The Architect of Bangladesh & the “Father of the Nation” - Bangabandhu – is also the “Father of Tourism Industry”.

Dr. Sheikh Mahabub Alam.

Adviser - The People’s University of Bangladesh (PUB)
Chairman - Department of Travel and Hospitality Management (THM)
Chairman - Board of Head of the Departments
The People’s University of Bangladesh (PUB)

Accepted 2017-01-15; Published 2017-02-13

Abstract:
Bangabandhu is the greatest Bengali soul the world has ever produced. His courage, voice, love & affection to the common people, his kindness had no bounds and his love towards little children had no limits an event the author has witnessed but above all his sacrifice for the nation was unparallel in the entire world. The nature has only produced one greatest politician, philosopher and tourism lover in the entire world. The world has also witnessed how the traitor (Mustaq-the black sheep in “The Awami League”) brutally killed him and his entire family in 15 August 1975 and publicly boasted that he killed Bangabandhu.

Mr. Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy and Sheer-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq was amazed by his courage, voice and leadership quality. The picked him-up, groomed him, trained him with their love, affection and supported him to become the leader of the country. He teamed up with Mr. Suhrawardy and Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq and took politics as part of his life, later he lead the language movement, the war of independence and finally brought the freedom for the nation.

Bangabandhu loved his countrymen and natural beauty and Mother Nature more than his children. That love encouraged him to travel every corner of the country. In fact he has travelled most of the villages in every Thana (Upazilla) of Bangladesh and was amazed by the natural beauty of the country and became a lover of tourism. He took the lead to show the beauty of Bangladesh to the wider world and took Geneva and Switzerland as the model to develop tourism.

Tourism became his passion. Nobody understood the natural beauty and its prospect for tourism better than Bangabandhu. He was the architect behind the development of a master plan to develop Cox’s Bazar as the Geneva, and turn Bangladesh as the Switzerland of Asia. He himself planted the Tamarisk (Jhau) forest along the beaches of Cox’s bazaar and he wanted to develop St. Martin’s Island (only Coral Reef Island) as a tourism wonderland. After the independence when Bangabandhu’s topmost priority was to rebuild the destroyed country and feed the hungry millions, he felt with his talent and farsightedness that tourism development will bring millions of dollars to expedite the rebuilding process of the country. He created Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) by himself. On the basis of his endless contribution towards tourism the author’s humble request to the government to officially declare Bangabandhu as the “Father of Tourism Industry”. This honorable declaration will only glorify our nation and elevate its status to the global community.
Dr. Sheikh Mahabub Alam, The Architect of Bangladesh & the “Father of the Nation” - Bangabandhu – is also the “Father of Tourism Industry”.

Keywords:
Tourist Bangabandhu, Cox’s Bazar, Tamarisk, Switzerland, St. Martin’s Island, Wonderland, Beauty of Bangladesh, Bangabandhu as “Father of Tourism Industry”.

1. Introduction:

Bangabandhu loved children very dearly. The author had the rare opportunity to meet Bangabandhu at the age of 12 years and that meeting encouraged him to attend the historic 7th Mar 1971 speech which is now recognized as one of best deliverance by a statesman. His blessing and word of wisdom changed author’s life forever which helped him to conquer every hurdle in life very successfully. In the same way Bangabandhu loved his countrymen, natural beauty and mother nature of Bangladesh that turned him to become an ambassador of tourism development of the country.

The author also had the rare opportunity to become a student of Gimadanga Tungipara (GT) High School the same Institution from which Bangabandhu started his schooling. His courage had no limit and his voice was extraordinary. During his school days Mr. Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy along with Sheer-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq came to visit his school and enquired about the wellbeing of the students and the school. When everybody including the teachers maintained pin drop silent one boy stood up and expressed the truth with courage that the school is in a very poor condition and rain water leaks through the broken roof and it requires urgent fixing. Mr. Suhrawardy was impressed with his courage and saw him as the future leader of the country. Mr. Suhrawardy invited him to come and visit him in Calcutta.

Later in life Bangabandhu went to Calcutta as a student of Islamia College and met him and finished his graduation from Islamia College. Mr. Suhrawardy and Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq loved him very dearly, taught him politics, mentored him and supervised him to become the leader of the country. He lead the language movement in 1952, became The President of the Awami League and eventually he lead the country during war of independence in 1971 and gave his people a precious gift of a free nation. The central theme of his political Philosophy was: love your country, countrymen, and love the natural beauty and mother nature with heart and take actions to alleviate the suffering of the common people and protect natural beauty. His philosophy is reflected in his action that his politics began with the grass root people and how their conditions can be improved. That is why everybody loved him in return so dearly and they were ready to make any kind of sacrifice including sacrificing life for the cause of the country.

His political philosophy was to raise his voice against any kind of oppression particularly if it is directed towards week and needy people which is proved by his solidarity with the demand of fourth class employees. This support cost him very dearly and eventually took him to jail but he did not compromise.

