national interests (Qudrat, 1997: 4). It has added credit to the country's legacy and history of attempting and achieving conflict resolution through negotiations without international intervention. To reach the accord, JSS stepped aside from their demand for full regional autonomy, complete withdrawal of the Army and the Bengalee settlers (Ahmed, 2004).

Role of the Government in Socio-Political Development

After the signing of the Peace Accord, insurgency ended through disarmament and regular life was restored. The instrument introduced; the amendment of 'Local Govt Council Act 1989', establishment of MoCHTA, passing the bills related to CHTRC and HDCs in the Parliament, formation of Land Commission etc, are the major steps taken by the Govt (Acharya, 2011 : 23). 21 Departments/ institutions so far handed over to the HDCs. CHTRC Act and Land Dispute Settlement Act, have been ratified and promulgated by the National Parliament between 1998 and 2001. The prioritized post accord activities of GoB for the sustainable socio-politico and economic uplift of the region continued. Besides Govt and SF development activities, there are many development partners like-UNDP, NGOs and International Organizations etc (Chaterjee, 2012), undertaken huge development activities after signing the peace accord.

Land Commission and Complexity

Land is an intricate and complex issue in CHT. During the colonial and post-colonial period the land ownership issue was not properly addressed through the cadastral land survey and conventional land record system. Due to lack of updated map and non-existent of any demarcations on land, caused claims and counter-claims over the same arable land. However, Govt has undertaken several initiatives and measures to resolve this core issue. Recently on 30 July 2012, Govt decided in a meeting to bring total 13 amendments in 'CHT Land Dispute Settlement Act' as per the demand of tribal people. In which land commission is to act on the basis of local tradition and rules.

Indigenous Identity Issue

General. In the peace accord CHT was mentioned as 'Tribal Inhabited Area'. This questioned the presence of the Bangalee in CHT, who now constitute half of the CHT population. In the 15th Constitutional Amendment reversion of the nationalism to 'Bangalee' yet again caused dissatisfaction amongst the same tribal leaders. In the same review the rights of the 'tribal people and ethnic minorities' have been protected incorporating a new Article 23(a), to flourish and develop the ethnic cultures, traditions and languages (Daily Star, 29 June 2011) which is yet to console the hill leaders. Distinguishing tribes of CHT as 'Indigenous People' (IP) has become a significant discussion theme only until 2008 after formulation of 'UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous People- September 2007'. An interpretation of the ILO Convention 169 and 'UN Declaration on the Rights of IP-2007' seems more pertinent to the colonial countries where the original inhabitants, aborigines or indigenous are being out ridden by the immigrants (Prothom Alo, 29 May 2011). The majority Bangalee cannot be discarded from the list of aborigines while recognizing the ethnics as indigenous in the constitution of Bangladesh which is irrational. Thereby, in contemporary perception, the use of word 'Indigenous' rather than 'Tribal' is not simply variation of noun, but it bears an implication which is unconstitutional and may become detrimental to State sovereignty.

Comments by Various Important Figures on Indigenous Issue. Hon'ble Law Minister Mr Shafiq Ahmed had clarified the issue on 8 Jun 2011, by saying that, *"There are no indigenous peoples in BD. Under the fundamental principles of state policy in the Constitution, measures will be taken for their recognition as ethnic minority or ethnic community or tribal people"*.

Bhomong Circle Chief Mr. Aung Shui Pru Chowdhury, told in an interview with ‘Chennel i’ on 12 April 2011, that “*Marmas are neither indigenous nor tribal people; they migrated to Bandarban region after the Burmese War*” (Acharya., 2011: 70-72).

Tribal – Bangalee Relationship

Even for decades of co-existence in the same region of the country, tribal-bangalee relationship is at times swayed on mutual trust and mistrust, but it is not as complicated as is portrayed and exploited. Despite differences over some issues like rights on the land, rights to vote, unequal quota system etc, both communities dwelled side by side for decades (Rahman, 2005: 121). Communal clashes those took place during 1980’s and 90’s were actually perpetrated by only a small portion of ill-motivated tribal and bangalee population. The entire tribal and bangalee population was not involved in those episodes. The importance of pluralism cannot be denied in a democracy especially in a society with distinct ethnic groups however they may be. The GoB appears to be evidently conscious of the importance in this question and shown sincerity in every steps.

