

ความไม่มั่นคงทางการเมือง และการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวในบังคลาเทศ

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บทคัดย่อ

การพัฒนาอุตสาหกรรมการท่องเที่ยวในบังคลาเทศเพชิญกับปัญหานานาประการ อาทิเช่น ความไม่สงบทางการเมือง การที่ต้องพึ่งพาด้านเศรษฐกิจของต่างชาติ ตลอดจนการวางแผนรับมือกับความยากจนที่เร็วประสิทวิภาค อุปสรรคดังกล่าวทำให้อุตสาหกรรมของประเทศไม่สามารถดำเนินต่อไปได้ดังนั้นในเบตความฉบับนี้ ได้แสดงข้อมูลและข้อเสนอแนะที่ชี้ให้เห็นถึงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการท่องเที่ยวและปรากฏการณ์ที่เกิดจากน้ำมือของมนุษย์ โดยมุ่งเน้นในประเด็นของความไว้เสถียรภาพทางการเมือง ความมั่นคงทางการเมืองที่เกิดจากภัยในบังคลาเทศการจัดการความเสี่ยง และความพยายามในการพัฒนาการอุตสาหกรรมท่องเที่ยวในบังคลาเทศ ดังกล่าวจะช่วยให้เห็นภาพที่ชัดเจนเพื่อจะนำไปสู่การพัฒนาการอุตสาหกรรมท่องเที่ยวในบังคลาเทศ

คำสำคัญ : ภาพลักษณ์ของประเทศ การจัดการความเสี่ยง การท่องเที่ยวระหว่างประเทศ
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Political Instability and Tourism Development in Bangladesh

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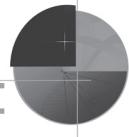
Abstract

The development of tourism industry in Bangladesh suffered various obstacles such as ongoing political chaos, dependency on foreign capital and the unplanned growth that neglects rural poverty. These factors prevented tourism industry from taking off. Thus, this paper focuses on the relationships between tourism and human-caused phenomena by examining the impacts of political instability on tourism development in Bangladesh, the effects of political violence on destination image, crisis management, and recovery marketing efforts. The main objective is to provide a better image for future tourism industry in Bangladesh.

Keywords : country image crisis management international tourism political instability

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Introduction

In the 21st century, tourism emerges as a significant income generating industry, a catalyst for growth and survival for various countries (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6). Tourism is the largest global industry that continuously growing and its global market are expected to triple in size by 2020 (7). Nevertheless, the journeys for many countries are rather gloomy, as their potentials have been interrupted by huge number of natural and man-made casualties. Apart from numerous natural and human-caused disasters, the threat from political turmoil tends to frighten potential tourists more severely. The acceleration of volatile political situations that intimidate tourists, increasing number of published works on this topic and the volume of scholarly attention focusing on this subject represent the importance of such incidents.

Studies investigating the influence of political unrest and war on tourism focus on specific situations in countries such as the Philippines, Fiji, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tibet, China, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Pakistan, Egypt, Thailand, including Bangladesh. These valuable cases enable readers to analyze situations and check the effectiveness of management efforts of the governments involved. For Bangladesh, the screening of riots and floods in particular thro foreign media, have created a terrible reputation and these have provide a negative image for her tourism destination (8). Thus, there is a need to

investigate the root causes for Bangladesh's lagging behind and to find the way for tourism industry to take-off.

Methods and Objectives

The purpose of this paper is to examine the impact of human-caused crises such as political chaos, civil unrest, strike, conflict on country image and intention to visit a country for Bangladesh. It was based on an exploratory study conducted in Malaysia relating the tourism image of Bangladesh. The historical chronology of political violence throughout the world were observed as evidences. Judgmental sampling method, ordinal scales in questionnaires and descriptive statistical were used in this exploratory study.

Conceptual Background

This paper is basically based on four main concepts and these are defined as follows:

Political Instability

Defined as a situation where a government has been collapsed, or is directed by group following a coup, or where fundamental practical requisites for social-order manage and continuance is unsteady and sporadically interrupted (9). The effects are multifaceted and complex in nature and have impact on countries' tourism activities.

