

## **Integrated Marketing Strategy and Development of Tourism Sectors: A Case of Bangladesh**

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### ***Abstract***

*Tourism is considered one of the largest and rapid growing economic sectors in the corporate world. It is one of the fastest and dynamic international industry sectors. Many countries like Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Kenya, Sri Lanka, South Africa, and Peru have developed their economy through proper utilization and management of tourism sector. Like many other developing countries, Bangladesh has enormous potential to improve tourism sector and related economy. In Bangladesh, we have not only the longest sandy sea beach Cox's Bazar and the largest single tract of mangrove forest Sundarbans but also many other natural, cultural, religious and historical sites which have huge potentials to be unique selling points for us. Due to lack of effective policies and their implementation, proper marketing strategy and promotion, Bangladesh has not seen a huge tourist's crowd as expected. Tourism sector can set up a sustainable economic trend in Bangladesh if philosophy of proper marketing strategy formation and implementation can be established. Considering the importance of tourism sector, integrated marketing strategy can play a vital role. Through integrated marketing strategy, our tourist spots can be focused in a clear, consistent and persuasive way to the whole world.*

**Keywords:** Tourism, Beautiful Bangladesh, Integrated Marketing Strategy

**JEL Classification:**

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## Introduction:

It is not a matter of concern that, Bangladesh is a poor, corrupted, flood-ravaged and more of a disaster zone than a travel destination. But behind these figures our country is enriched with beautiful and interesting attractions. Bangladesh is a country with rich traditions, natural beauty, beaches, forests, lakes, hills, wild lives, archaeological attractions, monuments, handicrafts, sanctuaries, religious festivals, cultural heritage, tribal culture and architecture, incredible greenery, mighty rivers and attractive river cruises, sunny beaches, colorful tribal life and attractive cultural functions that offer great tourist attractions. It is true that tourism contributes 10% GDP of the world's economy (Kimura, H.2011). Bangladesh Economic Review (2010) states that Bangladesh has basically three sectors of generating revenue: industry, agriculture and service. Tourism is a part of service sector which contributes to the GDP of Bangladesh. Though the contribution of tourism in GDP is only 7% in 2004-05, it has increased to 9.44% by the year 2009-10. Due to the political instability, it decreases in 2014 which is 4.1% of total GDP and in 2015; tourism contributes 4.7% of the total GDP. Basically, effective promotional strategies are very essential for the improvement of tourism industry in any country. Due to lack of available research, fund and proper marketing strategy, Bangladesh Parjaton Corporation could not yet develop the promotional strategies. As a result, tourism industry could not get room to grow correctly in Bangladesh. But there are lot of opportunities if Bangladesh attempts to focus our land as a tourist destination to the tourists through an effective promotional policies and can take some steps to improve some infrastructural facilities, the country would be able to earn more than present. It is known to all that, Bangladesh tourism industry could not achieve the remarkable progress in comparison to other South Asia. Limited promotional materials like souvenirs, brochures, travel guides, accommodation guides, hand books, tourist maps, poster, folders are distributed by Parjaton Corporation and some other private tour operators don't reach properly to the potential tourists and in addition to that, the quality of these materials is not satisfactory which causes not to create adequate curiosity among the potential tourists. Considering the time factor and limitation of other resources, only the promotional aspects has been considered for the present study and it will be attempted to examine the existing promotional approaches of both the public and private sector tour operators, identify the problems and the limitations of their promotional activities, and prescribe necessary policy measures for effective promotional actions for the industry in Bangladesh. The report has focused on the different aspects of tourism and ways to promote this lucrative sector of economy.

**Methodology of the Study:** It is an exploratory type of study. Data has collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary source includes different journals and articles, different textbooks, news papers, different websites. The relevant data has collected by informal discussion with the experts and by formal survey. The target people were officials of Parjaton Corporation and the tourists from home and abroad. Sampling technique was judgmental sampling and Sample sizes are 20 respondents from the officials and 40 respondents from the tourists.

### **Tourism: Meaning and Types**

The definition of tourism used by World Tourism Organization is as follows which was quoted by Middleton in 1994:

"Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year of leisure, business and other purpose."