Role of Security Forces (SF)

The military has been playing a leading role in CHT from the beginning of Counter Insurgency Operations (CIO) in 1976. To enhance the socio-economic development of CHT and strengthen the confidence of its people since placement in the CHT. To assist the hill people SF implements small scale community development projects in remote and inaccessible parts of CHT. Army Engineer Construction Battalions has constructed significant number of very useful roads in the remote areas of CHT. Total length of these roads is 510 km. After more than a decade of signing the Peace Accord, SF predominantly Bangladesh Army is presently operating under ‘*OP UTTARAN*’ with a mission to “*Maintain stable security environment within area of responsibility*”. Since signing the treaty, out of 556 SF camps, 238 have already been shut. Out of remaining 318 camps, 113 belongs to army, 111 to Border Guards of Bangladesh (BGB), 14 Armed Police, 59 Duty Post, 20 Ansar and one Range Reserve Force which shall be decreased in accordance with the progress of peace implementation.

Socio-Political Development and It’s Impact

The way of life and the distinctive elements of tribal culture and heritage are carefully protected and preserved by special socio-economic measures. At the same time, democratic and participative political and economic steps continue

to help mainstream the tribal groups in national life by accommodating their legitimate aspirations and demands. The peaceful and participative solution is the only way that ensures mutual survival and development. The other way points to chaos and disorder, and economically underdeveloped society that relentlessly harassed by man-made calamities.

Bangladesh set her goal to become a middle income country by 2021. To achieve this goal CHT itself can contribute significantly with its natural resources. Proper utilizing of all its resources CHT alone can significantly contribute in National GDP. Tourism in Chittagong Hill Districts can add 1% in Annual GDP Growth (Morshed, 2006). For the overall economic development and benefit of all the citizen of Bangladesh Govt should utilize all its possibilities (including resources of CHT) to make the Vision-2021 into reality.

TOURISM IN CHITTAGONG HILL DISTRICTS

Tourism Prospects in Bangladesh

With the recent superb advertisement through Worlds Natural Seven Wonders selection process Bangladesh has acclaimed its unique natural resources globally. Bangladesh offers ample of tourist attractions especially in South-Eastern part. Major portion of the area was inaccessible to local population due to insurgency for few years, which has gradually improved to a normal status (Chatterjee, 2011). Since 1997, after signing peace accord this region is experiencing development in all facets of their life. In the last few years tourism in the hill region has been flourished in multi dimension. This growth in tourism has clearly marked its tremendous market in future (Rahman, 2012).

The exceptional growth of tourism over the last six decades is one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena of the 21st century. It has become one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world (Chowdhury, 2010 : 3). Tourism sector in Bangladesh contributed 2.3 per cent of total share of GDP in 2011. She has forecasted it's annual growth rate from 1.5 per cent in 2006 to 5.7 per cent in 2007-2016 (Morshed, 2006: 3). Our foreign currency earning from tourism is only 1%. On the contrary Maldives earns 70% foreign currency from tourism and it contributes 20% to the GDP. Malaysian tourism industry contributed 17.5% to its National GDP. GOB identified tourism as a "Thrust Sector" in 1999. Developing country like Bangladesh, tourism can play an important role as a driving force of economic development.

Tourism Prospects in Chittagong Hill Districts

The Chittagong Hill Tract is divided into river valleys and their tributaries and composed with the ranges of hills, thick-planted forests, waterfalls and number of lakes. Besides, it preserves verities of tribes having own dialect, distinctive dress, rites and rituals. The fantastic natural scenic beauty, pristine foothill ecological environment and extremely fascinating lifestyle of the inhabitants are the perfect natural elements for facilitating tours and travels in the area (Morshed, 2006 : 29). Simply, every inch land of this region may turn into a world class tourism spot of Bangladesh. The tourism recourses of the area suggest that tourism could be the biggest economic product of the area. Chittagong Hill Districts has been relatively untouched by modern technology and development . Since 1997, after signing peace accord this region is experiencing development in all facets of their life. Thus, under the present situation by marketing its charms and attractions the tourism industry could be explored for earning foreign exchange. Tourism brings peace and cooperation among nations, groups and build bridges. Francesco Fragialli, WTO Secretary General said: “*Strengthening tourism links to promote cross cultural understanding*” (Cooper C and Wahab S, 2001: 10).