Tourism Crisis

This relates to "any undesired incident that impacts on tourists' confidence to a destination and interferes with its ability to



operate normally" (10). Sonmez et al. (11) stated that a tourism crisis relates to any event which can be a threat for the normal operations and conduct of tourism related businesses, spoil a tourist destination's image for safety, attractiveness, and comfort, by negatively influencing tourists perceptions of that destination and, disrupt the business operations of the local tourism industry by reducing in tourist arrivals and expenditures.

Glaesser (12) explored that a crisis is an undesired, exceptional, often unexpected and timely limited process with hesitant development potentials. It needs urgent counter steps to impact the further development again favorably for the organization/destination and to slow down the negative results as much as possible. A crisis situation threatens, weakens or destroys competitive advantages or important goals of the organization.

Crisis management

Glaesser (12 2005) defined crisis management as the strategies, approaches and measures that are planned and employed to prevent and manage the crisis. Ritchie (13) mentioned that plans and strategies to cope with different crises vary depending on time pressure, the extent of control and the

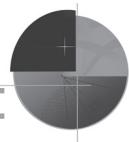
magnitude of incidents. However, crisis management is a dynamic and continuous process which incorporates both proactive and reactive steps for identifying and planning responses, and confronting and resolving crisis.

Country Image

Allred, Chakraborty & Miller (14) viewed a country image as an impression that consumers have of a country, based on the country's economic situation, political system, culture, relation with other countries, labor situations, and environmental aspects. Verlegh & Steenkamp (15) suggested, the image represents the mental reflections of a country's people, products, culture and national symbols.

Political Instability: Brief Chronology

The world continues to be an unsafe place and tourism falls drastically when it comes to insecurity or crisis (16, 17, 18, 19). Faulkner (20) explored a large number of crises and disasters that influence the tourism industry, while Evans et al. (21) also noticed, the external crises make it prone which sometimes beyond the control of its managers and policy makers. Political instability is one of them, and it has a dramatic and speedy effect upon levels of business (Table 1).

**Table 1** Incidents and impact on world tourism

Year	Country	Incident	Impacts
1980	Philippines	Bombing attempt on Marcos at The American Society of Travel Agents Conference	Dramatic reduction in tourist visitation from the USA
1980-88	North & South Korea	Shooting down of South Korean civilian airliner in 1980. South Korean student protests. Ongoing political instability in North and South Korea	Summer Olympics (1988) refuted the idea of Korea as a "dangerous place to visit". Direct involvement of tourism in the battle of political ideology.
1987	Fiji	Non-Fijian government being elected. Two military coups occurred within four months.	Qantas imposed a two-month ban on flights to Fiji. Travel Insurance cover was withdrawn
1989	China	News coverage showed army tanks threatening the civilian population at Tianamen Square	Hotel occupancy rates in Beijing dipped below 30 per cent. Tourism earnings declined by \$430 million in 1989 alone.
1990	Gulf Countries	The First Gulf War, 1990	Massive decline in tourist arrival in the Middle-East
1991	Peru	Formation of Maoist Terrorist Group and made some attacks.	Attacks led to a steep decline in tourism from 350,000 foreign visitors in 1989 to 33,000 in 1991
1991	Yugoslavia	Army attacks Slovenia and Croatia in 1991, and Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992	Tour operators for Yugoslavia lost over one million bookings in 1991
1992	Egypt	Egyptian Islamic extremist group attacked against Egypt's tourism industry since 1992.	22 per cent drop in international visitors,
1991- 96	Turkey	Kurdistan Workers Party bombed tourist sites, hotels and kidnapped foreign tourists.	Foreign visitor arrivals dropped eight per cent from 1992-1993
1991-1995	Croatia	Croatia-Yugoslav War	Foreign tourist numbers dropped from 7 million in 1990, to 1.23 million by 1995.
1994	Mexico	Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional (EZLN) initiated an armed rebellion	Visitation to Mexico dropped by 70 per cent.
1994	UK	Ceasefire was observed 1994- 1996 when a bomb exploded in London killing two bystanders and injuring 43 people	18-month cease-fire recorded a 11 per cent increase in hotel occupancy, and a 68 per cent increase in holiday visitors.
1997	Egypt	terrorist attacks at Luxor	Sudden fall in tourist arrival
1997	Indonesia	the economic and political crisis	Tourists' arrival fell drastically.
1999	Kosovo	the Kosovo conflict	Redirected tourist arrivals
2001	UK	the Foot-and-Mouth disease outbreak	Tourism affected severely
2001	USA	the September 11 th 2001 Incident	Worldwide negative impact on tourism industry.