Tourism can be classified in a number of ways based on the nature of activity, location type or duration of stay. A brief description on major types of tourism can be presented as:

**Heritage Tourism:** The most hottest or recent trend in today's tourism industry is heritage tourism or visiting historical sites of an area. Nowadays, people want to enrich their lives through travelling not to escape rather than visiting a park or a mountain range. They want to experience unique places, traditions and history and learn about their cultural roots. Heritage tourism involves visiting historical sites that may include old canals, railways, battleground etc. with the purpose of gaining an appreciation of the past.

**Adventure Tourism:** Adventure tourism is defined as: "A trip or travel with the specific purpose of activity participation to explore a new experience, often involving perceived risk or controlled danger associated with personal challenges, in a natural environment or exotic outdoor setting". It is rapidly growing in popularity as tourists seek unusual holidays, different from the typical beach vacation and typically involves travelling into remote, inaccessible and possibly hostile areas. It may include the performance of acts that require significant effort and grit and may also involve some degree of risk.

**Ecotourism:** Ecotourism refers to tourism that is based on the natural environment but that seeks to minimize the harmful impacts. It focuses on local cultures, wilderness adventures, volunteering, personal growth and learning new ways to live on our vulnerable planet. Responsible ecotourism includes programs that minimize the adverse

effects of traditional tourism on the natural environment, and enhance the cultural integrity of local people.

**Cultural Tourism:** Cultural tourism is the subset of tourism concerned with a country or region's culture, especially its arts and includes tourism in urban areas, particularly historic or large cities and their cultural facilities such as museums and theatres. Cultural tourism has begun to be recognized as a tourism product category with potential, rather than a niche and specialized activity and cited that between 35 and 70 percent of international travelers are now considered cultural tourists.

**Agri-tourism:** A style of vacation in which hospitality is offered on farms which may include the opportunity to assist with farming tasks during the visit where the tourists have the opportunity to pick up fruits and vegetables, ride horses, taste honey, learn about wine, shop in gift shops and farms stands for local and regional produce or hand-crafted gifts, and much more. Each farm generally offers a unique and memorable experience suitable for the entire family. People are more interested in how their food is produced and want to meet the producers and talk with them about what goes into food production.

### **Economic Importance of Tourism with Special Reference to Bangladesh:**

Tourism ensures the viability of economy, sensitivity of ecology and appropriateness of culture. It is a sustainable form of natural environment based trend that combines environment and economy and seeks to minimize harmful impacts, focuses on local culture, wilderness adventures, volunteering, personal growth as well as learning new ways to live on our vulnerable planet. Tourism is considered as the single largest industry in the world and both the developed and developing countries have started to realize the economic importance of this sector and striving to maximizing the benefit from this sector as much as possible. Bangladesh tourism industry with its enormous potentials is striving to reach at a satisfactory level in order to play the expected role in the economy of the country. The importance of tourism can be considered as a major source of revenue and can play an important role in the economic development of Bangladesh. According to the World Tourism Organization, a total number of 763.25 million international tourist traffics were recorded during 2004 and received US\$ 622.68 billion from this sector (WTO, 2005) and making the tourism as one of the largest industries in the world. Tourism business is essential to economy because of the direct effect on employment, the balance of payment and society in terms of educational and cultural benefits (Gilbert, 1989). Tourism's appeal to developing countries is based, in large part, on its provision of foreign currency earnings and corresponding alleviation of the balance of payments constraint. As Bangladesh is facing the constraints in foreign currency as

well as the adverse position in the balance of payment account, the proper policy and strategy for the development of tourism industry can contribute positively to overcome the situation. Tourism not only helps the national development but also contribute to regional development. As a result, tourism is increasingly seen as a catalyst for regional development, and a number of studies and projects have investigated how tourism could support development in peripheral regions. Tourism helps in the process of generating foreign exchange, creation of employment and encouragement of local economy especially nature tourism which occurs in rural areas, it can lead to localized economic development in these often neglected areas. Tourism industry has a great importance not only as a generator of income but also for creating employment opportunities. Tourism which is now most often considered as the more labor-incentive sector than any other industry and has emerged as the world's largest generator of jobs. Tourism is a labor-incentive industry provides the scope of creating direct and indirect employment opportunities for a large number of skilled and unskilled persons. Tourism not only facilitates the creation of jobs but also contributes to the distribution of wealth among regions of different income. A long-term strategy for the development of the tourism sector of Bangladesh can uplift the sector to contribute to promote the tourism related services like hotel services; transport services and other related business which will intern generate the employment opportunities in the country. Tourism has a noticeable impact on the balance of payments of many countries. If Bangladesh can utilize the full potential of its tourism then it will help to earn a large amount of foreign currency from this industry which can be utilized to fulfill the unfavorable gap of the country's balance of payment account.

