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Tourism, Development, and Migration: Resemblance of Internal Colonization in Bangladesh

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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CIPD	Centre for Integrated Programme and Development
DC	District Commissioner
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ILO	International Labour Organization
LRP	Long Range Patrol
NGO	Non-governmental Organizations
PCJSS	Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UPDF	United People's Democratic Front

Abstract

This study explores the relationship between the state, tourism, development, and migration affecting the Adivasi people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Bangladesh. Since the peace accord in 1997, the CHT has experienced significant tourism expansion under the state's and the army's direct intervention. Although this tourism expansion in the hill region is promoted as a poverty alleviation tool for the Adivasi community, it also intersects past state migration projects, business interests, and sociocultural changes that demand social research. The main question of this research is: How does tourism-driven development (re)shape the socioeconomic and sociocultural landscape of the hill region? This study also aims to understand the relationship between the 'Peace Accord' and tourism expansion in the hilly areas after 1997, examining its impact on people's (im)mobilities and the gap between development narratives and realities. This research uses qualitative methods and conducts fieldwork in Sajek, Rangamati, and Dhaka through a 'multi-sited' lens. This research found that the Army stands as the dominant force in hill tourism, transforming it into a lucrative business and investment sector, with permanent and temporary camps established next to each tourist spot under the guise of tourist safety. This tourism has facilitated various forms of mobility (such as seasonal migration and short-term movement) for Bengalis in the hills, effectively ensuring Bengali predominance in these areas. Following the peace accord, local NGOs contributed to tourism promotion, aiming to create positive impacts; however, the benefits have remained limited to certain classes or groups due to the failure to ensure broad participation from local Adivasi communities. Adivasi people in areas like Sajek face and negotiate daily challenges, including eviction, loss of privacy, shifts in occupation, and threats to their language due to the establishment of tourist spots. This economic, cultural, and military exploitation occurs with direct state support against Adivasis in the hilly areas, where 'tourism' has now become a significant tool. This exploitation can be viewed as a policy of 'internal colonization' intended to control Adivasi groups.

Relevance to Development Studies

This study illustrates how the Bangladeshi state and army use tourism in the hilly regions and examines the relationship between migration, development narratives, and local NGOs in the area's tourism development. While tourism's role in economic development for Adivasi communities is discussed, local participation is notably absent. Some local NGOs work to promote tourism among the Adivasi population alongside their development activities. However, the expansion of tourism has increased the mobility of Bengali populations in Adivasi areas, serving as a control strategy by the state and army over the CHT. This study thus critically connects tourism, development, migration, and state intentions directly relevant to Development Studies.

Keywords

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   Contextualizing the Research Problem

The development of tourism as a field of knowledge is linked to a long history of human travel, but academic discussion on tourism expanded in the 1960s (Graburn and Jafari, 1991; Sharpley, 2011). During this period, anthropologists and sociologists tried to understand the process of how 'otherness' is created through tourism. They argue that the expansion and promotion of tourism create and manipulate stereotypical ethnic identities. Based on this perspective, some scholars have attempted to explore the relationship between changes in ethnic society and state power and politics (MacCannell 1984; Desmond 1999; Stonich 2000). Simultaneously, in the tourism discussion, the dominant discourse of tourism in and around ethnic communities starts with the idea that ethnic communities are distinct and 'different', and it has a great display value (Grünewald, 2006). In this line, the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh can be a good example to understand this process of meaning-making and representation. CHT is mainly a hilly area and home to many Adivasi communities. According to the census by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (2022), 99% of the total population of Bangladesh is of Bengali ethnicity, while only 1% belongs to ethnic communities who self-identify as 'Adivasi'[1]. CHT has also been a conflict-prone area for a long time. The evidence shows that from the British period to the present, the ethnic communities have been in conflict with the state due to the state's intention to control the area (Panday and Jamil, 2009). Due to global pressure and universal legal provisions, ever since the foundation of Bangladesh as an independent state, the government could not confront the ethnic communities directly who were controlling CHT and eventually signed a 'Peace Accord[2]' with Parbatya Chittagong Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS)[3]. After signing the 'Peace Accord', the state changed its Hill area strategy (Wilkinson, 2015). The government started to promote 'tourism' in hill areas. Michaud (1995) demonstrates in his work that different states in South Asia use various tools and strategies to control the hill areas; however, the establishment of

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[1]. The use of the suffix 'Adivasi' will be detailed later.

[2] . "The accord allowed for the recognition of the rights of the peoples and tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts region and ended the decades-long insurgency between the Shanti Bahini and government forces: the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord of 1997". See also: Rashiduzzaman, M. (July 1998). "Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord: Institutional Features and Strategic Concerns". *Asian Survey*. University of California Press. 38 (7): 653–70. doi:10.2307/2645754. JSTOR 2645754

[3]. Parbatya Chittagong Jana Sanhati Samiti (abbreviated as PCJSS) is a left-wing political party founded in 1972 to represent the people and Adivasi of the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. Since its inception, the PCJSS has fought for the recognition of the ethnic identity and rights of the Adivasi in the hill region. See also: https://www.pcjss.org/about-pcjss/

tourism provides the state with easier access to these regions. Like others, the Bangladesh government has also developed various tools and strategies to ensure state control and access to the hill areas, including violence, genocide[4], and state-controlled migration[5]. However, after signing the 'Peace Accord', the establishment of tourism in these areas further facilitates state access. On the other hand, the promotion of tourism, which necessitated new safety measures, has paved the way for expanding the role of the Bangladeshi army in the CHT.