**Table 1** Incidents and impact on world tourism (continue)

Year	Country	Incident	Impacts
2002	Bali, Indonesia	Bomb blast in the island of Bali	Hotel room occupancy rates fell to less than 10 per cent owing to a mass exodus of international visitors.
2005	Egypt	terrorist attacks at Sharm Al-Sheikh	the number of tourists fell down by 15%
2006	Israel and Lebanon	Fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.	25% tourists arrival fell from the previous year due to the large number of war-related cancellation
2011-2012	Conflict in Syria	the bloody conflict in Syria enters its second year, it is inflicting economic stresses and uncertainties on the country's neighbors.	In 2011, tourist arrivals dropped by more than 24 percent, according to preliminary numbers from the United Nations World Tourism Organization.
	Political turmoil in Egypt	Egypt has been roiled with instability as the country operated without a firm government since Hosni Mubarak was ousted early last year.	While Egypt's stocks recovered losses since the election, the benchmark index is still over 30% lower than it was at the end of 2010.
	Political crisis in Libya	Libya's civil war hugely disrupted the economy by cutting oil output, the primary source of revenue, to virtually zero.	The economy contracted 41.8% in 2011

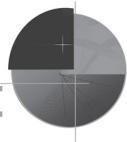
Source: Modified from Sarah J. R. (23), 56 & 57

Both, Beirman (22) and Glaesser (12) agreed that tourism destinations are not immune from crisis. Table 1 for instances represented partial view of total incidents that occurred throughout the world and that have affected many tourist destinations severely. The worldwide political vulnerability downturned the tourism demand suddenly and unexpectedly; for instances, the terrorist attacks at Luxor in Egypt in 1997, the on-going Palestinian and Israeli conflict, the Kosovo conflict in 1999, the effects of the Foot-and-Mouth disease outbreak in the UK in 2001, the impact of the September 11th 2001 terrorist attacks in the US, the terrorist attacks in Bali and Kenya, the war in Iraq in 2003, the war in Afghanistan and

political crisis in Bangkok, Thailand.

As a consequence of the conflict in Tiananmen Square in China, approximately 11,500 tourists disregarded visit to Beijing in 1989 (23). The Gulf War in 1990 redirected huge tourists away from the Middle East while hotels in Israel were housed for Russian immigrants as a substitute of tourists (25). Perhaps, more recently, political turmoil in Pakistan and the Middle East, especially in Libya, Egypt and Syria have great impacts on tourism growth, globally.

Thus, some big issues need to be considered: how do destinations suffer from political instability through negative images? How does the industry manage the crisis of



political strife? Does tourism become immune to the effects of political problems?

Tourism is a sector with much sensitivity for both demand and supply to extreme events such as terrorism or political vulnerability (26, 27). The absence of terror or violence is a must for the development of destinations to an acceptable level since tourists prefer tranquility and peaceful social environments (28-30).

Towards this, Cavlek (31) mentioned that, the intention to visit a destination is hit by human-caused crises like war, civil unrest, regional tensions, terrorism, political instability, violence of any kind and crime since travelers give highest priority on safety and security. Many evidences shown that tourists normally try to avoid risky situations or destinations (32-38).

Turner (39) found that the effect of political crises perhaps spreads to other parts of the country-or even to the neighboring countries-where no such problems exist. Rami (40) explored that a negative image had been arisen in the aftermath of 9/11 on the Arab/Muslim countries and it stayed for a long time. In Egypt, the number of tourists fell down by 15% as a result of terrorist attacks at Sharm Al-Sheikh in the year 2005.

The image of destinations in tourist-generating regions is highly influenced by the political stability and political relations (41). The political strife that causes sticky concerns in the attraction of visitors is warfare, coups and political strikes or protests. Ankomah and Crompton (42) opine that any evidence of domestic political turmoil

influences potential tourists not to visit that country. However, if something happens to disrupt the stability of a country, such as war, political tension, or acts of terrorism, and so on, these can have a powerfully negative influence on tourism demand (34).

Political Vulnerability: Some Cases

Sonmez (28) has explored examples of highly publicized political conflicts including the 1991 disintegration of Yugoslavia and the ensuing war in Bosnia-Herzegovina together with racial, ethnic and religious conflicts in Burundi, Haiti, India, Pakistan, Rwanda, Somalia and South Africa. Other cases include student uprisings in China and North Korea, and the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East.