Thus Tourism can change the socio-economic pattern of the hill region. Development of all aspects of life, employment opportunity, marketing, growth of industry, cultural mix and economic potentials will force to bring political environment into a normal status (Rahman, 2012). Which will have a positive impact on socio-political environment of the region.

Tourism industries can be developed in this area with less effort and minimum investment. In this regard a case study of ‘*Hawaii*’ and ‘*Shimenthai of China*’ is referred for better understanding and compare with Chittagong Hill districts. Details of the case study discussed as under.

Case Study of Hawaii and Shimenthai

The *Island of Hawaii* and *Shimenthai of China*, is taken as case study since it has got the similarity with CHT and lessons can be drawn there from. *Island of Hawaii* was an independent Kingdom before annexation by the USA in 1893 AD. *Shimenthai of China* is a beautiful hilly area having lakes and rivers, which has the similarity to our hill districts. Chinese authority developed it for eco-tourism keeping its natural beauty undisturbed. Our Hill Districts can be developed like Shimenthai, keeping nature undisturbed and small scale investment to attract all types of tourists.

HAWAII. The Hawaiian Islands are located in the North Pacific Ocean. The islands were united under a single ruler Kamehameha I, in 1810. In January 1893, Queen Liliuokalani was overthrown and replaced by a Provisional Government. McKinley (Ex US President) annexed Hawaii illegally against the opinion of annexation on 7 July 1898 to the United States ([http://wikipedia.org/wiki/History of Hawaii](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Hawaii), Formation of the Hawaiian_Kingdom accessed 23 April 2012). After years of cultural and societal repression and along with other self-determination movements worldwide the 1960's is thought to have seen the rebirth of Hawaiian. US Congress passed a joint resolution called the "Apology Resolution". It was signed by President Bill Clinton on 23 November 1993. This resolution apologized to native Hawaiians on behalf of the people of the United States for the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii on January 17, 1893 and the deprivation of the rights of Native Hawaiians to self-determination (www.wikipedia.org, History of Hawaii: accessed 23 April 2012). Since Statehood in 1959, tourism has been the largest industry, contributing 24.3% of the Gross State Product (GSP) in 1997. The gross output for the state in 2003 was US\$47 billion; per capita income for Hawaii residents was US\$ 30,441 (2003). Millions of tourists contribute to the Billion dollar business in Hawaii (<http://www.hawaiihistory>, 2012). At present they are contended and happiest state in USA having per capita \$ 63,746. Enormous business scope and tourism related support industry created huge employment opportunity and raised the overall economy of new State. Financial prosperity ensures native Hawaiian in better living status. All these had a direct influence on the Hawaiian Sovereignty demand and that played a vital role on the native Hawaiian to remain within the statehood of USA and gave up there their idea to form a Kingdom.

SHIMENTHAI (China)

Shimenthai is a province, which is about 400 Km away from Shanghai, geographical features of which has similarities with CHT. The area contains numerous attractive tourist spots and it is located beside a river, similar to Kaptai river of Bangladesh. It is also a eco-friendly tourist place at mountainous area like CHT (Hossain, 2012 : 4). The place attracts tourists due to its simplicity and quietness. The area is made for walking and climbing through specially made foot route and reaching up to a hill top and returning in the same way. The tourists would have additional pleasure of walking through the hills, water streams, stones, jungles etc, quiet attractive specially for those who like such adventurous travel and tracking.

Shimentai, being relatively a remote place, electricity of the tourist spot was supplied by solar power. The construction of the foot routes, local scenic spots,

local water dam, foot bridges etc, all were constructed without disturbing the nature using the local resources which is cost-effective and simple in construction (Hossain, 2012). Amusement facilities were also catered which runs without electricity. The place is liked by the tourists due to its simplicity and scenic beauty. Since the scenic beauty, remoteness, quietness and development has the similarity with Chittagong Hill Districts, so in CHT such spots can also be made utilizing small scale investment.