At the same time, a grand/dominant narrative of the expansion of tourism in the hilly regions of Bangladesh (Rangamati, Khagrachari, Bandarban) has emerged as a win-win scenario (Ahmed, Shamsuzzoha, and Rahman, 2023). According to this new vision, tourism would result in the structural development of the area, and that the people of the area will benefit economically while at the same time, tourists could learn about the culture and lifestyle of the Adivasi people. Additionally, those involved in the tourism business (resort/hotel owners, travel companies) could expand their enterprises and play an important role in the country's economy.

Almost, three decades after its inception, this structural development project and its grand narrative raises some fundamental questions, such as who has the power to build tourism spots, how the legitimization of the development of tourism spots in ethnic areas has been undertaken, and who has the authority to craft the grand narrative of development. On the other hand, the expansion of tourism has increased the mobility of Bengali tourists and businessmen in the hills, reminiscent in some ways of earlier state-led migration projects (discussed later). At the same time, Adivasi people often face eviction due to tourism in the hilly areas. According to the Human Rights Report on Indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh (2015), authorities forcibly evicted 45 ethnic families from their land in various areas of the hill region in 2015 under the pretext of tourism and development, and nearly 1,400 ethnic families live under the threat of eviction (Chowdhury and Chakma, 2016). Furthermore, Neef (2019) cited the work of Chakma and Chakma (2015) and Ahmed (2017) in his paper, showing that since 1997, the state administration has allocated about 688 hectares of land for tourism in the hilly areas, which has resulted in the eviction of around 700 ethnic families

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[4]. Ethnic people have been subjected to large-scale evictions torture, and rape in the 1980s by the Bangladesh army. Massacres 10 000 ethnic people people were killed in 1981 alone. See also: Gray, R.A (1994). Genocide in the Chittagong Hill tracts of Bangladesh. Reference Services Review, 22(4), pp.59-79.

[5]. Here, state-controlled migration refers to the 'cluster village' policy. Through this policy, in the 1980s, the military government of Bangladesh relocated Bengali people from the plains and settled them in the hilly areas under government auspices. See also: Siraj, N. and Bal, E. (2017). 'Hunger has brought us into this jungle': understanding mobility and immobility of Bengali immigrants in the Chittagong Hills of Bangladesh. Social Identities, 23(4), pp.396–412. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2017.1281443.

from 26 villages. This is why, tourism has various social and cultural effects on the lives of the local Adivasi communities in these hilly areas, as exemplified by the '*Sajek*' tourist spot in Baghaichhari Upazila of Rangamati district. Thus, the purpose of this study is to understand why and how the state has been developing tourism spots in the hilly regions since 1997, and what tourism so far has done in terms of local development.

1.2 Rationality of the Study

The study of tourism in Bangladesh reveals a shift in trends before and after 2000. Before 2000, researchers focused on structurally describing tourism in Bangladesh, detailing available facilities along with limitations at tourist sites and travel options for foreign visitors (Richter and Richter, 1985; Tisdell, 1997; Hossain, Chowdhury, and Ahmed, 2012). During this period, Khan (1997) also studied how rural women in hilly areas spent their leisure time after completing household work. After the peace accord, social scientists have studied its social, cultural, and economic consequences, examining both positive and negative aspects, development potential in the hills, land disputes, and factors affecting its implementation or lack thereof (Rashiduzzaman, 1998; Kalindi, 2000; Islam, Schech, and Saikia, 2022). Since 2000, however, tourism research in hilly areas has increasingly focused on ecotourism, community-based tourism, and cultural tourism (Shamsuddoha, Alamgir, and Nasir, 2011; Rahman et al., 2013), as well as the negative impacts of tourism in these regions, such as land grabbing and cultural commodification (Khokaneswar Tripura et al., 2023; Sajib, 2021). Yet, It remains challenging to find specific research that addresses whether tourism is connected to the peace agreement, why hill tourism gained importance afterward, or how the Adivasi upper classes are involved in tourism. Therefore, this research is justified in seeking to connect these elements.

On the other hand, after 2000, tourism research in Bangladesh expanded significantly, covering a diverse range of topics like economic and developmental narratives, including the balance between economic growth, environmental concerns, and social objectives; poverty alleviation; natural resource conservation through tourism; strategy development; sustainable tourism processes; tourist attitudes toward tourism and tourist sites; tourism policy and tourism potential, among others (Hasan, 2005; Ahmed, Azam, and Bose, 2010). Mandal (2017), in his rather recent discussion, states that tourism in Bangladesh is not sustainable and that the industry is plagued with various problems. To address this issue, he emphasizes the need to balance environmental concerns with the safety of tourists. Rahman (2012), on the other hand, highlights how cultural tourism can enrich the country's economy. Several studies

have highlighted tourism as a means of poverty alleviation for the indigenous people of Bangladesh. It is noted that although the indigenous populations live in extreme economic poverty, their culture holds a strong appeal for tourists. According to these studies, expanding tourism in the hill regions could help alleviate poverty among the indigenous people (Islam and Carlsen, 2015; Hoque, Lovelock, and Carr, 2020). However, these studies discuss the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in tourism promotion in support of the prevailing development discourse. Based on the discussion above, in the context of cultural tourism, it can be concluded that nearly every researcher has drawn linear, fragmented, and romanticized conclusions about the Chittagong Hill Tracts and its Adivasi communities. Despite expectations that the distinct culture of Adivasi communities could be a major attraction for both local and international tourists, the CHT historically remained a conflict-ridden area, and prior to 1997, it had seen few tourists over the decades (Adnan and Dastider, 2011). In light of the development of tourism in hill areas of Bangladesh, this research has been conducted to highlight the critical issues.