### **Tourism Sector in Bangladesh: Current Status**

Bangladesh is a country filled with natural wonders and untouched reserves and home to a variety of unique and magnificent creatures. She has many tourist attractions including archaeological sites, historic mosques and monuments, resorts, beaches, forest and wildlife. Many foreigners still know Bangladesh as a country of poverty, beggars, floods, and political unrest. Some more negative aspects including sanitation problems, uncomfortable ground level transports, insufficient accommodations at the destination areas, insecurity of movements, lack of pure drinking water and hygienic food, etc. have also affected the image of the country as a tourist destination. But the people who have visited Bangladesh are pleased with and satisfied with the country's magnificent natural beauty, eye-catching attractions, rich cultural heritage, cheap services and facilities, and friendly simple people. Bangladesh has enormous beauty, hundreds of serpentine rivers, lakes of crystal clear water, ever green hills, luxuriant tropical rain forests, beautiful

green tea gardens, Sundarban- the world's largest mangrove forest, home of the Royal Bengal Tiger and the wild lives, Hill Tracts tribal people, warbling of birds in green trees, wind in the paddy fields, plenty of sunshine, world's longest and unbroken natural sea beach in Cox's Bazar, Kuakata sea beach- a beach offering a full view of both the sunrise and sunset, rich cultural heritage, relics of ancient Buddhist civilizations and colorful tribal lives, an old and eventful historic place and home of an ancient civilization - Bangladesh creates an unforgettable impression of a land of peace. These could be reasons why Bangladesh should be highlighted in the world's tourist maps. Regarding the above facts, Parjaton Corporation along with other private tour operators should prioritize the issue of correcting the image of our motherland by undertaking diversified measures in order to develop tourism in Bangladesh. The government should also extend the cooperation in this regard by playing the major role in building the positive image so that this industry can play key role to the economy of the country.

### Tourist Arrivals in Bangladesh

The following table shows the tourist arrivals in Bangladesh in different years:

Month	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
January	20,213	16,733	39,345	29,632	24,670	20,370	19,170	16,733	10,045	27,202
February	15,848	17,308	30,788	27,286	26,012	22,021	22,022	15,308	15,288	25,181
March	19,853	17,579	30,079	27,114	25,262	25,999	21,202	16,579	14,079	24,014
April	16,234	23,956	25,128	28,786	25,173	21,455	20,211	14,956	13,128	25,281
May	18,535	20,853	36,929	25,704	19,959	15,213	17,100	14,853	16,220	22,104
June	17,496	24,483	39,158	26,244	24,020	19,623	15,201	17,483	15,158	20,200
July	19,773	32,223	42,457	25,780	25,991	21,423	16,233	27,223	14,411	21,283
August	15,292	20,614	36,017	20,239	23,938	17,762	20,102	20,614	16,017	17,130
September	13,166	18,509	26,723	19,749	20,860	18,336	14,206	18,509	17,321	16,742
October	15,568	27,073	43,213	18,963	22,785	20,112	18,312	19,073	21,203	18,903
November	18,399	30,308	39,996	21,336	25,208	23,322	21,312	14,308	21,196	19,336
December	17,285	39,471	77,499	25,274	20,392	22,122	19,202	19,471	29,409	21,274
Total	207,662	289,110	467,332	297,107	271,270	247,788	224,273	215,113	203,475	258,650

**Table: Foreign Visitors Arrival by Months (2006-2015)**

**(Source: Bangladesh Tourism Board and World Travel and Tourism, 2016)**

The table shows that the number of tourist arrivals in Bangladesh has increased to 271,270 in 2010 from 207,662 in 2006. In general, the statistics shows a very good and positive trend. But the fact is that the overall scenario is not good. Due to the political instability and strike, the rate of tourist's arrival had decreased from the year of 2011. At the initial level of market entry, the above arrival rate is not a positive one. Expected tourists' arrival is about 600,000 for the year 2020, subject to remaining the present trend unchanged. Keeping gap between marketing strategy formation and implementation, it is impossible to fulfill the target.

### Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourism and Travels in Bangladesh

The marketing performance of any tourism organization can be evaluated based on the earnings by the organization. The following table shows the earnings and growth rate of the same of BPC, the only government owned tourism organization in Bangladesh :( Million Taka)

Month	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Jan	273.80	297.50	259.00	457.00	450.42	653.71	561.13	749.28	649.24	495.98
Feb	218.10	260.60	327.00	393.70	502.73	554.11	624.04	585.06	579.46	496.98
Mar	196.10	336.20	355.90	425.90	468.50	538.94	471.90	527.79	518.90	565.97
Apr	219.00	312.50	241.10	309.40	335.56	411.62	387.22	459.35	473.85	427.37
May	240.50	282.70	226.30	305.00	347.95	452.02	449.95	423.06	538.21	342.11
Jun	221.70	313.00	288.00	279.70	301.23	394.96	366.17	509.52	417.71	473.03
Jul	207.10	267.50	302.30	303.60	296.98	398.14	346.63	461.98	453.03	320.97
Aug	170.50	251.50	232.00	285.90	354.61	424.16	363.72	417.30	439.32	431.37
Sep	193.40	245.90	217.30	293.10	334.14	362.29	342.54	464.46	350.65	368.06
Oct	187.00	205.00	265.10	247.90	332.67	327.95	359.68	415.67	361.99	525.26
Nov	234.80	277.70	224.20	250.42	324.45	444.50	440.25	519.39	461.28	477.14
Dec	291.80	262.50	371.80	415.94	444.65	568.25	551.96	591.66	518.60	638.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>2653.80</b>	<b>3312.60</b>	<b>3310.00</b>	<b>3967.56</b>	<b>4493.89</b>	<b>5530.65</b>	<b>5265.19</b>	<b>6124.52</b>	<b>5762.24</b>	<b>5562.70</b>
% Change	1.02	24.82	-0.08	19.87	13.27	23.07	-4.80	16.32	-5.92	-3.46

**Table: Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourism & Other Travels (2001-2010)**

(Source: Bangladesh Tourism Board, 2016)

Though the foreign exchange earnings through mobilizing domestic resources by the host country's tourism industry can play an important role in the economy, the earning of Parjaton Corporation is very insignificant in terms of the overall earnings of the said

industry in the world and even in the Asian region. The earnings from tourism in Bangladesh were Tk. 267.7 million in 1990-91 which increased to Tk. 5562.70 million in 2010. There is also a very positive sign that in most of the year from 2000 to 2010 has a positive growth rate. From the above table we have seen, Bangladesh does not have a good position in world tourism, but the trend of growth rate in the earnings is encouraging.

### **Tourist Spots in Bangladesh:**

Bangladesh is a country adorned by the beauty of the nature. It has many beautiful places to present to the tourists like sea beaches, forests, lakes, hills, wild lives, archaeological attractions, monuments etc.

**1. Sea Beaches:** Cox's Bazar, the longest sea beach of the world, is the tourist capital of Bangladesh. The shark-free beach is good for bathing, sun-bathing and swimming. The breathtaking beauty of the setting sun behind the waves of the sea is captivating. Visits to the fascinating spot like Himchhari, Teknaf, Inani Beach, Buddhist Temple at Ramu and islands such as Sonadia, St. Martin and Moheskhalia can form memorable experiences of one's lifetime. Kuakata is a panoramic sea beach on the southern most tip of Bangladesh. Located in the Patuakhali district, Kuakata has a wide sandy beach from where one can observe both the sunrise and sunset. The Kuakata beach is 30 km long and 6 km wide.

**2. Archaeological Sites:** About eight km. to the west of Comilla town which is situated 144 km. south east of Dhaka lays a range of low hills known as Mainamati-Lalmai ridge, an extensive centre of Buddhist culture. On the slopes of these hills lie scattered a treasure of information about the early Buddhist civilization. Paharpur is the most important and the largest known monastery, help to recollect the glorious past of the then Bengal under the Pala dynasty of 8th century A.D. and had been declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Mahasthangarh, The oldest archaeological site of Bangladesh situated at a distance of 18 km to the North Bogra town and is famous for its size and height of the tower and pavilion. It is an archaeological site of the 3rd century B.C. and till today held to be of immense holiness by the Hindus.