He traveled every corner of the country, met every kind of people, loved them like his own children, solved their problem with his own money and efforts and in return he won their heart and soul and their blessing. He could not and did not ignore the natural beauty of the country rather the more he travel the deeper were his attraction and bonding with the natural beauty of Bangladesh which made him an ambassador of tourism. His desire to expose the beauty of Bangladesh to the wider world and transform Bangladesh a Tourism friendly country of the world. In his leisure he has shared his dream with his dearest and nearest friends and allies of him and our honorable
Minister for Tourism and civil Aviation Mr. Rashed Khan Menon was one of them to whom he expressed his desire to transform Bangladesh as the Switzerland of Asia. The article will also depict Bangabandhu as one of the greatest Philosopher and lover of natural beauty and mother nature, how he wanted to develop them and finally expose them to the wider world. It is extraordinary for a great leader like him that he kept the idea of tourism development always on his priority list and he constantly looking for a model that will help him to build his Golden Bengal as a heaven for tourism. Through this article the author will request the government to officially accept and declare him as the “Father of Tourism Industry”. The scope provides the opportunity to assess, investigate and justify how he loved the natural beauty, how he wanted to preserve them, he lead by example by planting the Tamarisk (Jhau) tree with his own hand to encourage people to become guardian angel to preserve the natural beauty of Bangladesh and why he picked up Switzerland as the role model to develop tourism.

2. Philosopher Bangabandhu:

2.1. Bangabandhu – The Greatest Soul on Earth. Bangabandhu (Fig. 1) was born on 17 March, 1920 with a sacred soul that was lionhearted, adventurous, heroic, intrepid, gallantry, bold, fearless, and full of courage and extraordinary voice. He was landed on the soil of Tungipara, started his schooling at Gimadanga Tungipara (GT) High School Fig. 2). But later he moved to Gopalganj Missionary School.

His father’s name was Mr. Sheikh Lutfur Rahman and his mother’s name was Mrs. Saira Begum. He was married to her cousin Begum Fazilatunnesa in 1942. They were blessed with 5 children of which H E Sheikh Hasina is the eldest of all and is now the current Prime Minister – Desh Ratna. Out of 24 years of Pakistani rule he spent about 12 years in
Dr. Sheikh Mahabub Alam, The Architect of Bangladesh & the “Father of the Nation” - Bangabandhu – is also the “Father of Tourism Industry”.

jail but nothing worked to stop his success and fame in every corner of the country.

His political career effectively began with the inspiration of Mr. Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy and Sheer-e-Bangka A K Fazlul Huq in 1939.In 1948 he co-founded East Pakistan Muslim Chatro (student) League. With the blessing of those two prominent leaders he very quickly became the “Uncrowned King of Bangladesh (Farland, 1969)” politics of the then East Pakistan. He led the 1952 language movement in which Salam, Barkat, Rafique, Jabbar and Matiur sacrificed their lives on 21 February by police firing. His unprecedented popularity was proved in the 1970 election when he won the election with landslide victory which the world has never seen before and never will in the future. This victory should take its place in the Guinness book of records as a one-off event. The visionary leader must have foreseen something therefore he prepared the nation with his iconic speech at Ramna Race Course on 7 Match 1971 where the author was present himself (Alam, 2016) at the meeting. In that speech he effectively declared the independence and gave all the instructions that was necessary to achieve the victory even he is not there physically. The heroic Bengali nation very quickly regrouped and put fierce resistance and eventually with the support of Indira Gandhi and Indian People the independent Bangladesh was born. Bangabandhu was released from Pakistani jail and came back to Dhaka via London and Delhi on 10 January, 1972 (Khan, 2016) and took the charge as Prime Minister of Bangladesh. Later he opted for Presidential form of government and became the first president of Bangladesh.

On 23 February, 1969 prominent elderly leader Mr. Tofail Ahmed MP and current Commerce Minister honored him with the title of “Bangabandhu” and since then he was known as Bangabandhu and will remain Bangabandhu forever. He was the architect of Bangladesh and now he is the “Father of the Nation” as he led the war of independence and gave us a new country called “Bangladesh”.

2.2. Philosophical Belief of Bangabandhu:

Fig. 2. Bangabandhu began schooling at Gimadanga Tungipara High school. (Source: https://www.google.com/search?q=image+of+gimadanga+tungipara+high+school).

20174

doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.15520/ijcrr/2017/8/02/122
Everybody is sent to this world with a mission. Bangabandhu was sent to give us a free nation. The central theme Bangabandhu’s philosophical beliefs and political wisdom were to: Love your country and countrymen with your heart; Speak the truth under all circumstances even when the life is at risk; Create equal opportunities for all and protect country from deprivation of any kind; Spread love and affection towards grass root common people and protect the interest of vulnerable groups; Always keep your head high with unusual courage and honesty; worked relentlessly to create a society where there will be no poverty, hunger and injustice; Always stand-by for causes of helpless, poor and needy by supporting them without any reservation; He was a person who was rationally and sensibly calm especially during circumstances when his life is at stack; Bangabandhu’s love for nature was unusual and his vision was not only to protect the natural beauty of Bangladesh but to preserve, enhance and expose the beauty to the wider world; Bangabandhu acquired his philosophical belief from his unusual courage, honesty, sincerity, his love for his country, and of course through his physical presence in all odd circumstances. His mingling style with common people cannot be explained with words and his understanding about the needs & wants, sorrows & happiness of poor people was phenomenal; he was a wise man who is calm in all circumstances and rational in all perception. All of his philosophical beliefs mentioned above were reflected in his character, action, judgments and utterances. Bangabandhu’s mission was to achieve the freedom from the oppression and suppression with saintly courage, determination and organized efforts by uniting everyone under one platform and under one ideological belief i.e. the historical 6-point demand of Bangabandhu.