1.3   Research Objectives and Questions

The objective of this study is to:

- Understand the relationship between the 'Peace Accord' and the expansion of tourism in hilly areas after 1997 in the context of Bangladesh and its ties to people's (im)mobilities.
- Examine the growing use of ethnic tourism as a discourse and tool for local development and the relationship between the 'narrative' and reality.
- Understand the socioeconomic consequences of state-led tourism in hilly areas after 1997 at both individual and community levels.

In light of these objectives, this research seeks to answer the following question: **How does the 'tourism' development process (re)shape the socioeconomic and sociocultural landscape of the hill region?**

More specifically, the research will address the following sub-questions:

- Why did the state focus on expanding tourism in the hill region after 1997?
- How does tourism shape and reshape Bengali's mobility in the CHT?
- How is ethnic tourism used as a tool for local development in the hill areas?
- What role did local NGOs play in developing tourism in the CHT?

- To what extent did local Adivasi participate in tourism activities in the CHT?
- What socio-cultural changes is tourism generating in the hills, and how are Adivasi communities adapting to these changes?

1.4 A Primer on the Term 'Adivasi' as Used in This Research Paper

'Adivasi' comes from Sanskrit, where 'adi' means 'origin' and 'vasi' means 'inhabitant' (Barnes, Gray and Kingsbury, 1995, pp.3-5). However, there is no universal definition of 'Adivasi'. Adivasi people believe that a universal definition is unnecessary to recognize and protect their rights, as no single definition can accurately capture the diversity of indigenous peoples across different countries. As a result, some Adivasi groups may be excluded by such definitions. On the other hand, states are often asked to define who the indigenous peoples are. Adivasis feel that being pressured or asked to be defined in this way constitutes a form of discrimination and a violation of basic human rights (Minority Rights Group International, 2008). In the case of Bangladesh, through the Fifteenth Amendment in 2011, ethnic groups were constitutionally recognized as 'minor ethnic groups' rather than 'Adivasi' (Barman and Neo, 2014). This construction of the constitutional identity of 'indigenous' groups in Bangladesh is not an isolated event but reflects the historical relationship between the state and ethnic populations. Despite the state's stance, various indigenous groups in Bangladesh continue to fight for recognition as 'Adivasi'. This study will refer to them as 'Adivasi' and the terms 'ethnic community' or 'indigenous' will be used only when referring to the work of various scholars.

1.5 Chapter Plan of the Thesis

After this introductory chapter, the next chapter will describe the research field and the techniques used for data collection, data analysis, researcher positionality, and research limitations. The third chapter will review various previous writings on the relationships among the state, tourism, development, and migration. The fourth chapter will elaborate on the history of the Adivasi communities living in the hill regions of Bangladesh, tracing back to the pre-British period and continuing through the British, Pakistan, and Bangladesh periods. The fifth chapter will detail the hill tourism situation before and after the 'Peace Accord' of 1997 and how the state, army, and other stakeholders currently utilize tourism. The sixth chapter will discuss Bangladesh's tourism policy, the role of local NGOs in hill tourism, and local people's participation in tourism development. The seventh chapter will highlight the

development process of the Sajek area as a hill tourism spot and examine the socio-cultural impact of tourism on the local population. The last section provides the conclusion.

Chapter 2: Research Methodology

This research was guided by qualitative research methodology to examine how the state uses tourism to control Adivasi populations in the hill region, as well as how the state's army, tourism policies, and development narratives operate in that context. To fully understand these issues, it is essential to explore the stories and perspectives of various actors, namely tourism stakeholders, including adivasi peoples, resort owners, hotel staff, policymakers, sociologists, and tourists. Through this method, the researcher can systematically and subjectively explain the respondents' daily experiences, including personal narratives and cultural views. Qualitative methodology helps the researcher understand the deeper meaning of a particular culture and society (Grove, Burns, and Gray, 2017). Inspired by Marcus's (1995) 'multi-sited' approach, this research follows the people somewhat involved in tourism interventions in the hill tracks of Bangladesh. Within the hill tracks, I focused on the Sajek area, within which I traveled from one location to another to interact with various experts to understand the details of tourism policy or development narratives around the CHT region and Dhaka. This way, I can gain a more comprehensive understanding of tourism and tourism-related (im)mobilities and its local effects as shaped by changing state-society relations.

2.1   Description of the Research Field

Sajek is a union[6] from Baghaichhari Upazila in Rangamati District, and different Adivasi communities like Chakma, Marma, Tripura, and Lusai live there. It is a popular tourist destination for Bangladeshi tourists. This tourist place is situated at the top of the hill (2,000 feet above sea level), and the name Sajek came from the Sajek River, which originates from the Karnafuli River. The area's road construction and communication system were established by the Bangladesh Army around 2010. In 2013, first, an army-owned resort (Ruilui Resort) was built in Sajek. Subsequently, around 30-40 privately owned resorts were developed to popularize Sajek as a tourist spot further. Today, there are approximately 200 resorts and motels of various sizes (Ali, 2021). In addition, visiting the Sajek tourist spot requires an army escort. In summer, army escorts pick up tourists from a place called Baghaihat every day at 9:30 AM and return them around 4:00 PM. In winter, the pick-up time is 10 AM, with a return around 3:30 PM. Additionally, army camps and check posts have been set up at