**3. Monuments:** The National Memorial located at Savar, Dhaka, dedicated to the sacred memory of millions of unknown martyrs of liberation war of 1971 that brought Bangladesh into being an independent country. The Central Shahid Minar bears the symbol of Bengali nationalism and is dedicated to the honour of martyrs of the historical language movement of 1952 to establish the right of Bengali as the state language. War Cemetery is located in Chittagong where over 700 soldiers buried from Commonwealth countries and Japan, who died during the Second World War.

**4. Museums:** The National Museum was established in 1913 and which has four main departments, namely: National History, History and Cultural art, Ethnography and Decorative art and Contemporary art and Civilization. Each department is enriched with rare collections. Folk Art Museum was established in 1975 to fulfill the dream of the famous painter Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin with a rich collection of different folk objects of aesthetic and utilitarian values reflecting the temperaments, skills and expertise's of the artists and artisans who made them. Shilaidaha Kuthibari carries memories of Nobel Laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore and preserves many of his short stories songs and poem in this house, and some special and rare attractions like: Rabindranath Tagore's photographs of childhood, youth and old age are exhibited here. Some paintings painted by Tagore display here. Varendra Research Museum has a rich collection of objects from Mohenjodaro and also from 16th to 19th centuries with a rich collection of interesting objects of Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim heritage.

**5. Forests:** The Sundarbans is the largest mangrove forest in the world. Two-third of the Sundarbans is in Bangladesh. Sundarbans South, East and West are three protected forests in Bangladesh. This region is densely covered by mangrove forests, and is one of the largest reserves for the Bengal tiger. National Botanical Garden was established in 1961 and is located to the eastern side of National Zoological Garden in Mirpur with a total area of 84 hectare of land. The garden has a collection of about 100 species of local and foreign plants. About 100 varieties of roses, in the bamboo grove 100 varieties of bamboo, varieties of sandal wood are some notable attractions of the garden along with about 60 species of different rare and exotic plants. Botanical Garden and Eco-park is a reserved forest block with unique natural beauty established in 1998 at the foothill of Chandranath Hill at Sitakunda, Chittagong with a total area of 808 hectare. It is a promising site for developing habitat of wild flora and fauna, blooming eco-tourism and developing research and education for scientists of home and abroad.

**6. Hills, Rivers, Lakes and Island:** Rangamati is a wonderful repository of scenic splendors with flora and fauna of varied descriptions. The township is located on the western bank of the Kaptai Lake. Rangamati is a favorite holiday resort because of its beautiful landscape, scenic beauty, lake, colorful tribes, its flora and fauna, tribal museum, hanging bridge, homespun textile products, ivory jewellery and the tribal men and women who fashion them. Bandarban is regarded as one of the most attractive travel destinations in Bangladesh. Its resources can attract tourists from all over the country or even from abroad. Nilgiri is a famous tourist place here. Notably Bandarban is the house of the three highest peaks of Bangladesh. Khagrachari is also known as Phalang Htaung or the Mong Circle. Khagrachari is a valley. It has three rivers namely Chengi, Kasalong

and Maini. Most of the land of Khagrachari is hilly areas. Its resources can attract tourists from all over the country or even from abroad. The Sylhet Division is covered with terraced tea estates, patches of tropical rainforest, pineapple plantations and orange groves. This division has the best climate in the country - temperate and cool air in the winter and moderately warm in the summer. This place is also of religious importance to the pious Muslims of Bangladesh since the shrines of Hazrat Shahjalal (RA) and Hazrat Shahporan (RA) are situated there. St. Martin's Island is the only coral island in Bangladesh. It is about 8 km west of the northwest coast of Myanmar at the mouth of the Naf River. The local name of the island is "Narical Gingira". Saint Martin's Island has become a popular tourist spot.