3. Bangabandhu’s Unprecedented Attachment:

3.1. Sky was the Limit of his Love and Trust:

Bangabandhu has molded his political organization with his philosophy directed towards the alleviation of sorrows and grief of common people. His love and affection had no limits and he embraced everyone from the lowest classes of day laborers to landless farmers regardless of ethnic origin, creed or clan. He gave them everything he could possibly donate. That is why people from all walks of life loved him, supported him and awarded him with the landslide victory during the election of 1970.

After becoming the Prime Minister of independent Bangladesh he did not live in the Ganobgaban to save national expenses instead he preferred to live in his own home at Road No- 32, Dhanmondi with minimum security. The defeated Pakistani army became furious to take revenge and recruited Traitor Mustaq and his team to kill Bangabandhu. He loved and trusted his countrymen so much that even when Indira Gandhi informed and warned Bangabandhu that his life is in danger, he disregarded them.

3.2. He Fell in Love with the Natural Beauty and Mother Nature:

While he was touring the country he did not overlook the natural beauty of the country. A country with the most fertile soil of the world due to its origin from alluvial deltaic sediments came through the river network from the Himalayas, Shillong Plateau and Arakan-Yoma Mountain Ranges. Bangladesh is known as land of rivers. The huge abundance of soil assemblages and water resources has made this country unique. There is no country in the world which has rivers like the Padma and the Meghna or the Brahmaputra Rivers. Riverine and Maritime tourism has a huge potential and prospect in Bangladesh and Bangabandhu realized that very well and believed in his hear. The other natural features are its unique disposition of massive flat land bounded by the hilly foot hills of Shillong.
Plateau on the east and Arakan-Yuma Fool hills along the eastern margins of Bangladesh. This unique disposition and its beautiful natural vegetation assemblages is eye catching to everyone and Bangabandhu took a very good account of that as well. That is why he called his country Sonar Bangla (Golden Bengal) and spontaneously picked up Tagore song as our national Anthem.

3.3. His Dream to Depict the Beauty of Golden Bengal to the Wider World:
In 30 July, 1972 Bangabandhu went to England for a Gall bladder operation and from there he went to Geneva as health recovery trip. To him it was the heaven on earth and as a lover of natural beauty and the infrastructural development made by Switzerland at that time he has already made up his mind to take Switzerland as a model country to transform Cox’s Bazar as the “Geneva of Asia” and remodel Bangladesh as the “Switzerland of Asia”. Bangabandhu shared his dream with fortunate few of his fellow companion. But unfortunate Bangladesh could not keep him alive to materialize his tourism dream that he cherished in his mind. Bangabandhu did not want to live at The Gono Bhaban (the official residence of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, which is located on the north corner of the National Parliament House at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar) to reduce national expenses as he was having a tough time to rebuild the war torn country and to feed the hungry millions.

4. Bangabandhu – A Tourist Champion:

4.1. National Tourist Icon:
There is no other political leader in the world who visited the entire country to see the condition of their people except Bangabandhu who have visited all the Thana’s/Upazillas and most of the villages of Bangladesh. His extraordinary love for common deprived people and attraction to the natural beauty of the countryside took him from one part of the country to another. He wanted to see the condition of the people by himself, listen to their problems and tried to solve them on the spot if possible. His unusual love for his countrymen and astonishing attraction for the nature brought him very close to the heart of the people and unquestionably he was moved by the natural beauty of Bangladesh. His extraordinary display of love, compassion and care for the nature and his affection towards his countrymen, forced him to travel and transform him as a great traveler and lover of tourism. His love for tourism inspired him to show the natural beauty of Bangladesh to the wider world. This idea became a determination after his trip to Switzerland in 1972. A very brief description of four iconic tourist destinations that defines the country’s natural boundary.

4.1.1. Teknaf:
Is located on the bank of the Naf River. This river is the natural divide between Bangladesh

Fig. 3. Teknaf the border of Bangladesh (source: https://www.google.com/search?q=images+of+teknaf&client=firefox-b-ab&tbm).
And Myanmar. The entrance of this town is a hilly area and people visit this point to enjoy the beauty of Naf River (Fig. 3) surrounding from the top of the hill. Its reserve forest provides a safe haven for the elephants and other wild animals. Teknaf is 92 KM south of Cox’ Bazar. Teknaf hilly area and natural parks are very popular to the adventure lover tourist. There are some caves in this area that attracts the tourists. It is the last border of the longest Cox’s Bazar Sea Beach. Riverine tourism transports are operated from Teknaf that connects the mainland with the wonderland of St. Martins Island.

4.1.2. Tetulia:
Tetulia is the extreme northern border of Bangladesh with India. It is called the Zero point. Tetulia is also known as “The City of Dream” from here one can see the mighty Himalayas. It is the connecting point of Silk Road that will criss-cross within the greater Asia.

According to 1991 census it has a population of nearly 87 thousand with an area of 73.02 mi² under Panchagarh district. Tetulia (Fig. 4) corridor is a proposed 4-6 km passage that would connect Chopra and Maynaguri of India via Tetulia of Bangladesh. This corridor will reduce travel distance by 84km between the two cities of India. It will facilitate business boom between the two countries. There is an organic Tea Estate in Tetulia own by Kazi & Kazi Tea Estate.