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[6]. A Union is an administrative structure in Bangladesh. A Union is made up of several Villages, an Upazila is formed from several Unions, a District is composed of multiple Upazilas, and a Division consists of several Districts.

various locations under the pretext of providing security for tourists, where Adivasi people are routinely searched. Despite living in their own region, the Adivasi people remain under constant army surveillance.
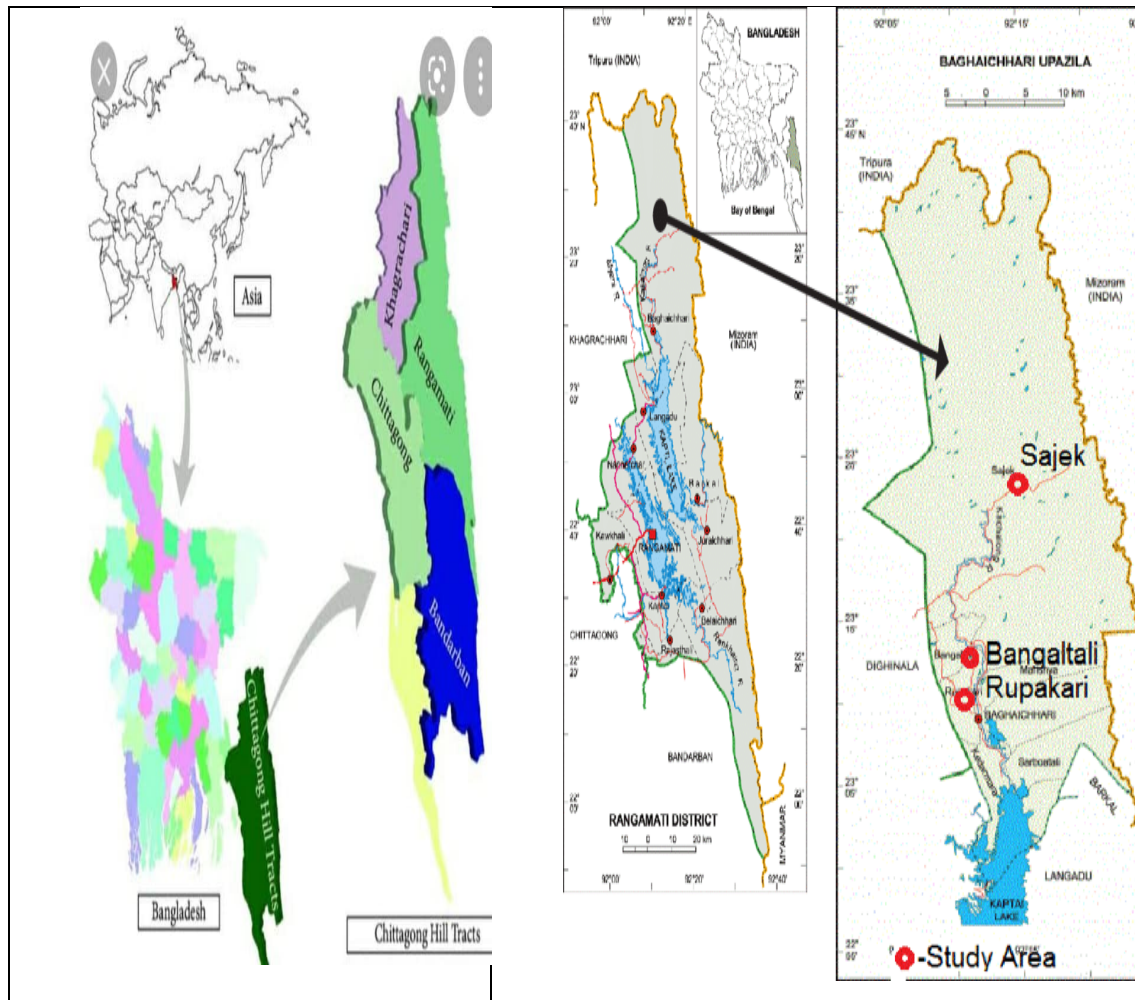
Map 1 Study Area

Although my research focuses on Sajek, I conducted interviews in the cities of Dhaka and Rangamati (a hilly district in the Chittagong division of Bangladesh) as part of the study to follow the interlocutors' stories. Sajek is not socially or geographically isolated, as many hotel and resort owners in Sajek reside in Dhaka or Rangamati. Additionally, tourists from various parts of Bangladesh visit Sajek. On the other hand, Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, is home to most government and private organizations related to tourism in the country. So, there is a connection between the place and the story, and I followed those connections and stories.