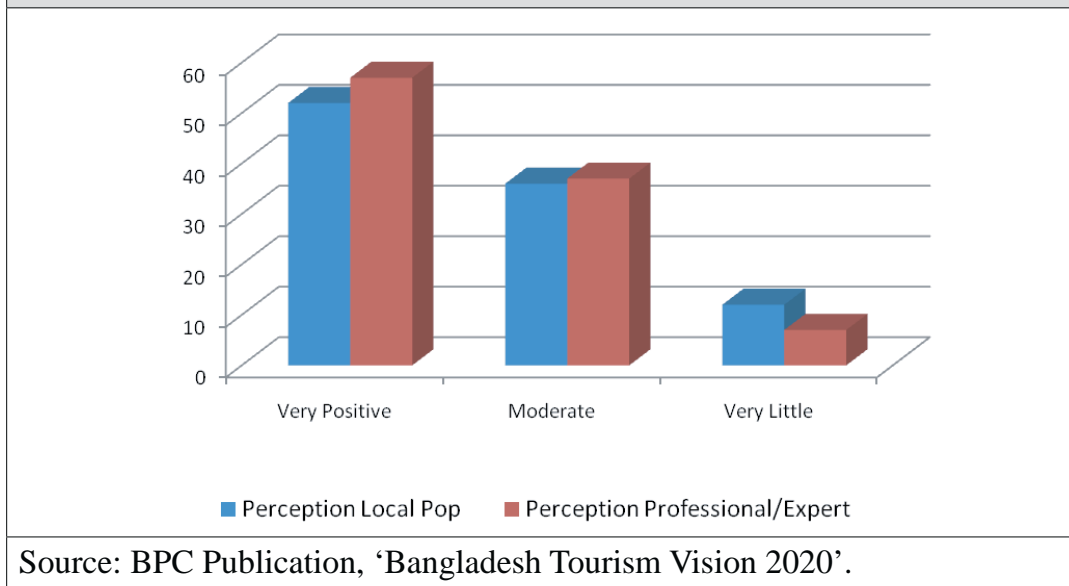
Lesson Learnt. It is learnt from the case study of Hawaii that, Tourism industry changed the livelihood of locals and improved economic condition. As a result, they are satisfied with the “Apology Resolution” and Statehood in USA. Eventually native Hawaiian shifted away from the demand of old traditional Hawaiian Kingdom. Native Hawaiian ethnic culture and issue of identity has got similarity with the tribals of CHT. It is therefore, Hawaii is referred to analyze and draw the lesson while resolving the CHT issue. Shimentai is a remote eco-tourist place similar to Chittagong Hill Districts, where eco-tourism developed using local resources with small scale investments at various attractive places (Hossain, 2011). If facilities developed in a planned way, it would not only promote the tourism of Bangladesh but would also contribute to improve political environment and economy of the region.

Economic Effects of Tourism

General. The fantastic natural scenic beauty, pristine foothill ecological environment and extremely fascinating lifestyle of the Chittagong Hill District’s inhabitants are the perfect natural elements for facilitating tours and travels in the area. Thus, promoting tourism in CHT will pay socio-economic return to the country. In the recent years the flow of tourists towards this region especially in Hill District of Bandarban, has opened a new horizon among general people and concerned agencies. This will help in poverty alleviation, creating job opportunity and bring change in socio-economic status of the region.