### Findings and Analysis of the Study:

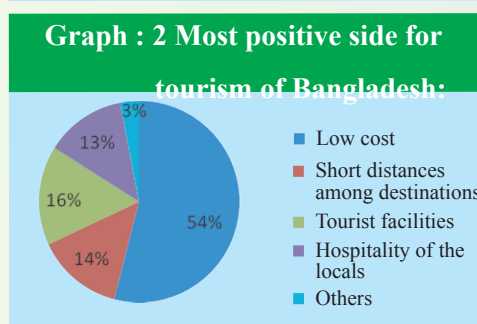
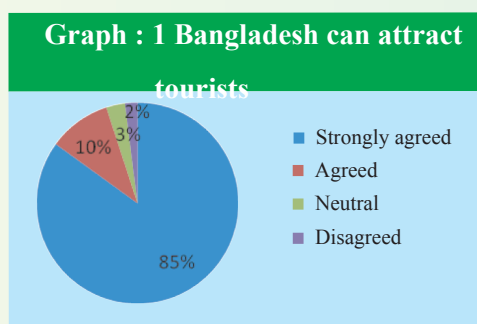
This evaluation may help to find out whether the promotion activities have any role or not in tourism marketing, are the tour operators are spending the sufficient amount on promotional activities or not, whether they need to spend more money to promotion or not and finally, is the promotional measures undertaken and launched by the same industry is effective or not. The objectives of tourism industry must match with the findings delineated in the whole report. To have insights about the industry a survey was conducted on 40 persons of varying age, social class, income level. This survey has supported to understand the present condition of our tourism industry. Followings are some of the findings of my survey;

#### 1. Bangladesh Can Attract More Tourists:

The respondents were asked whether Bangladesh can attract more tourists in future. 95% of the respondents think that Bangladesh has a great opportunity of attracting more tourists in the future. Only 5% of them have negative impression about the prospect of attracting more tourists. (Graph: 1)

#### 2. Most positive side for tourism of Bangladesh:

The respondents were asked to name the most positive side for tourism in Bangladesh. 54% mentioned low cost as the most positive side for tourism of



Bangladesh. Some other positive sides for tourism of Bangladesh as mentioned by the respondents are short distances among destinations, facilities, hospitality of locals etc. (Graph: 2)

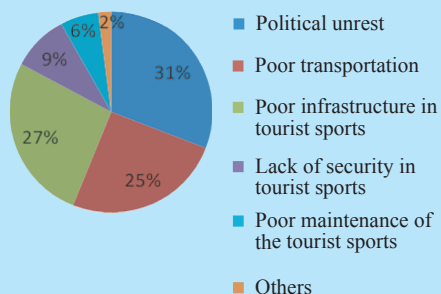
**3. Most Negative Side for Tourism of Bangladesh:** The respondents were asked to name the most negative side for tourism in Bangladesh. 31% of the respondents mentioned political unrest as the most negative side. Some other negative sides for tourism in Bangladesh are poor transportation, poor infrastructure, lack of security for tourists, poor maintenance of the tourist's spots etc.(Graph:3)

**4. Most Preferable Spots:** The respondents were asked to list their most preferable spots. 63% of them name Cox's Bazar as their most preferable spots. Other preferable spots are the Sundarbans, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Sylhet, Kuakata etc. (Graph: 4)

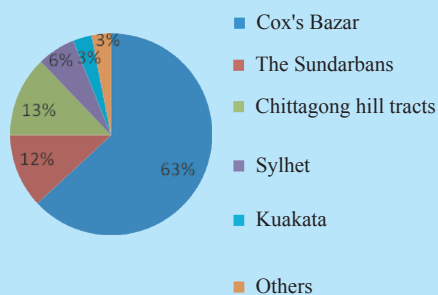
**5. Government Steps are Adequate:** The respondents were asked whether government steps for the development of tourism in Bangladesh are sufficient or not. 52% of the respondents think that the government steps were not adequate. Only a small portion of the respondents was satisfied with the initiatives of the government.(Graph: 5)

**6. Advertising can play the key role:** The respondents were asked which promotional tools can be used to promote tourism in Bangladesh. 25% of them think that

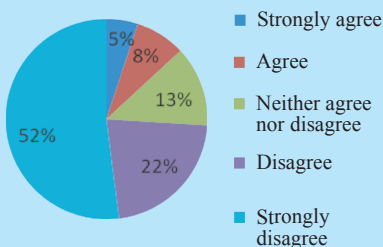
**Graph : 3. Most Negative Side for Tourism of Bangladesh:**