2.2 Data Collection Methods

This research used in-depth Interviews (IDI) and Key Informant Interviews (KII) to capture descriptive data of interlocutors' ideas, views, knowledge, behavior, perceptions, and also unfold complex networking processes (Vansina, 1985; Yow, 1994). The IDI interlocutor can be someone with relevant knowledge about the research, while the KII interlocutor has specialized expertise in that specific area (Rutledge and Hogg, 2020; Akhter, 2022). It emphasizes capturing information about various aspects of individuals' lives, such as their health, family dynamics, professional experiences, and political engagement. For the interview, I prepared some guidelines for the interlocutors (Appendix A). I conducted twenty-three interviews in this study, of whom eighteen were male and five were female. Among these interlocutors, eleven were Bengali, three were from Tripura, three were Chakma, two were Marma, three were Lusai, and one was from the Mro community. My interlocutors could be categorized into five main groups. Those were social researchers/develop ent practitioners (five interviews), policymakers/local government officials (four interviews), resort owners/employees/managers (three interviews), tourists (two interviews), and Adivasi community members (nine interviews). The interlocutors represented various professions, including teaching, NGO owners, local government officials, hotel managers, retired army officer, lawyer, shopkeeper, and Jhum[7] (slash and burn cultivation) cultivator (Appendix B). I conducted KII with social researchers, development practitioners, policymakers, and local government officials. In contrast, I used the IDI method with resort owners, employees, managers, tourists, and members of the ethnic community to collect data. Of these 23 Interviews, I conducted the majority of them in person (16) in Dhaka and Rangamati, as well as in Sajek and, due to the unstable political situation across the country over the summer, I had to conduct several of these interviews over the phone (5) and via Zoom (2).

Finding suitable informants for research requires the researcher to be strategic, as the sensitive nature of the data makes people cautious about providing information (Roulston, 2010). Through my personal network among the Chakma and Rakhine communities who live in Rangamati, and with their assistance, I located my interlocutors. Additionally, I have a Bengali friend whose uncle is involved in the tourism business. His uncle owns a resort in Sajek. He helped me find other interlocutors for my research.

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[7]. Jhum farming is a type of shifting cultivation practiced by the indigenous people of Bangladesh. They mainly clear forested areas in the mountains and cultivate different crops simultaneously. When the soil fertility decreases, the farmland is relocated, and new agricultural land is developed elsewhere.

2.3 Data Analysis Methods

A good interview document is important for data analysis. Therefore, when I interviewed the interlocutors, I recorded some of the interviews on my phone with their permission. I also took extensive field notes. In some cases, I only took field notes because the informants did not grant permission for recording. After transcribing the recorded interviews in Bengali, I combined them with the detailed field notes. I used non-verbatim methods to transcribe the interviews, organizing them around research questions and the interlocutors' answers. After completing the transcription, I began translating it from Bangla to English, and once the translation was finished, I started the data coding process. I used the 'manual coding' method and for this, I created a codebook. Then, I carefully reviewed the twenty-three transcripts and field notes and coded them while keeping my research objectives and questions in mind, and this open coding led to themes.

2.4 Positionality

Positionality in qualitative research "reflects the position that the researcher has chosen to adopt within a given research study" (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013, p.71). As a researcher, I strived to establish my researcher position when conducting fieldwork for data collection among various Adivasi communities. Here, the researcher position means that I prioritized my researcher identity over my personal identity when interacting with interlocutors in my study. To ensure that the participants (individuals) fully understood the purpose of my research and how their information would be used, I prepared a consent form in Bangla and presented it in a culturally appropriate manner. I attempted to obtain written consent from my respondents, but some declined due to the political situation. In those cases, I obtained verbal consent. I assured the participants that their involvement was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the interview at any time without any negative consequences. Additionally, before the interview began, I sought separate permission to record the interview. Since my research paper is written in English, most of my informants showed no interest in reviewing the results. However, six informants expressed interest in reading my thesis. I assured them that I would share my paper with them after completing my degree, and they had no objection to me publishing it later.

2.5 Limitations of the Research

My research had several limitations. I went to Bangladesh for my fieldwork on July 9th and returned to the Netherlands on August 8th. During this period, students in Bangladesh were involved in the 'quota reform movement'[8], which later evolved into a mass 'anti-government' movement and led to the resignation of the government on August 5th. This political turmoil made it difficult to travel from one district to another in Bangladesh and forced me to limit my field stay in Rangamati and Sajek to only one week. Second, I conducted interviews with five interlocutors by phone and two via Zoom. However, in those cases, it was difficult to establish proper rapport with these interlocutors. Another limitation of my research is the difficulty in achieving gender balance among interlocutors due to the male-dominated tourism sector in Bangladesh and the country's unstable political situation. Fourth, there is a difference between the culture of the Adivasis of the hilly regions and that of the Bengalis. As a Bengali researcher, it is challenging to fully grasp the culture of the Adivasi interlocutors, which presents a major limitation of this study. To overcome this challenge and establish trust with the Adivasi community, I relied on my personal network. My prior academic training and knowledge in anthropology also helped me understand the cultural norms, values, and sensitivities of the Adivasi communities.

The next chapter discusses various literature related to this study.

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[8]. The Bangladesh quota reform movement (June to August 5, 2024) began as a student movement. However, the government's widespread use of violence against the general public escalated the student protest into a full-scale people's uprising. In response, the government deployed the police, RAB, BGB, and other armed forces, imposing a nationwide shoot-at-sight curfew. This led to over 1,400 confirmed deaths and more than 20,000 injuries during this period. Subsequently, the Awami League government was forced to resign, and Sheikh Hasina left for India on August.

Chapter 3: Literature Review and Theoretical Position

Tourism is not only about spending leisure time or seeking a change of air or entertainment. Nor is it solely related to economic growth or employment opportunities (Kay Hin TAN, 2018). It can also serve as an agent of development narratives (Harrison, 2014), a tool for the soft control of ethnic communities (Hinch and Butler, 1996), or even as a harmful system for specific groups or regions (Richards and Hall, 2000). A power relationship can also be observed between ethnicity and tourism, wherein tourism can reshape ethnic identity (Van, 1994). Some scholars argue that tourism has a dual effect on ethnic communities. To exploit tourism, the authorities or businessmen promote narratives of cultural flourishing and economic development. However, this often leads to the deterioration of ethnic people's livelihoods and the commodification of ethnic culture (de la Maza, 2016). This chapter will examine the relationship between tourism and various issues by exploring the plains-mountains relationship, the link between tourism and mobility, and the nexus among the state, tourism, and development, drawing on previous studies.