4.1.3. Sundarban:
The Mangrove forest of Sundarban is the home of reptiles (Fig. 5), Royal Bengal Tiger (Fig. 6) and many other wild animals. The Mangrove forest located in the south-east corner of Bangladesh is the best gift of nature to our nation. It is also the home of millions of fauna and flora. If it can be developed based on Ecotourism and sustainable tourism developmental policy then it will become the best cash cow to earn billions of dollars from millions of global tourist as well as our national tourists. It is a matter of great pride that the Current Prime Minister has declared 2016 as the “Year of Tourism” and spending millions of dollars to construct massive infrastructure with the intention of tourism development that was Bangabandhu’s dream. Due to hundreds of years of neglect our iconic Sundarbans is getting slimmer. As per The Prothom Alo (3 September, 2016) the area of Sundarban was 11,256 sq. km. in 1776, which had been premeasured as 9,279 sq. km. and according
to the last survey in 2015 the area has been reduced to 5,467 sq. km. Climate change impact, uncontrolled human destruction, the effect of Farakka barrage and sea water encroachment had significant contribution along with many other reasons for this reduction.

Fig. 5. Sundarbans famous for swampy Crocodile population. (source: https://www.tourmyindia.com/wildlife_sancturies/sunderban-national-park.html).

Fig. 6. Sundarban is world famous for its Royal Bengal Tiger population (source: https://www.tourmyindia.com/wildlife_sancturies/sunderban-national-park.html).

4.1.4. Jaflong and Tamabil Border in Sylhet:

The Golden Bengal begins from Jaflong located on the border between Sylhet of Bangladesh and the Meghalaya State of India. The Dauki River that came down to Sylhet through the zero point at Jaflong is famous for boulder resources that are useful for the construction industry of Bangladesh. The crystal clear water attracts tourist to soak them like the lady at the Dauki River (Fig. 7).
Dr. Sheikh Mahabub Alam, The Architect of Bangladesh & the “Father of the Nation” - Bangabandhu – is also the “Father of Tourism Industry”.

The Khasi Tribe living at Jaflong area for thousands years.

Fig.7. Crystal Clear Dauki River Water and It is time to have a bath. (Source: https://www.google.com.bd/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8&q=images+of+Janflong+sylhet).

Tamabil is only 5 km before Jaflong. A number of eye catching waterfalls are located around Tamabil area which flows down the foot hills of Meghalaya.

4.2. Bangabandhu a Leading Global Tourist:

Bangabandhu had a pretty long political career (although most of his youth he spent in Pakistani jail about 12 years in total) but unfortunately he had a brief pilgrimage (course) as a statesman. Yet Bangabandhu visited many countries either as a national leader or as a Statesman during his brief statesmanship. A very brief mention will be made here with some of his selected foreign trips during which he didn’t miss any opportunity to see the natural beauty of those countries besides his official engagement as if he is looking for something within the natural beauty of foreign lands:

1957: Bangabandhu visited China and Russia as part of his official tour.
1962: He made a surprise visit to Pakistan (I mean West Pakistan).
1966: He visited Lahore and placed his 6-point demand before the selection committee of the national conference.

1972: Bangabandhu made his first official visit to USSR (Russia) as Prime Minister of Bangladesh.
1972 and 1974: On 8 January 1972 Bangabandhu was released from Pakistani jail and flew to London for health check. From there he came to Dhaka with a short stopover at Delhi to meet and thank Indira Gandhi and arrived at Dhaka on 10 January.
1972&1973: Bangabandhu visited Japan the garden country of the world.
1973: He met a lot of world leaders at Algiers Non-Aligned Summit such as Marshal Tito, Fidel Castro, King Faisal and many other prominent leaders. 77 countries participated while 22 countries were also present as observer.
In 1774 Bangabandhu went to London and Switzerland.
1974; Bangabandhu paid a visit to Egypt.
The omnipresent pipe in Bangabandhu’s hand, His charismatic tall appearance and courageous
Dr. Sheikh Mahabub Alam, The Architect of Bangladesh & the “Father of the Nation” - Bangabandhu – is also the “Father of Tourism Industry”.

engagement made him more impressive alongside the towering international personalities like Fidel Castro, Marshal Tito, Henry Kissinger, Andre Marlaux, Curt Waldheim, Ne Win, Colonel Gaddafi, Motubo and others. In 1974 Bangladesh became a member of United Nations and Bangabandhu delivered his historic speech at UN general Assembly in Bangla. After that historic speech he became of the greatest leader of the world.

5. His Dream to Transform Golden Bengal as Tourist Heaven.

5.1. His Master Plan to Transform Cox’s Bazar as Geneva of Asia.

The Cox’s Bazar sea beach (Fig. 8) is the longest natural sandy beach in the world. It is an unbroken beach and has a length of 125 km. It is renowned to the wider world for its tranquility and magnificent green scenario on a hilly background and the appealing waves on the front. Bangabandhu’s desire and vision was to transform Cox’s as the Vienna of

Fig-8. World’s Longest Unbroken Sandy Sea Beach at Cox’s Bazar. (source: https://www.google.com/search?q=images+of+cox%27s+bazar&client=firefox-b-ab&biw=1366&biw).