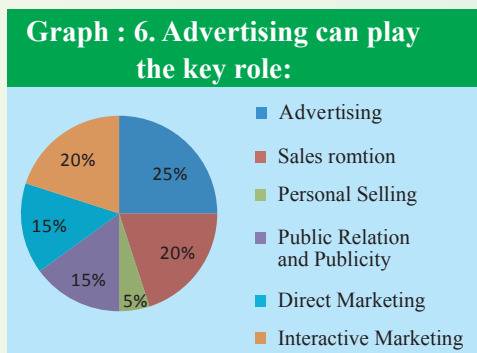
**Graph : 4. Most Preferable Spots:**



**Graph : 5. Government Steps are Adequate:**



advertising can play very important role. 20% of them think Sales promotion should be used; another 20% think Interactive marketing can be effective. 15% emphasize Public relation and publicity, another 15% emphasize Direct Marketing. Only 5% respondents mentioned personal selling to be used as a promotional tool to promote tourism.(Graph: 6)



Besides, the tourism industry is still quite young in Bangladesh and its development has been predominantly left to the local market forces. The climatic changes throughout the year have considerable implications for travelling in Bangladesh since the country occasionally experiences harsh storms, floods and earthquakes. The country also has a worldwide image of poor land with numerous natural catastrophes and corruption. The national tourism sector is negatively affected by the lack of social and political commitment.

### **Role of Integrated Marketing Strategy to Promote Tourism in Bangladesh**

Various tools of Marketing Communication Strategy can be used to promote the tourism sector of Bangladesh.

**Advertising:** Advertising is a non-personal form of mass communication and offers a high degree of control for those responsible for the design and delivery of the advertising message. Different tourist attraction of the country can be advertised in TV, Radio, newspaper, Journals or magazines using persuasive message to attract the potential visitors. Both the home country media and foreign media can be used to deliver the message. For example: Some persuasive and attractive advertisements like "Beautiful Bangladesh" can be prepared and presented in broadcast media.

**Sales promotion:** According to Philip Kotler, sales promotion is the short-term incentives to encourage the purchase or sale of a product or service. According to the authors, samples, cash refunds, price packs, premiums, advertising specialties, patronage rewards, point-of-purchase displays and demonstrations, and contests, sweepstakes and games can be used for consumer promotion tools and many of the tools used for consumer promotions- contests, premiums, displays - can be used as trade promotions or alternatively, the manufacturer may offer a straight discount off the list price on each case purchased during a stated period of time, also called a price-off, off-invoice or off-

list whereas in business promotion includes many of the same tools used for consumer or trade promotions but mainly conventions and trade shows and sales contests are used for business promotions. Incentives can be given to attract the visitors in the off-season. For example- tour package, discount services, price reduction or some facilities can be offered to the visitors. Some lucrative offers can be offered on different occasions. Tour fair can also be arranged. Again, special offers can be given on special days like Valentine's Day, or any other days when there exists an opportunity to attract visitors.

**Personal selling:** Personal selling is traditionally perceived as a communication tool which involves face-to-face activities undertaken by individuals, often representing an organization, in order to inform, persuade or remind an individual or group to take appropriate action, as required by the sponsor's representative. According to the author, a sales person engages in communication in a one-to-one basis where instantaneous feedback is possible and the costs associated with interpersonal communication are normally very large. The respective authority can send their delegates to different countries where they will personally deliver messages about the tourist's attraction and facilities of our country in different seminars and meetings. 'Team selling' form of personal selling can be used where groups of people will present information on our tourists spot to a number of potential visitors who can influence even more visitors to visit our tourists spots.

**Public relations:** Public relations is the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organization's leadership, and implementing planned programs of action which will serve both the organization's and the public interest. Third-party like magazines, newspapers, news programs etc. disseminate the messages on behalf of a particular company or organization. The increasing use of public relations and in particular publicity is a reflection of the high credibility attached to this form of communication and there is no charge for the media space or time but there are costs incurred in the production of the material. Press relations, product publicity, corporate communications, lobbying and counseling etc. are the different tools which can be used for public relation effectively. Bangladesh can establish one tourism promotion office and help desk in each of the countries where a large number of visitors are supposed to be found. Again, a Tourism booth can open in each of the High Commissioner Offices of Bangladesh in various countries.