Cambodia

Cambodia suffered for decade's long guerrilla fighting and it could not focus on tourism development. After rescued from that destructive situation the country started to advance in the tourism sector rapidly. In 1998, Cambodia received 96,000 tourists and increases in 2006 to 2,000,000 (43). While, the only tourism product in Cambodia is its cultural heritage, and the Angkor Wat yet she earned \$1 billion from tourism in 2006.

Sri Lanka

Nearly two decades long political violence and guerrilla fighting pushed the country into frustrating level in the tourist arrivals even though it has everything what are needed for tourism development. Sri Lanka hopes that it will soon deluge over its difficulties



that have been plaguing the island nation for decades and will take steps to lure Indian visitors with tours like Ramayana Trail. A senior officer Shafraz Farook remarks that they will offer new and more enchanting tourism products to showcase Sri Lanka as a land that has a lot more to offer than just beaches (44).

Nepal

Although Nepal is a growing tourist nation, but it passed a bad tenure with much chaos, anarchy and violence that stuck the inflow of tourists. In 2001, Maoists started ruling many distant areas of Nepal and violence spiraled all over the country showing the negative sign in tourism as shown in tourist arrival data. The tourist inflow started to increase in 2003 due to cease-fire by Maoists and Nepal Army (Fig. 1). This simply proves, peace means more tourism business for Nepal (45).

Thailand

Thailand, a rising tourist nation in Asia was also hit by the political disturbances in 2009 and 2010. Although the flow of arrivals in the last quarter of 2009 and the first quarter of 2010

show the potential of the Thai tourism industry for sustained growth but in both the second quarter of 2009 and the second quarter of 2010 show the influence of political riots and uncertainty. It has been figured that Thailand missed between 1 and 2 million potential extra visitors in both 2009 and 2010 (Fig. 2, 46).

Although a wide range of literature exists on destination image, little attention has been paid to how political violence influences destination image, how media contributed to the development of destination image, and how image can be improved during and after a negative occurrence. In such context, this paper intends to explore the situation faced by tourism industry in Bangladesh.

Thus, based on previous studies, a conceptual image mediation model has been developed to portray the scenario of the tourism industry in Bangladesh with much hope that it will guide policymakers, operators and investors to keep the industry in proper track (Fig. 3, Table 2 & Table 3).