Dr. Sheikh Mahabub Alam, The Architect of Bangladesh & the “Father of the Nation” - Bangabandhu – is also the “Father of Tourism Industry”.

Asia. Bangabandhu was so well connected and focused with the development of Tourism Industry and the upgradation of Cox’s Bazar Sea Beach for the global visitor’s that he himself started planting the Tamarisk (Jhau) tree (Fig. 9) along the Cox’s Bazar Sea Beach being the head of States of the country to inspire people to follow him. He started designing the master plan for the development of Cox’s Bazar under his direct supervision.

5.2. Transformation of St. Martin’s Island as a Tourism Wonderland:

It is a piece of paradise which has protruded into the sea at the Bay of Bengal. Bangabandhu wanted to transform “St. Martins Island” (Fig. 10 & 11) as the wonder Island of the World after the Great Barrier Reef of Queensland, Australia. But he did not.

Fig. 10. St. Martin’s Island (a coral reef island) (source: http://www.stmartinisland.org/media/rokgallery/a/a3838d9b-8be8-445a-88c6-559c7988c185/960863f4-11df).

Fig. 11. The St. Martins island (The only coral reef in the country) http://www.stmartinisland.org/media/rokgallery/a/a3838d9b-8be8-445a-88c6-559c7988c185/960863f4-11df).
Dr. Sheikh Mahabub Alam, The Architect of Bangladesh & the “Father of the Nation” - Bangabandhu – is also the “Father of Tourism Industry”.

Get the opportunity to use his imagination and vision to develop neither the “Cox’s Bazar Sea Beach” nor the “St. Martin’s Island”. If that tourism icon along with other iconic destinations can be developed through sustainable and ecotourism facilities then the country will have the potential to earn billions of tourist dollars and can become number one source of foreign currency earners. Then the nation does not need to wait until 2041 to attain the developed country status.

5.3. Sudden Demise of a Tourism Dreamer:
The defeated Pakistani army used traitor Mustaq and his team whom Bangabandhu loved them like his own children assassinated him with his entire family but luckily Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana survived as they were in Germany at that time. The army in the middle of the night buried him in Tungipara (Fig. 12) under heavy security.

Fig. 12.Bangabandhu was buried at Tungipara under heavy security after his assassination at the above mausoleum. (source: https://www.google.com/search?q=images+of+tungipara&client=firefox-b-ab&tbm=isch&imgil).

God carries out his justice in a very mysterious way. There is a famous quote in English that “When God closes the doors somehow he opens the window” for the sunshine to seep through. That window of hope Bangabandhu’s eldest daughter his own blood – the honorable Prime Minister – Desh Ratna – H E Sheikh Hasina. God kept Sheikh Hasina alive to salvage the country from darkness and punish those culprits. The Pakistani favorite governments ruled the country for more than two decades with their oppressive misrules, rampant corruption and they have systematically closed the door to put the killers of Bangabandhu on trial. Rather than punishing the successive governments rewarded, promoted and protected those self-confessed killers. The death of the “Father of Nation” took the country backward for nearly 25 years instead of progress and prosperity.

5.4. Reappearance of Bangabandhu:
In the face of peoples opposition both the military rule and the Pakistani favorite government bow down and handed the peoples power to Desh Ratna – H E Sheikh Hasina to lead the country on the path of progress and prosperity. Desh Ratna – H E Sheikh Hasina with her alliance government managed to amend the constitution so that the killers of Bangabandhu, the collaborators and traitors during the war of independence in 1971, the August Grenade attack on Sheikh Hasina and other Awami League leaders, can be put on trial. She also established the International Crimes Tribunal Bangladesh (ICTB) to put on trial the...
war criminals through a long, tedious, and transparent trial process. The killers of Bangabandhu had been tried and punished with capital punishment. The war criminals have been tried and punished with the capital punishment. Some of them are still at large others are hiding in USA and Canada but one day they will bring them home to punish them because she is the daughter of Bangabandhu.