**Direct Marketing:** Direct Marketing is defined as any activity which creates and profitably exploits a direct relationship between the company and its prospect. Direct marketing is a term used to refer to all media activities that generate a series of

communications and responses with an existing or potential customer. Telephone, mail, fax, e-mail, the Internet etc. can be used to communicate directly with specific consumers and to create and sustain a personal and intermediary-free dialogue with them. The database from the travel agencies and hotels can be used to obtain the lists of their frequent clients. This information can be used to communicate and inform about various tour facilities and offers to the potential client bases. For example, it may take the form of direct-mail marketing, catalog marketing, telephone marketing or direct-response television marketing.

**Interactive Marketing:** Interactive marketing relies on customers expressing their preferences so that marketers can produce more relevant marketing messages. Unlike the outbound marketing of the past, interactive marketing creates a two way dialogue between a business and its customers. Any time a customer is invited to provide feedback, express their personal preferences, or offer up demographic information, they are providing information that marketers can use to guide their advertising efforts. Interactive marketing can take many forms, but search engine marketing is one of the most common. When customers type a query into a search engine, they are shown advertising based on their search terms. Bangladesh should develop an interactive website or improve its current website so that potential visitors can contact directly with our responsible authorities. Bangladesh's tourism sector must start taking all the preparations from this moment if it wants to grab the huge development potentiality it possesses. Although we should largely target the foreign visitors, at the same time it mustn't also ignore the increasing prospect of the domestic market of this sector. As mentioned earlier, it is not enough that the country possesses a potential for becoming a covetable tourist destination. To turn that possibility into reality, marketing is a pre-condition. Today, promotional activities through Integrated Marketing Strategy can help Bangladesh to reach its target destination.

## Recommendations

**Renovate to image of Bangladesh:** Bangladesh is suffering from the image problem because of some international media. As a result, many foreigners do not choose Bangladesh as a tourist destination because of either they don't have enough idea about the country and its tourism attractions and facilities or what they have is negative. So, Bangladesh tourism should emphasize first on its promotional measures to correct this negative image.

**Information Technology in Tourism:** The international tourism system is dependent on information technology for its future growth, competitiveness and long-term survival. In

addition to that World Wide Web is the most popular application on the Internet which can be used effectively for the many purpose of tourism marketing including direct sales, advertisement, customer support, etc. Bangladesh tourism authority must consider the effective use of this technology for the promotional activity of this industry. It is worth mentioning here that though Bangladesh Parjaton Corporation has its own web page; it should be well designed containing all the necessary information.

**Promotion of Specific Regions:** If the industry wants to attract more foreign tourists, it needs to publish some creative advertisement in some specific travel guides, magazines, and specialized professional journals that the potential tourists, overseas tour operators, travel agents, and travel writers read.

**Importance of More Funds:** Bangladesh don't have that level of capability to compete with the world's top tourist generating countries, but it has the capability to compete with the member countries of SAARC or at least some other small countries of SAARC except India. To compete with these countries, needs to conduct more promotional measures. But what the amount is allocating presently for this purpose is not sufficient. But it is easy to increase its promotional budget up to 4 or 5 percent of its total earnings from this sector. In addition to that the authority should have a plan for the effective use of the promotional budget because it will again help to increase the earnings by attracting more tourists.

**Significance of Foreign Tour Operators:** Bangladesh Parjaton Corporation and the private tour operators of Bangladesh can maintain the contact and liaison with the foreign tour operators and to influence them to send more tourists to Bangladesh. Even foreign tour operators can be used to distribute the brochure, souvenirs, and tourists' maps of Bangladesh tourism. For this purpose they need to have some incentives. Bangladesh can sell package tours through foreign tour operators where they receive a handsome amount of discount.

**Combine discounted Offers and Group Tours:** Bangladesh can attract more tourists by offering more discounts on group tours and long stay visits. For example, discount on air tickets, hotel rents, discounted price of local transport arranged by the tour operators etc. National airlines have a major role in this regards. Since the position of the national airlines of Bangladesh is not so good, the country can make the mutual arrangement on some selected international airlines. In addition to that the tourism authority should offer more off-season discounts, students discount, SAARC tour rebate etc to motivate the potential tourists to visit Bangladesh.

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