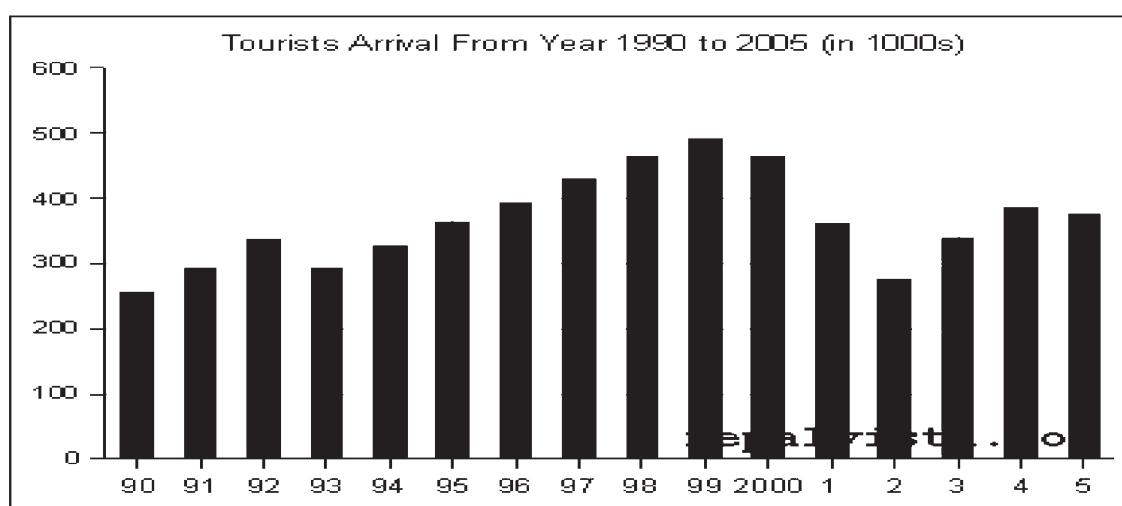


Fig. 1 Tourist arrival in Nepal

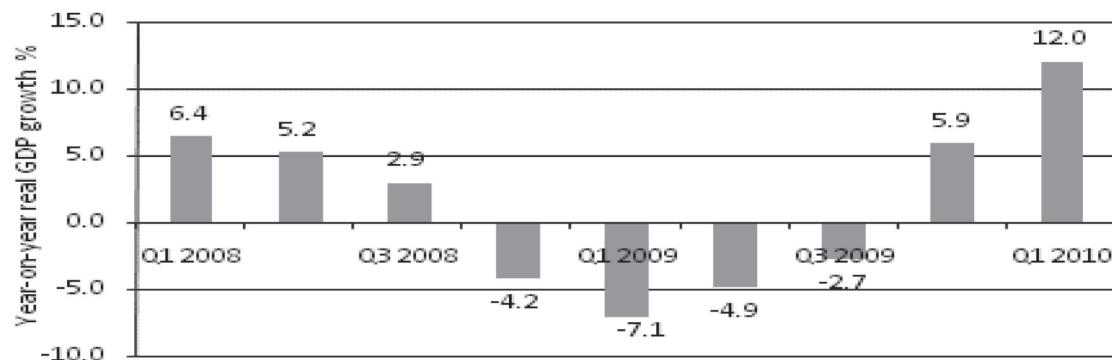
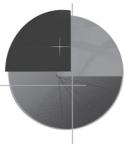


Fig. 2 Thailand - Annual growth in real GDP: Q1 2008 - Q1 2010

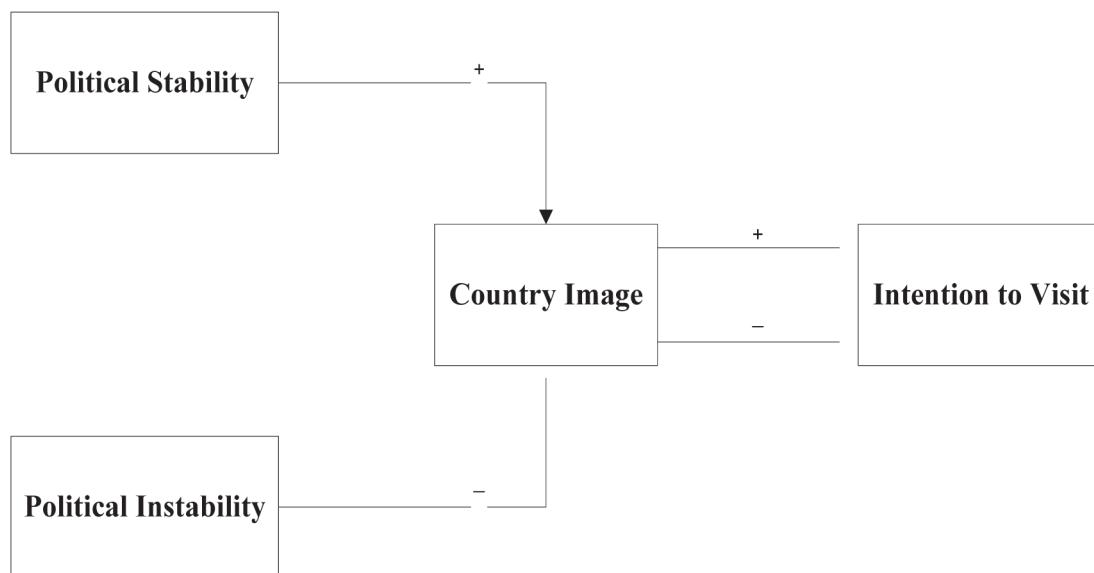


Fig. 3 Country Image Mediating Model for Tourism.