5.5. Sir Frank Peters Call and Bangladesh Tourism Response:

Sir Frank Peters has proposed a brilliant idea to celebrate the birth centenary of Bangabandhu (Fig. 13) with the theme of promoting Tourism under the leadership of Sajib Wazed Joy (The Grandson of Bangabandhu and the son of H E Sheikh Hasina). Sir Peters correctly pointed out that Bangabandhu and Bangladesh is inseparable. He knew very well the tourism lover Bangabandhu and his dream to transform Bangladesh as the Switzerland of Asia. According to Sir Peters proposed Sajib Wazed (Joy) to chair the Bangabandhu Centenary birthday celebration. The author also believes it’s a wonderful idea. Joy would put his heart and soul effort to make it successful”(Sir Peters, 2016). Foreign travelers are habituated and expects seamless memorable tourism experience as money is not an issue to them. They want quality engagement in a fun loving environment. To make tourists life easier and their journey unforgettable the following requirements are very important: 1. The Hundred Day Celebration begins with visa less travel i.e.-travelling during those 100 days tourists does require any visa and fee requirement should also be waived; 2. At the airport there should be separate immigration counter for Centenary Celebration Tourists; 3. Alternative Mode of transport should be arranged to avoid traffic congestion from airport to the hotel and to the tourist attraction sites; as for example those who want to go to the iconic spots directly helicopter transport should be ready for those 100 days; 4. Traffic congestion must be reduced to a tolerable level by getting ready light rail travel facilities before the arrival of Bangabandhu’s birthday; 5. Establishment and availability of limousine service should be fully equipped with ample service facilities – the aim is quick detachment from airport to the destination with comfort and honor; 6. Modernization of Railway Service and foolproof Luxurious Riverine Cruise Services and Luxurious Costal Transport at their fingertips; 7. The Attraction (tourism spots) must have the following facilities and amenities: A. modern eye catching transport facilities in and around the venue for easy movement from one attraction to the other; B. Modern cafes and restaurant scattered all around the venue; C. ample modern washroom facilities scattered all over the venue; D. plenty of Banks ( and ATM machine) are scattered inside and outside the tourist attraction; E. Easy collection of venue entrance ticket which require plenty of ticket selling booth scattered all around the venue so that people do not need to stay in long queues to collect ticket; and F. Finally plenty of entrance gates should be installed all around the venue for easy entry and exit. Plenty of entertainment, amusement and attractions facilities inside the venue will keep the tourist inside for a longer time. The longer they stay inside, more money they spend, the more profit the facilities provider makes, government make more revenue and national economy gets stronger – that is the foundation of tourism business. Exclusive foreign tourist’s zone can be developed.

Above preparation requires years of hard work, plenty of funds, right architectural design, strong construction foundation and multiple highways to reach the venue. It is therefore vital that that those who will be engaged in developing those infrastructures, facilities, tourism product develop and their (tourists) movement from one venue to

doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.15520/ijcrr/2017/8/02/122
another requires utmost sincerity, honesty, dedication and hard work to complete them in time. The focal point is to make every tourist’s journey memorable so that they come back again with their family and friends.

The writer is in complete agreement that this is a unique once-in-a-lifetime opportunities for Bangladesh to celebrate the birth centenary of the “Father of Nation” in 2019 and capitalize the opportunity to make this country a tourism friendly nation. Once established the tourists will keep coming for many years to come booming the economy.


6. Why Bangabandhu should be the “Father of Tourism Industry”:

6.1. Bangabandhu Nurtured Tourism Dream in his Heart:

Honorable Rashed Khan Menon in many occasions has mentioned Bangabandhu’s tourism desire, aspirations and tourism dream. Since his return from Pakistan he wasted no time to begin tourism development activities and established Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) and he initiated the master plan to develop Cox’s Bazar under his direct supervision. But Bangabandhu was always on the move to find out a model for tourism development that he finally found during his trip to Geneva, Switzerland. Since then he tirelessly worked to transform Cox’s Bazar (the longest unbroken natural sandy sea beach in the world) as Geneva of Asia. His next master plan was to develop the St. Martins Island (a piece of Coral reef paradise protruded in the ocean along the Bay of Bengal) as the wonderland of the world. His ultimate desire was to transform Bangladesh as the Switzerland of Asia. The underlying motive was to attract millions of visitors to this wonderful country and who would spend billions of dollars and with that revenue Bangabandhu would build his Sonar Bangla (Golden Bengal). Bangabandhu’s dream was like the height of the Himalayas and his love and affection towards the nature and country was no less than Charles Darwin. His sky high tourism dream encouraged him to begin planting Tamarisk (Jhau) tree along the famous natural Sea Beach of Cox’s Bazar.

6.2. Bangabandhu as “Father of Tourism Industry” will Glorify Tourism:

On the basis of his philosophical belief, his affection and care for the common people, his
dream for tourism & love for the Mother Nature, his tourist adventure within the country and his love for national and international tourism mad us proud as a tourism loving nation. The traitors did not allow Bangabandhu to complete: 1). His dream and vision to transform the country as the Switzerland of Asia; 2). His master plan to reconstruct Cox’s Bazar as Geneva of Bangladesh; 3). Transform St. Martin’s Island as the dreamland for the world tourists. If he could get some more time he would transform this country as a heaven for global tourists. Bangabandhu’s love for tourism industry and his contribution during his brief statesmanship is more than enough to officially recognize him as the “Father of Tourism Industry”. Bangabandhu during his life time did not forget for a moment how the country can be made more attractive to the world tourists so that the tourists can get the opportunity to get the real taste of golden Bengal (Sonar Bangla). If the government award Bangabandhu with the honor of “Father of Tourism Industry” it will not benefit him in anyway but the country will be glorified to the wider world. This recognition will take this country 10 step forward towards tourism development.

6.3. Authors Call to Declare Bangabandhu as the “Father of Tourism Industry”:

On the basis of the foregoing interpretation, analysis and explanation of Bangabandhu’s love for Natural Beauty & Mother Nature, his Passion for Tourism, his Vision of Tourism development and his engagement in tourism development he has already become the “Uncrowned Father of Tourism Industry”. Normal leader thinks what will happen in 5 or 10 years but Bangabandhu used to think what will happen in the next century. That is why Bangabandhu is the greatest leader the world has ever produced. My humble request and I put forward very strongly to our honorable Prime Minister – Desh Ratna – H E Sheikh Hasina to declare officially Bangabandhu as the “Father of Tourism Industry” during his next birthday.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations:

7.1.