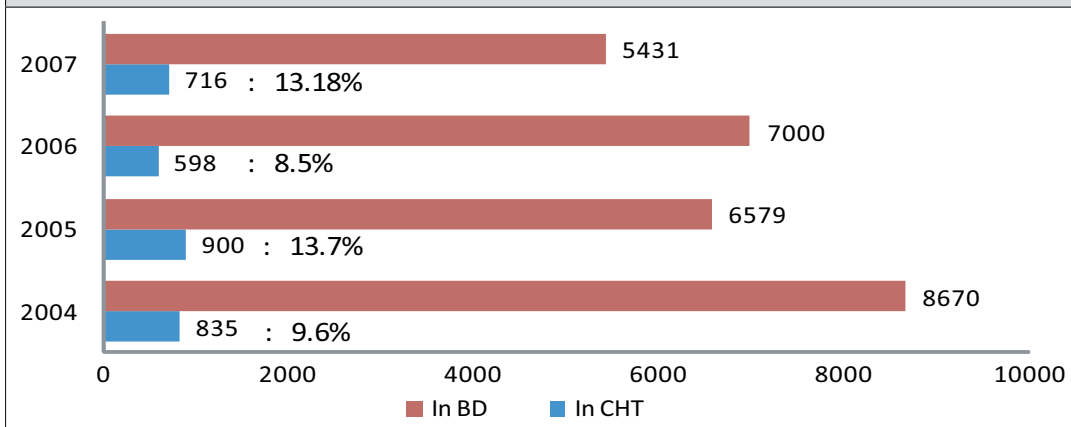
Perception and Expectation of Community. Existing tourism activities in CHT has been flourished naturally with minimum effort and has become an additional source of income for the local community (Rahman, 2012). Expert and officials recognizes enormous potentials of earning huge local and foreign currency in tourism sector if Hill Districts are explored properly. Tourism in Bandarban District booming like Cox’s Bazar and local (Bandarban) authority including tribal’s are deeply engaged in promoting tourism at their level (Chaterjee, 2012).

Figure-6 : Perception of Community towards the Economic Benefits of Tourism



Forecast of Likely Earning of Foreign Currency in Year 2020. This research could theoretically calculate the likely earning of foreign currency in year 2020 by following analysis:

- a. Forecast of Inbound Tourist Arrival in Bangladesh.** Bangladesh forecasts at least 500,000 inbound visitors' arrivals by 2020 (Morshed, 2006: 3). It is fairly realistic to forecast that total arrivals to Bangladesh may exceed 1.30 million in 2020, provided that the favorable market situation prevails.
- b. Likely Arrival of Inbound Tourists in CHT.** The comparison of data of foreign visitors arrival in govt hotels/ motels and guest houses in CHT (Rangamati, Bandarban, Khagrachari) and that of entire Bangladesh is shown on the chart below:.

Figure-7 : Foreign Guests Arrivals in Govt Accommodations in CHT

Source: Tourism Statistics of Bangladesh (www.bpc.gov.bd, accessed 17 May 2012)

It gives us the idea that more than 13% of total foreign visitors in Bangladesh visit CHT. Recently this percentage raised upto 40% in CHT and Chittagong area. This can further supported by the result of survey conducted in land and air port by BPC. It finds that 74.13% of the total visitors expected to visit capital and 15.15% of them has expressed their interest to visit CHT.

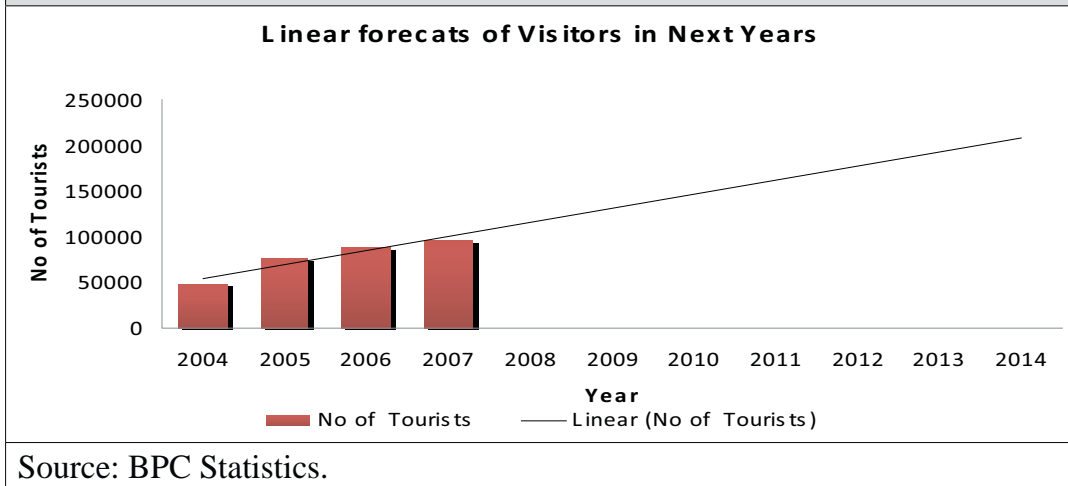
- c. Forecast of Earning from Local Tourists in Year 2020.** The following table provides us the data of local guest arrival in govt hotel and motels in CHT in last 4 years:

Table 1 : Local Guests Arrivals in Govt Accommodation in CHT				
Year	2004	2005	2006	2007
No of Tourists	8124	12505	14743	15746
Source: Tourism Statistics of Bangladesh				

Again the survey result by BPC finds that 54.23 % visitors stays in private paid accommodation while 16.42 % stays in public sector accommodation and 29.35% visitors do not stay overnight in CHT. So, the approximate total local visitors in CHT for last 4 years stands as shown in the next table:

Table 2 : Total Visitors in CHT in last 4 years	
Year	No of Tourists
2004	49476
2005	76157
2006	89784
2007	95893
Source: Tourism Statistic of Bangladesh	

Figure- 8 : Forecast of Total Visitors in CHT in 2020



With the graphical analysis of this increasing trend of local tourists in CHT, the estimated forecast of total visitors in CHT in 2020 is approximately 250,000 annually. If we consider the daily expenditure for a local tourist is tk 1000, then the estimated earning will be tk 250 million annually.

- d. Investment Potential and Income Return.** After analyzing the above charts and data it is evident that BPC's estimate on future tourists arrival at CHT and projected income is a reality and viable. BPC's publication 'Vision 2020' forecasted that, by the year 2020 the expected foreign visitor in Hill Districts will be approx 0.135 millions and likely foreign currency earning will be around US\$ 25 million. Besides, analyzing the total local visitors in CHT it is etimated the total visitors in CHT in 2020 is approximately 250,000 annually from which the minimum earning will be tk 250 million annually. At least 20,000 people will be directly employed and another 30-40 thousand people will be employed indirectly (Morshed, 2006).

Prospects of Employment Opportunity (Estimation of Ministry of CHT Affairs). Promoting tourism in CHT will provide a wide range of different employment opportunities for the local population. Especially it will create opportunities for many small entrepreneurs. According to the estimation of MoCHTA, total unemployed population in CHT is around 0.2 million. It is predicted that tourism will reduce around 40% of the unemployment of the area. At least 20,000 people will be directly employed and another 30- 40 thousand people will be employed indirectly.

Infrastructure Development Prospects. Promoting tourism in CHT will ultimately improve the condition of present infrastructures. These are communications, transport, accommodation, recreational facilities etc.

Improvement of Livelihood. According to the perception of tourism experts and professionals, promotion of tourism in CHT will definitely improve the livelihood of the local community through contributing in following areas:

- a. **Alleviation of Poverty.** Tourism industry will increase job opportunity including women. It will also result in increased business opportunity and economic activities which will ultimately contribute in poverty alleviation in the area largely (Rahman, 2012).
- b. **Recreation and Social Cohesion.** Since Bangladesh does not have adequate recreational facilities, CHT can be turned into an important place which will really take the people near the nature. It will also help to reduce social unrest, change quality of life, reduce misunderstanding, preserve nature and culture and above all appreciate God gifted nature (Chaterjee, 2012).
- c. **Environmental Considerations.** Well-planned tourism in CHT can contribute the preservation of local environment. Tourism will help to reduce negative impact of deforestation.
- d. **Education, Agriculture, Livestock and General Business.** Tourism in CHT has strong multiplier effect to the rural livelihood of the community. The survey findings (Table below) indicate that 31% respondents (tourism experts and professionals) perceived the benefit of tourism for education sector. Likewise, 57% respondents perceived the benefits for agriculture sector, 31% for livestock and 78% for other general business (According to the survey carried out by the researcher).

Table 3 : Multiplier effect of Tourism in Other Sectors		
Perception	Number	Percentage
Education sector	22	31
Agriculture sector	41	57
Livestock	31	43
General business	56	78
Source: Tourism Statistics of Bangladesh.		