Table 2 Studies on political stability: positive results

Studies		Results
Years	Authors	
1996	Hall and O'Sullivan	Political stability
1998	So"nmez	
2003	Israeli and Reichel	Positive country image
2004	Neumayer	
2005	Reisenger and Mavondo	Positive intention to visit

**Table 3** Studies on political instability: negative results

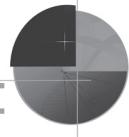
Studies		Results
Years	Authors	
1990	Ankomah and Crompton	Political instability
1996	Mihalic, in Pizam et al.	
1996	Wahab, Wall,	
1996	Pizam and Mansfield,	
1998	Sonmez and Graefe,	Negative country image
2001	Pizam and Fleischer,	
2002	Cavlek	
2004	Cooper et al.,	Negative intention to visit
2005	Aktas and Gunlu,	
2007	Rami	
2008	Fletcger & Morakabati,	

Tourism in Bangladesh

Bangladesh starts its journey for glorious but costly independence from Pakistan in 1972. Unfortunately, despite of government emphasis, tourism is one of the most neglected sectors till today (47). While most countries in Asia have done well in recent years, for instance, Thailand earns per head of US\$ 157 yearly in tourism (2004), but Bangladesh has shown the worst performance in tourism. She earns less than US\$0.5 per capita, compared to Sri Lanka at \$26 and India at \$6 respectively. This disappointing growth is not only due on poor marketing alone. While a weak Nation Branding is a strong factor, there are many other factors

responsible such as - unavailable attractive hotel resorts, poor infrastructure and disappointing customer service (48).

Basically, tourism sector in Bangladesh is persuasive for attention. She has the largest mangrove forest in the world (the Sundarbans), the fine-looking hills in Rangamati, the exotic tea gardens in Sylhet, the fantastic lifestyle of the indigenous people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and Bandarban, the archeological structures of past civilizations, the eye-catchy natural scenery in Foy's Lake, and the longest unbroken natural sandy beach in the whole planet in Cox's Bazaar. And this is just to name a few attractions that justify Bangladesh's



marvelous potentiality for becoming a superb international tourist hotspot as attractions. Therefore, in reality she failed to capitalize those beauties due to political vulnerability in a nutshell.

Nevertheless, the major obstacles for Bangladesh rising into a vibrant international tourist destination are political instability and insecurity. Efficient security services are pre-condition for modern tourism. Tourists do not feel safe in Bangladesh which is a great barrier that discourages not only foreign but also local tourists. The “lonelyplanet.com,” commented about Cox’s Bazaar: “Discover how special this country is before the tourist hordes catch on,” and “Beware of political instability.” Both the comments are true, and it is obvious, foreign tourists do not prefer to visit amidst such political instability (49).

A local human rights organization explores that over three-hundred people were killed and nearly nine-thousand others were injured in politically motivated violence during 2005. As noted earlier by Butenis (50), the U.S. wants ‘the same things as most Bangladeshis want - a country free from political and terrorist violence, a strong democracy that resolves disputes through non-violent means.’

For instance, during periods of 1972 to 2010 - almost one third of the times Bangladesh was ruled by military personnel. Although, the rest of the times she was administered by elected authorities, yet political turmoil, violence, unrest, strikes, hartals and chaos resulted in

killing, injuries, fear and anxieties amidst people (Table 4). Out of reality, the country experienced terrible labor unrest (2006) damaging 300 factories cost nearly \$100 million and hundreds of death and injuries. The sea and air ports were mostly in stagnant due to political anarchy and chaos and it becomes normal scenario in every regime (52).

Bangladesh: The Image

How the world sees Bangladesh as tourist destination, might be clearer if we refer to a self-administered survey conducted in the campus of University Utara Malaysia, Kedah in November, 2009. The purpose was to investigate the image of Bangladesh from respondents involving 16 countries. It was judgmental sampling method where the researcher tried to cover respondents from as many countries as possible. Total sample size was 63 respondents involving 80% male from which, 62% are ASEAN and 38% from middle-east and Africa. Majority of them (80%) were from 25-45 age groups and all respondents have at least postgraduate qualification. Although, the result cannot be fully generalized, still it signals the real scenario for Bangladesh.

Perception towards Bangladesh

The respondents were asked to select any one of the 6 words for expressing the image of Bangladesh. Results revealed an outstanding image: almost 44% expressed Bangladesh as a poor nation, 19% noted as a flood affected



country and 10% related it to political chaos. Collectively, those 73% respondents perceived negative attitudes towards the country, but only 27% responses perceived positively indicating Bangladesh as peaceful nation, as a tourist destination or relates to garments industry. In conclusion, it can be argued that almost three fourth of those 'high educated' group of persons perceived Bangladesh with negative impression! (Fig. 4)

Intention to visit

The ultimate goal of potential tourist's intention to visit depends highly on the organic and induced image of a country where Bangladesh is far lag behind. In response of whether or not they have intention to visit Bangladesh in near future, 77% respondents indicate reluctance, whereas only 23% in favor to visit. When respondents were asked why they were not interested to visit Bangladesh, we gathered various answers, such as: not much

tourism, no information of great things, not much things to do, there are many places better than Bangladesh, nothing much to see there, poor infrastructure, not a beautiful country or without interesting places.