Bangabandhu is not only the best Bengali soul the nature has ever produced but the author believes he is the best human soul the world has ever produced. Both Mr. Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy” and “Sheer-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq” were amazed by is courage, voice and leadership skills. Their assessment was that that Bangabandhu is born with natural leadership quality. They picked him up, trained and groomed him under their direct supervision as the future leded with their love affection and companionship. Later he lead Language movement, he was elected as president of The Awami League and became supreme command of War of Independence. A leader of such stature cannot be trained up but he was born to become the leader of the world.

7.2.

The omnipresent pipe in Bangabandhu’s hand was his diagnostic symbol. His charismatic tall appearance and courageous engagement made him more impressive alongside the towering international personalities like Fidel Castro, Marshal Tito, Henry Kissinger, Andre Marlaux, Curt Waldheim, Ne Win, Colonel Gaddafi, Motubo and Houari Boumediene. But his historical speech at UN in 1974 made him one of the top statesmen of the world. After that historic speech he became one of the greatest leaders of the world.

7.3.

He was a personality with a great heart. His political philosophy and ideology were surrounded with the well fare of the grass root people. His desire and intention of helping the poor and needy was the focal point of his ideology
and establish equality for all regardless of origin, creed, sex and religious faith (religion is individual right but the celebration is for all). His political dream was to bring equality in the society, save the country from deprivation and oppression created by the Pakistani ruling class.

7.4.
There is no record in world history that any other political leader has traveled every corner of the country like Bangabandhu did. He not only travelled he mixed and mingled with the common ordinary poor people, he hugged them, kissed them and embraced them without any hesitation and reservation and in return he own their hearts, minds and love. People have sacrificed their life and took the bullets during language movement led by Bangabandhu. The war of independence began with one man’s call that was Bangabandhu. The people sacrificed their life in their millions to achieve freedom.

7.5.
His unusual love to towards the Mother Nature and natural beauty was beyond imagination. His extraordinary display of love, compassion and care for the nature forced him to travel from one part to the other that he did not want to miss any example of beauty scattered all over Bangladesh. He maintained his dream in his heart to transform Bangladesh as a heaven for tourist. He was constantly on the move from one country to another as if he is looking for something i.e.- that is he is looking for a model to design country’s tourism industry and in the end he found one and that was Geneva and Switzerland. His desire was to transform Bangladesh as the Switzerland of Asia.

7.6.
When America asked Bangabandhu to give them St. Martin’s Island he did not take time to say no because his vision was to make St. Martin’s Island as a paradise for global tourists. He knew St. Martin’s Island is a piece of paradise protruded in the middle of the ocean along the Bay of Bengal. He knew it could be developed with little money using local technology with a flavor of modern touch that would be a pleasure island for global visitors - making way for millions of dollars of revenue for the country. Similarly there are many other Islands scattered in the Bay of Bengal each of which could be developed as a little Disneyland in the Bengal opening the door to earn billions of dollars in revenue. All other revenue earning sectors of development will be saturated one day but tourism industry will continue to grow and its demand will continue to go up like Disneyland until the Day of Judgment.

7.7.
Bangabandhu knew that tourism is the only sector that requires less money to make it acceptable to world travelers. The tourist does not want to see what they have already seen in Europe, America or South-east Asia. They want something new, something different and something that is traditional & unique. This country has ample iconic beauty scattered all over the country, along the beaches, within the foot hills, and in the off-shore Islands. All that is needed is to develop them with right kind of product and facilities, packed with elements of fun, amusement, entertainment, 5-star and 3-star accommodation, good food, world class sanitation, safety & security and plenty of transport facilities including luxury cruise ships ferrying visitors over 100s of rivers and within the islands and can be extended within the neighboring countries opening the doors for endless opportunity.

8. Few Suggestions if I May:

8.1.
Bangabandhu gave highest priority on tourism development because he realized that it was the
best way to earn billions of dollars from world traveler who would be happy to see the Golden Bengal and enjoying its unparallel hospitality offered by common ordinary rural people. Bangladesh people are always ready to render their help, care and love to any stranger and particularly to foreign tourists with fair complexion. Our hospitality can conquer the world if it can be developed with international tourism guidelines. The author is very pleased to see that our Prime Minister - Desh Ratna – H E Sheikh Hasina is doing everything possible to boost tourism industry to fulfill Bangabandhu’s dream.

8.2.

It is the demand of the time that a separate Ministry is required to expedite the unlimited prosperity of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry of Bangladesh. This Ministry cannot be treated just like any other ministry it should be run by the tourism experts starting from the minister to Junior Assistant Secretary. Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) was created by Bangabandhu soon after his return from Pakistan after the liberation because he realized that tourism industry will bring more benefit with less investment that will help him to feed the hungry millions and to rebuild the war torn country. Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB) has now been added to bring positive results for the development of tourism industry. A PPP program will expedite the development of tourism industry – a dream initiated by Bangabandhu.

8.3.

The author believes that H E Sheikh Hasina knows everything about Bangabandhu’s dream, desire and vision for tourism development. She has already declared 2016 as the year of tourism of Bangladesh and lot more surprise decisions will be coming from her for the development of tourism industry. Bangabandhu has already started the master plan for tourism development in Cox’s Bazar. This master plan can be ungraded with the increased demand of modern world and can be completed with shortest possible time to bring Bangabandhu’s dream a reality. Bangabandhu was miles ahead of thinking about the future development of not only for tourism but for the total development of the country.