Political Effects of Tourism

General. Chittagong Hill Districts is one of the least explored tourism destinations as compared to its potential in Bangladesh and it has been recognized as one of the attractive location considering the interest of local inbound tourists visiting the area in recent years (Rahman, 2012). At present it is growing naturally with its eco-tourism potential and flourishing with strong prospect for the locals, which needs to be addressed and planned strategically to get full benefit (Charterjee, 2012). Chama Circle Chief, Barrister Devashish Roy also opined in favor of promoting tourism in CHT. In an exclusive interview with 'The Daily Star on 29 March 2011', Mr. Roy expressed that: *"Tourism, in order for it to be respectful of ecology and the CHT peoples' culture, spirituality and social norms, must be people owned, people-led and people oriented. The only type of tourism that may be acceptable to the local people is one which is low-capital oriented, locally owned and managed, or at least co-owned and co-managed by local people, respectful of the local ecology, architectural traditions and with proper waste management."* Exclusive interview was taken by Md Ali Sattar, Assistant Editor, The Daily Star on 29 March 2011.

Economic Effects on Politics. Opportunity of product marketing, employment generation, tourism based industry, cottage industry, handicrafts selling etc, will rise the economic condition of the society. The industry will alleviate poverty, develop the education, agriculture, livestock and general business opportunities etc. It is obvious that young generation having abundance business opportunity will not go back to uncertainty and insecure life (Rahman, 2012). Improved socio-economic conditions and local empowerment through CHTRC, HDC will transform the political environment in favors of the govt (Charterjee, 2012) as well as promote positive political culture.

Cultural Effects on the Society. Cultural practices makes the society more civilized, wise and improve the understanding. Tourism will promote local art and culture, which in turn will increase better understanding and defuse social misunderstanding (Cooper C, Wahab S, 2001 and Charterjee, 2012).

Greater Motivation and Social Cohesion. CHT can be turned into an important place which will really take the people near the nature. It will also help to improve social unrest, change quality of life, ensure love and respect for others, reduce misunderstanding, preserve nature and culture and above all, appreciate creation of the Almighty (Charterjee, 2012).

National Integration and Constitutional Unity. High Court Verdict on the Peace Accord in this regard acted as strong base against any demand of 'Regional Autonomy'. Such verdict is understood by all corners. Donors and NGO's will be discouraged in future to continue their propaganda against administration and HC verdict.

Tourism for Sustainable Peace in Chittagong Hill Districts

- a. The importance of developing local tourism facilities need not to be over emphasized. Chittagong Hill Districts is full of natural tourist attractions and as such may be developed further for promoting tourism in CHT and the sooner is the better. If tourism facilities of CHT can be developed in a planned way, it would also contribute in the overall development of the country.
- b. 'Vision 2020' forecasts 1.3 million tourists arrival in 2020. GDP target is to raise 5% from this industry by 2020 (Morshed, 2006). 5% GDP growth in tourism can only be achieved if tourism industry can be developed and utilize resources of Chittagong Hill districts.
- c. Should we resort to 'Reactive' or 'Proactive Strategy'? Dilemma in countering PCJSS 'Autonomy' motive is leading to a more complex and unstable situation in the region. To arrest the situation and improve it to normalcy, GoB should act in a proactive manner. People and Constitution of Bangladesh shall not allow any demand for autonomy or protracted land for ethnic minority people. Where 10% land is occupied by only 1% population of Bangladesh.
- d. 'TOURISM Enriches' is the theme of WTO. Tourism enriches individuals, society, nations; it stimulates economic activity for the locals; also enhances communications and understanding between locals and nationals (Cooper C and Wahab S, 2001: 13). It will pave the way of politico-economic development vis-à-vis social stability of hill region. Security situation is not conducive in CHT. It is therefore, Tourism in hill districts to be developed under separate plan with a strategic vision. A pragmatic and realistic easy to implement, tourism project plan is foremost important after necessary feasibility study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings, perception and opinion of the tourism professionals, experts and other stakeholders a short term and long term plan is recommended below which may promote tourism in Chittagong Hill Districts :

a. Short Term Plan. The stated short term plan aims to flourish domestic tourism in Hill Districts within 2-5 years and onward. However, the recommendations are as follows:

- (1) Dedicated survey to be conducted by BPC or other government agencies to identify and select suitable tourism products and eco-tourist spots in CHT. A pragmatic and realistic easy to implement, tourism project plan is foremost important after necessary feasibility study.
- (2) Facilities including economy accommodations, entertainment, catering and other support facilities are to be developed for all levels of income groups in the country.
- (3) Senior military officials may be added with inter-ministerial co-ordination and implementation committee's member to address the security threat.
- (4) Keeping in view the land complexity Govt should devise a land policy related to tourism business to promote this industry. For Foreign Direct Invest (FDI) GoB may issue khas land on the lease agreement basis. For the local investors they can be allotted with Khas land or they may go for joint venture with the locals.
- (5) Local tribals should be given priority in tourism business. They are preferably be integrated in joint venture tourism projects.
- (6) Govt should declare CHT as a special tourist's zone and formulate tourism related policy in CHT that should include land affairs also.