Tourists' Preference

Destination images influence a tourist's travel decision-making, cognition and behavior at a destination as well as satisfaction levels and recollection of the experience (53). Thus the image is the outcome of a negative or a positive perceptions or feeling of potential tourists (54, 55). While Turner (39) explored that the effect of political crises are so strong and perhaps spread to other portions of the country-or even to the neighboring countries-where no such problems exist, perhaps Cavlek (31) had suggested earlier that a key determinant for a visitor's decision to visit a place is the view of safety and security (56, 57).

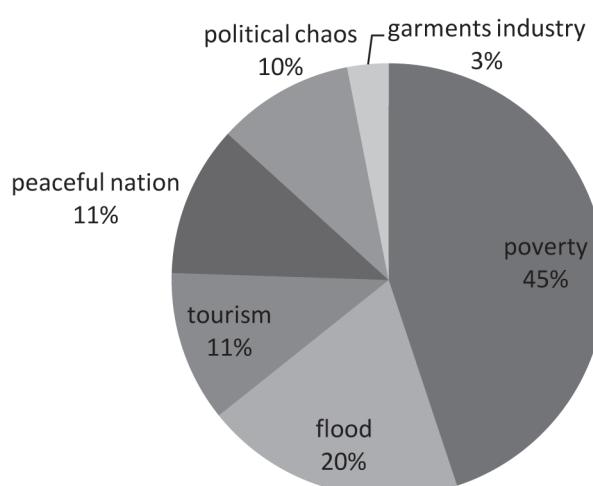


Fig. 4 Perception towards Bangladesh

Safety and security are inextricably linked to issues of international law and political relationships, and so have a “ripple” effect that goes far beyond the destinations and parties directly involved in the incident. Consequently, potential tourists select alternative destination

for visiting in any forthcoming holidays or chances. Thus, from the scenario portrayed in Table 4, it could be evidently observed how potential tourists perceived - comparatively - Bangladesh was indeed not a secured destination to visit.

Table 4 Political instability in Bangladesh:

Year	Incident	Consequence
1971	Sheikh Mujib was arrested and taken to West Pakistan. In exile, Awami League leaders proclaim the independence of the province of East Pakistan on 26th March.	Nine months long liberation war. Just fewer than 10 million Bangladeshis flee to India and troops from West Pakistan were defeated with Indian assistance.
1972	Sheikh Mujib returns, becomes prime minister.	A nationalization program for key industries was taken to improve living standards, but with little success.
1974	Severe floods devastate much of the grain crop, leading to an estimated 28,000 deaths.	A national state of emergency is declared as political unrest grows.
1975	Sheikh Mujib becomes president of Bangladesh. The political situation worsens.	He is assassinated in a military coup in August. Martial law is imposed.
1981	Zia is assassinated during abortive military coup.	Zia's assassination was followed by nationwide anxiety and fear
1982	General Ershad assumes power in army coup.	Limited political activity is permitted.
1987	State of emergency was declared.	Opposition starts demonstrations and strikes.
1990	Ershad was stepped down after a long mass protests and strike.	The country goes under completely unrest situation for a few months.
1991	Ershad was convicted and jailed for corruption and illegal possession of weapons	Opposition calls hundreds of hartal, strikes in this tenure.
1996	Two sets of elections eventually see the Awami League win power,	The opposition BNP begins campaign of strikes against the government.
2001	High Court confirms death sentences on 12 ex-army officers for killing Mujib.	Seven killed in bomb blast at a Bengali New Year program in Dhaka.
2001	Bomb kills 10 at a Roman Catholic church. Bomb at Awami league office in Dhaka kills 22.	Unrest situation was going on for a few months continuously.
2001	At least eight people are killed and hundreds injured as two bombs explode at an election rally in south-western area	Agitation and conflicts are focused in dailies and political turmoil conditions prevail
2002	Bomb blasts in cinemas in a town north of Dhaka kill 17 and injure hundreds.	Agitation and conflicts worsen
2004	Bomb attack on Muslim shrine in north-eastern town of Sylhet kills two and injures UK high commissioner and 50 others.	Opposition calls 21 general strikes over the course of the year as part of a campaign to oust the government.
2004	Grenade attack on opposition Awami League rally in Dhaka kills 22 people.	Hartal, strikes are called frequently
2005	Prominent politician AMS Kibria is killed in a grenade attack at a political rally.	The party calls a general strike in protest.