8.4.

The Bay of Bengal has hundreds of islands and few dozen of island is very strategically located and each of which can be developed as a mini Disneyland. Such development would bring revolution in Marine Tourism and will bring cash bonanza for the nation if properly developed. The Riverine Tourism is another sector with unlimited prospect potential if cross-boundary riverine tourism program can be developed in cooperation with our friendly neighboring countries and to extract more positive results the so called bureaucratic visa system needs to scrapped and visa free travel exclusively for tourist must be introduced. This visa free travel system will bring overseas tourists in their millions will bring economic benefits for all our neighboring countries. This can be introduced during the celebration of centenary birthday of Bangabandhu. Worldwide publicity and marketing is required to invite people from all over the world to take part centenary birthday celebration of Bangabandhu.

8.5.

The brilliant idea of celebrating “A ‘Bangabandhu 100’” came from Sir Peter Frank is a fantastic idea and a once-in-a-life-time opportunity for Bangladesh to show case its beauty and the nations respect its “Father of the Nation” in a befitting manner to the wider world. The world will witness that Bangladesh and Bangabandhu is inseparable and they are the two sides of the same coin. Sir Peter Frank’s proposition to honour Sajib
Dr. Sheikh Mahabub Alam, The Architect of Bangladesh & the “Father of the Nation” - Bangabandhu – is also the “Father of Tourism Industry”.

Wazed Joy (son of Prime Minister H E Sheikh Hasina and Grandson of Bangabandhu – Sheikh Mujibur Rahman) as the Chairperson of the Celebration Committee is also another excellent idea. It will offer Bangladesh with countless opportunities to compete with the established tourism markets of south-east Asian countries and Indian sub-continent. To grasp this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, work needs to begin on ‘Bangabandhu 100’ immediately. It requires extensive planning, the co-operation of many companies, organizations, international airlines, Media (TV, Radio and Press) and individuals both here and overseas to maximize its potential (Sir Frank, 2016).

8.6.

Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism are already in operation. Ambitious eco-resorts are already in operation in different part of the country as for example “The Shuktara Nature Retreat (shuktararesort.com) in Sylhet is an amazing example of ecotourism. This retreat is designed and built by local architect, local technology and resources amid rolling hills. The Srimangal tea-growing area further south in Sylhet, DuSai (dusairesorts.com) is another example of Five-Star grand resort that is running on ecotourism principles. This ecotourism in combination with sustainable tourism principles can be extended to the Mangrove forests of Sundarbans which in course of time could become source of billions of dollars in revenue from local and foreign tourists.

8.7.

Effluent wealthy middle class is growing first in Bangladesh and is already bouncing the tourism industry and their participation in growing number is good enough to keep this business going. This will encourage global tourist to visit Bangladesh to enjoy the exclusive natural beauty of the country. To attract them and to keep them longer at the tourist’s attraction world class amenities, amusement facilities, 5-star and 3-star accommodation, world class restaurants, Banks & ATMs, luxury transport facilities and rapid movement are of utmost importance. By virtue of digital revolution the whole world is at the fingertips of every tourist all over the globe. It is therefore important to showcase our specialty, uniqueness, unlimited hospitality through state-of-the-art advertisement and marketing so that they are convinced to put Bangladesh on their priority list. With the arrival of foreign tourists in their millions will add billions of dollars in national revenue and will elevate the status of the country and minimize the gap between the Bangladesh and developed world.

8.8.

The appointment of tourism police is an excellent step forward to provide safety and security for thousands of national and international tourist. It is true that safety and security is still a concern for foreign tourists in Bangladesh. The establishment of Tourism police is a milestone progress for the country’s tourism industry. People now feel more secure and safe with their presence but their number must be increased quite quickly to cover the most popular destination and gradually covering the entire tourism destination. Tourism police has already won the minds and hearts of thousands of local and global tourists and their increased presence will bring revolution in providing safety and security to all kinds of tourists thereby helping tourism industry to bring booming revolution which will generate income for general mass and will make our national economy stronger.

8.9.

There are now 12 private University other than Dhaka University that offers Tourism and Hospitality degree. These universities have tourism experts with life time contribution,
expertise and skills. The author’s earnest request to Desh Ratna – H E Sheikh Hasina that they be involved in any future tourism development planning and program to make a solid base for tourism Industry. This is the only industry which is global, it will never decline and it will keep bring more and more foreign currency as the time passes by. A separate Ministry under the leadership of H E Sheikh Hasina is created. This Ministry will be completely different from the traditional ministerial set-up. Only tourism experts will be appointed to hold the Ministerial position extended down to Senior Assistant Secretary. Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) and Bangladesh Tourism Board (BTB) must also be run by tourism experts to transform Bangladesh as one of the most tourism popular destination of the world – a dream always nurtured by the Architect of Bangladesh and the “Father of the Nation”. Tourism development can and will make it easier for the country to become developed country sooner.

References:


2. Bangabandhu's Egypt Visit, 6 November 1974. (Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNiFZ856fk0)


Dr. Sheikh Mahabub Alam, The Architect of Bangladesh & the “Father of the Nation” - Bangabandhu – is also the “Father of Tourism Industry”.


15. shed Khan Menon (2016), Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism, speaks at a discussion marking the 41st death anniversary of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