b. Long Term Plan. The long term plan aims to flourish inbound as well as domestic tourism as per the potential of the area within 10-15 years and onward. However, the recommendations are as follows:

- (1) Government may allocate adequate fund required to promote tourism in Chittagong Hill Districts. Public Private Partnership (PPP) Projects in this regards is suitable to promote tourism.
- (2) Domestic private entrepreneurs may be patronized and foreign investors may be encouraged to invest in tourism sector in CHT by facilitating capital investment at concessional interest rate, tax holidays, payment of taxes at rebated rates and allotment of land at reduced price etc.

- (3) Infrastructure facilities that comprise communications (including aviation and road facilities), accommodation, recreation and entertainment facilities, information network, etc to be improved up to international standard gradually.
- (4) Advertisement to be continued through popular TV channels, important newspapers and popular holding magazines, Posters, etc in local and target countries in different languages. Foreign travel writers and media personnel may be invited to project the tourist potentials of CHT.
- (5) Exclusive tourist zone may be established with adequate modern tourism and recreational facilities.

CONCLUSION

The problem of CHT is primarily a legacy of colonial rule. Which is coupled with interest of misguided stakeholders and lack of continuity in policy makers. These underscore and recognize that the development and integrating endeavors of the state contributed to the heightening of the sense of identity and aspirations of a section of the ethnic groups. It is important to note that the endeavors of the GoB to ensure their rightful share for the tribal people in a democratic and developing society are directed towards all ethnic minorities. The insurgency of CHT, has confronted economically impoverished and underdeveloped Bangladesh with a problem that is not its own making. Moreover it also threatened to impede the pace of its total socio-economic development, a must for the emancipation of all Bangladeshis from poverty and backwardness. The GoB have tried sincerely and energetically to solve the problem: the effort have lead to a peaceful solution '*The CHT Peace Accord-1997*'. In the post accord era, development was intensified by the UNDP, NGOs, CHTRC and HDC. Recent decision of GoB on Land issue and handing over all subjects to HDC also a giant step towards socio-political empowerment and fulfillment of the tribal demand according to the peace agreement. Govt also clarified her firm position on Indigenous issue in home and abroad, which is logical and spared no room for further discussion.

In this largely favorable atmosphere, the GoB need to further strengthen the process of peaceful development of the people of the Hill Districts and the region overall, by taking other timely steps. Existing socio-economic development needs further acceleration and expansion in the possible and promising sector. Chittagong Hill Districts in Bangladesh, is a unique place of scenic beauty having a wide opportunity of promoting tourism. After signing the peace accord it is found that tourist flow has been increased drastically. Wide scale

tourism in Chittagong Hill Districts will have remarkable economic and political development prospects in the region. Tourism industry will increase job and business opportunity which will contribute in poverty alleviation in the area. The economic and social developments in the area will ultimately improve the overall livelihood of the local population which will help to fulfill the criteria of the peace accord 1997 and shall resolve the issues for insurgency and instability in Chittagong Hill Districts.

The steps GoB have taken to solve the problem in CHT reflects the larger social awareness. Diversity and managing it in a style which allows peaceful solution in a non-confrontational manner is an important component of further future development. But perhaps recent history in South Asia require that we formulate the development policy more carefully so that we can identify where particularistic steps asserting parochial concerns have to give away to larger conceptions where they be rooted in democratic norms of what in legal terms is called 'the general principles of civilized societies'. The present democratic peace exercise and development process needs to be further strengthened. No stone should be left unturned, no time lost in fulfilling this important national mission, Govt, the tribals and Bangalees in CHT need to move with all sincerity and utmost care to expand development process and reinforce political economy of the area in particular and Bangladesh as a whole. It is a vital matter which need to be appreciated not only by the scholars but also by the leaders of the nation and the media.

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