3.1   The Relationship Between the State and the Hill Areas

In the Anglo-American perspective, 'ethnicity' is portrayed as a small cultural or ethnic minority within a larger nation. However, in Europe, 'ethnicity' is not seen as the smallest part of the larger nation but rather as the foundation or ancestor of the nation (Malešević, 2004). It is evident that different nation-states have varying perspectives on 'ethnicity'. On the other hand, regarding the legitimacy of the modern state, Jayal (1993) argues that the nation (a unitary identity) and the state (the governing or political structure) are expected to be congruent. However, this homogenizing spirit of the modern state has been challenged by various ethnic groups worldwide, as their citizens' 'plural' ethnic identities have been marginalized and not treated equally. This reveals a complex relationship between the state and ethnic communities. This kind of complexity is also observed among large populations in Southeast Asia, from the Central Highlands of Vietnam to Northeastern India. These populations historically remained outside the control of plainland governments. The people of this vast region differed sharply from the plainland societies that dominated Southeast Asia's political landscape due to their cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity. They have historically evaded plainland state control through their social structures, livelihood strategies, and cultural practices. This resistance challenges traditional state-centric views of history and geography. Van

Schendel (2002) coined this concept through the term 'Zomia'. Scott (2009) later elaborated on this concept, arguing that the people of the 'Zomia' region deliberately chose a lifestyle that resists state control through their physical mobility, cultivation practices, and language. He called this highland a 'shatter zone' because, historically, it was difficult for the state to govern the people of this region. But Formoso (2010) describes Scott's concept of 'Zomia' as a simplification thesis. He argues that the relationship between the plains (state) and the mountain-dwelling ethnic groups of Southeast Asia was complex and cryptic. Through ethnographic examples from regions like Chiang Mai and Kengtung, he shows that the hill people maintained cordial relations with the plains and contributed to the formation of both premodern and modern Southeast Asian states alongside the plains.

On the other hand, Leng (1983) discusses the relationship between plains and mountains through the concepts of 'majority' and 'minority'. He notes that even within the same state, majority and minority ethnic groups lack cohesion, with ethnocentrism particularly evident from the majority perspective. Consequently, he suggests finding a way to unite the 'majority' and 'minority' of the plains and mountains within the state. However, the state has never abandoned its authoritarian tendencies, as evidenced by the Bangladesh government's 'Bengali' settlement project in the hilly areas. Adnan (2007) demonstrates in his work that the military-backed Zia government seized Adivasi lands in the hills to establish Bengali settlements, aiming to control the Adivasi population. He refers to this increase of the majority population in minority areas as 'demographic engineering'. McGarry (1998) also describes this type of state policy as a strategy in which the government settles the majority group in an area to suppress or control conflict in regions inhabited by minority populations. This policy is not new or unique to the highlands of Southeast Asia, as, for example, the Ottoman Empire has also repeatedly used population transfer to establish authority in newly conquered territories between the 16th and 18th centuries (Şeker, 2007).

3.2 Connection Between Tourism and Mobility

Sheller and Urry (2004) describe tourism as a combination of complex mobilities involving the movement of people, objects (such as airplanes and suitcases), images, and brands. Both tangible and intangible components travel within tourism. However, different academic disciplines—anthropology, sociology, science, and technology—explain mobility in fragmented ways. Therefore, Sheller and Urry (2006) suggest that mobility, whether human or non-human, involves power relations and creates a new type of fluid, mobile space, which they refer

to as the 'new mobilities paradigm'. Ranasinghe and Cheng (2017) examine the Vedda society in Sri Lanka, applying Sheller and Urry's concept of new mobilities. They note that tourism influences changes in the society's traditional culture, language, and professions. Although the mobility of local people is limited, outsiders are increasingly entering the area, and technological advancements have enhanced communication with the outside world. Consequently, the people in this area are entering a new mobility space that transforms their social and cultural landscape. Additionally, Randell (2018) critiques Sheller and Urry's 'new mobility paradigm' through Thomas Kuhn's paradigm theory, arguing that paradigms are inherently plural. However, Sheller and Urry's discussion of mobility attempts to introduce a singular concept of mobility into academic discourse, which Randell finds problematic.

Scholars like Williams and Hall (2000) attempt to understand tourism mobility based on the movements of actors involved in tourism. They state that tourism mobility encompasses both the movement of tourists and various other actors, such as hotel owners and employees. Tourism also creates involuntary mobility, as relations of power and inequality operate, as Neef (2021) points out in his book. He explains that in many Global South countries, the state and corporate groups are entering the tourism business and evicting local people to seize the land they need. He highlights thirty cases from various regions, including Latin America and the Caribbean, sub-Saharan Africa, and South and Southeast Asia, demonstrating that tourism and land grabbing are displacing people from their homes, with this phenomenon on the rise.

3.3 The Nexus Between Tourism, Development, the State and Internal Colonialism

A relationship between tourism and development can be observed over time. Although there were some discussions about tourism in the 1930s, it was primarily in the 1960s that economists and planners began focusing on tourism for organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank. During this period, tourism was linked to economic development. Simultaneously, the concept of 'development' gained prominence. In the 1940s and 1960s, many colonized territories gained independence from colonial rule. Consequently, former colonial powers began creating new 'colonial' circles under the guise of 'development' in these newly independent countries. Thus, there is a historical and academic interrelationship between development, colonization, and tourism research (Telfer, 2002; Goldsmith, 2002).