2005	Around 350 small bombs go off in towns and cities nationwide. Two people are killed and more than 100 are injured.	Spate of bombings, blamed on Islamic militants, hits Chittagong and Gazipur.
2006	Violent protests damaged hundreds of factories.	A 14-party opposition alliance campaigns for controversial election officials to be removed.
2006	Election date set at 22 January. Awami alliance says it will be boycott the polls.	Blockade aimed at derailing parliamentary elections paralyses the country. Garments labor's strikes turns into riot and devastating damage of many factories including export processing zone.
2007	A state of emergency is declared amid violence in the election run-up. Fakhruddin takes over as head of caretaker govt.	Six Islamist militants convicted of countrywide bomb attacks in 2005 are hanged.
2007	Sheikh Hasina is charged with murder. Begum Khaleda Zia is under virtual house arrest. Several other politicians are held in an anti-corruption drive.	Government imposes a curfew on Dhaka and five other cities amid violent clashes between police and students demanding an end to emergency rule.
2009	Sheikh Hasina sworn in as prime minister.	Around 74 people, mainly army officers, are killed in a mutiny by border guards
2009	The High Court decides that it was the father of PM Sheikh Hasina, who proclaimed independence from Pakistan in 1971.	The government bans the local branch of the global Islamist organization Hizb ut Tahrir, saying it poses a threat to peace.

Note: Modified from BBC's historical chart for Bangladesh (51)

Bangladesh: Avenue for Rescue

Political instability seems to be a chronic problem for Bangladesh. Since independence, the country has been suffering from political conflict, violence, strikes, civil unrest and weak governance that made the image gloomy. Crisis management must be treated as a process rather than a one-off operation. Usually, natural disasters/crises can be recovered easily but crises caused by humans, especially the unstable political situations are complex to manage and might prolong, that will restrain the tourism industry from advancement.

Warm relationships among various parties, patience conduct with oppositions, constructive criticism to the government and peaceful co-existence within versatile groups are needed to nurture in the political culture of the country. Nevertheless, a strategic management approach for dealing with tourism crises is the key to speedy recovery. Indeed, in

order to manage and alleviate the negative impact of crises, the managers and policy makers need to be sincere to incorporate the strategic planning process into their industry. In fact, Ritchie (58) had suggested that a strategic management and planning approach to crisis and disaster management can be helpful, especially for destinations that are often affected negatively by external political, economic and social factors.

It is therefore, becoming more and more important to analyze negative events from every angle, to systematically identify critical success factors, to integrate them and take them into account when considering strategic corporate orientation. The country should make new laws with provision to deal promptly with emerging conditions at various tourist places that could arrange protection of all tourists, with additional emphasis on foreign nationals. Notably, Hasan (47) vividly suggested - if special security forces

are developed for these purposes, it would increase the confidence of the tourists towards Bangladesh.

Conclusion

Directly, political instability creates an image of lawlessness and terrorism and indirectly it damages economic growth and hinders the development of infrastructure. For both cases, tourists perceived the destination negatively. Indeed, the Bangladesh tourism industry could not even dig its roots in the last four decades as the country experienced severe political unrest, strikes, hartals and conflicts. The government, tourist service providers, investors and mass people of the country need to realize the present long earned negative country image and to be sincere for replacing the culture with empathically nurtured political atmosphere. To change this mindset, the government policy makers might have vigorous motivating program for domestic and foreign potential tourists.

Thus, as always been pointed out by the World Tourism Organization (10), a good communication based on the principles of honesty and transparency together with communications, promotion, security and market research are the key to successful strategy for crisis management. To achieve this, it will have to chalk out the down-to-earth tourism marketing and country image building strategy and go for aggressive marketing in countries, which produce the most outbound

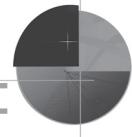
tourists and these countries should be the focal points of tourism marketing for Bangladesh.

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