This research tries to consider the viewpoints of anthropologists and sociologists from the 1980s who viewed tourism as an external force affecting passive host communities (Crick,

1989; Picard, 1995). They saw international tourism as a driver of social change and a catalyst for transforming identities and cultures. Canosa (2014) argued that communities and societies are not isolated from outside influences and historical processes of change. Moreover, Michaud (1995) illustrated how states use tourism to exert control over minority populations. In Ladakh, India, and Northern Thailand, he observed state authorities seeking control over remote areas through military presence, settlement of outsiders, and tourism development, coining the term 'internal colonialism' to describe this dynamic. 'Internal' forms of colonialism function within a nation-state. This concept was primarily developed in Latin America by development economists to understand the uneven trade between majority and minority groups within national borders. According to Gutiérrez (2004), internal colonialism refers to the exploitation of minorities within a country by the state, based on race or ethnicity. Oakes (1995) demonstrates in his work that tourism in Guizhou, China, is essentially a form of internal colonialism, as the investment, revenues, and planning of government-controlled tourism development in this ethnic region are entirely managed by the government, with no involvement of the local people. The concern and participation of the local community in developing a tourist center are essential, as "the tourism industry uses the community as a resource, sells it as a product, and in the process affects the lives of everyone" (Murphy, 1985, p. 165). Additionally, the local community bears the impact of various sociocultural encounters created by tourism (Lea, 1988). In some cases, wealthy and politically connected individuals from the community may be involved in such processes. However, their participation brings little benefit to the community, as these elites often have connections with the state and powerful figures. Consequently, they remain loyal to the state and prioritize their own interests (Giampiccoli and Saayman, 2018).

Thus, tourism is closely tied to power and politics. Henderson (2003, p. 98) notes through his work on Myanmar, "tourism is, without doubt, a highly political phenomenon which extends beyond the sphere of formal government structures and processes ... and it (politics) is thus an underlying and indirect theme in much tourism research." Similarly, Bowen, Zubair, and Altinay (2016) cite Henderson, emphasizing that creating or developing a tourism destination is never apolitical, as power relations exist among the various stakeholders involved in tourism at local, regional, and national levels. Scheyvens (2011), using the example of the tourism system in the Maldives, argues that even when conflicts arise among stakeholders in development planning or implementation, the views of the state remain influential.

In addition to various business-related stakeholders in tourism, some cases reveal a relationship between the state and the army. Loperena (2016) demonstrates through his work experience in Honduras that the state employs the country's army to confront local people, thereby creating and legitimizing special development areas for tourism. Similarly, Seioghe (2016) illustrates in his research on tourism in Sri Lanka that the government deploys armed forces to tourist spots in the Sinhalese region to protect tourists from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). In the context of tourism in the hill regions of Bangladesh, it is also dominated by the state and the army, with no meaningful engagement of the local Adivasi communities. Ahmed (2017) illustrates the army's presence in tourism in the mountainous regions of Bangladesh. She explains that military-controlled tourism, particularly in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, has been used to obscure the history of domination over indigenous peoples, land appropriation, and ongoing state repression in the region. This tourism system allows the military and the state to reproduce their power over the hill areas and maintain dominance in the region.

The above discussion clearly shows that the complex relationship between the plains and hills, along with the interconnections of tourism, mobility, and development with the state, encourages hill tourism to explore not only leisure activities but also the power and authority relations between these areas. The next chapter will highlight the historical relationship between the hills and plains in the context of Bangladesh to better understand hill tourism.

Chapter 4: Socio-political Overview of State-society Relations in the Hills Regions of Bangladesh

As anthropologist James Scott (2009) shows in his famous book 'The Art of Not Being Governed', the 'plains' construct, govern and exploit the 'mountains'. While the conception, emergence, and functioning of the modern state threatened the distinct existence of hill and mountain communities in Southeast Asia, as Scott describes in detail in his work, these communities have consistently shunned the state and evaded its 'long arm of development'. Therefore, a historical analysis of the relationship between the state, plains, hills, and Adivasi is necessary to understand the contemporary relationship between the hills and the state, the army, tourism, and development in the hilly regions of Bangladesh.

4.1 Pre-British Period (before 1860s)

Geographically, the larger Chittagong Hill Tracts area was located between Assam and Hill Tripura to the borders of Arakan and Myanmar. However, there is considerable debate as to when the Chittagong Hill Tracts began to be inhabited, as they are richly documented only since the late eighteenth century. The history of the people in these hilly areas before this period was very fragmentary. At that time in history, three central powerful regions—Arakan in the south, Tripura in the north, and Bengal in the northwest—were located nearby. There is no recorded history of any major conflict between them, although there were disputes over dominance (Galen, 2008). However, after the 16th century, the region was visited by Portuguese traders and pirates, Burmese state brokers, and Mughal emissaries. During this time, the kings of this region (Chakma, Marma) used to pay taxes to the Mughal kings through cotton, which was known as the 'Carpus tax'. These kings ruled over their respective regions and nations. Essentially, before 1860, this region was not included in any institutional state structure (Van Schendel, 1992; May, 1980).

4.2 British Period (1860-1947)

The British occupied the Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1860 and incorporated it into British India, renaming it *Parbatya* Chittagong. An Act was passed in 1860 to separate the CHT from the plains, solidifying British rule in the region. According to this Act, a favorable administrative structure was established for the CHT. Furthermore, in 1881, the Chittagong Hill

Tracts were divided into three regions (circles)[9] and were administered by the Chakma, Marma, and Tripura kings. This reorganization aimed to strengthen and consolidate the tax collection system. The three regions were: Manikchari Circle, centered on Manikchari, covering 653 square miles under Mang Raja; Bomang Circle, centered on Bandarban, encompassing 1,444 square miles under Bomang Raja; and Chakma Circle, centered on Rangamati, spanning 1,658 square miles. The duties and powers of these kings were limited to the collection of tributes and the arbitration of local disputes under the traditional system. However, all executive, judicial, and financial powers were vested in the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner of the Chittagong Division. Essentially, similar to what Scott (2009) describes for Southeast Asia, the British rule has undermined the ethnic social, and economic system, which was based on the indigenous knowledge of the hill people, through the imposition of modern governance and economic principles. Consequently, British control over the hill region precipitated a significant crisis for the hill dwellers (Ali, 1993; May, 1980). Then, the British rulers created two independent states, India and Pakistan, based on Hindu-majority and Muslim-majority areas, respectively, in the Indian subcontinent in 1947. This event, known as 'The Partition of India', witnessed the largest mass migration and violence in human history till that time (Talbot, 2008).

4.3 Pakistan Period (1947-1971)

On August 15, 1947, the state of Pakistan was born. This new state on the one hand differed significantly in character from the previous ruling class and on the other hand, grossly abused its power throughout East Pakistan[10] (present-day Bangladesh). During the 24 years from 1947 to 1971, one of the most controversial decisions made by the government of Pakistan was the construction of the Kaptai Dam in Rangamati. This project inflicted significant emotional and social damage on the residents of the hilly areas. The rationale behind the construction of this dam was that the people dependent on agriculture would benefit from the

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[9] . The three districts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts—Bandarban, Rangamati, and Khagrachari—have monarchies established by the British government. In 1860, the British government originally divided the Chittagong Hill Tracts into three circles: Chakma, Bomang, and Mong. The Bomang Circle (of Marma ethnicity) is located in Bandarban, the Chakma Circle (of Chakma ethnicity) in Rangamati, and the Mong Circle (of Tripura ethnicity) in Khagrachari. Each of these circles has a king, but the kings no longer hold much power. See also: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tribal_Monarchy_in_the_Chittagong_Hill_Tracts#cite_note-1

[10] . Pakistan gained independence from British rule in 1947. At that time, 'East Pakistan' and 'West Pakistan' together formed the state of Pakistan. Geographically, the distance between these two regions was 1,600 km. Although both regions belonged to the same state, they differed in terms of language and culture. On December 16, 1971, after nine months of armed conflict, 'East Pakistan' gained independence from 'West Pakistan', leading to the creation of the independent state of Bangladesh. See also: https://www.britannica.com/place/Pakistan/Political-decline-and-bureaucratic-ascendancy

project. It was expected that floods could be controlled and the forest area of the Karnaphuli basin could be used. However, the outcome was the opposite of what was anticipated. In 1963, after the project was launched, 18,000 families (about 100,000 people) were left homeless overnight as 50,000 acres of cultivable land were flooded. A quarter of the total population of the Chittagong Hill Tracts was adversely affected rather than benefited by this project. Most of the families affected by the construction of the Kaptai Dam were Chakmas, who lost their land and were forced to leave the country for India[11]. During the construction of the dam, the then-government of Pakistan began encouraging poor Bengali families to settle in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The influx of Bengalis into the hilly areas during the dam's construction exacerbated the situation. Consequently, the hydroelectric project fostered a relationship of bitterness and mistrust between the ethnic community and the Bengalis (Parveen and Faisal, 2002; Ahmed, 2021; CHTC, 1991).

4.4 Bangladesh Period (1971 to present)

Although Bangladesh emerged as an independent state in 1971, after independence the hegemonic attitudes of the state (previously British and Pakistani) towards ethnic minorities persisted, and Bangladesh continued state-centered repression of its Adivasi population. In 1973, under the leadership of Manvendra Larma, the Parbatya Chittagong Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) was formed to support peaceful and democratic means of resisting this repression. However, in 1975, when martial law[12] was imposed in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, this peaceful movement, which initially started as a protest against state oppression of ethnic groups, turned into an armed conflict (Nayak, 2019). The PCJSS formed an armed group called the 'Shanti Bahini' to resist the Bangladesh army. As government forces continued to oppress the hill people, the Shanti Bahini also attacked government forces, making the hill region unsettled. The conflict between the army and the 'Shaanti Bahini' was particularly intense during the military government of Bangladesh from 1976 to 1990, leading the army

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[11] . See also: https://hydroimpacted.ca/the-kaptai-dam-part-one-a-brief-history/

[12]. On 15 August 1975, the then-president, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and most of his family members were killed by a group of army officers during a coup. The army subsequently took over the responsibility of running the government of Bangladesh, essentially coming to power by issuing martial law. During this period, the army was deployed to suppress the ethnic community in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) area and began using military force. This led to the onset of armed conflict in that region. See also: Islam, S.S. (1984). The State in Bangladesh under Zia (1975-81). Asian Survey, 24(5), pp.556–573. doi:https://doi.org/10.2307/2644413.

to establish permanent and temporary camps in the hilly areas to strengthen its position (Shelley, 1992; Yasmin, 2014).

At the same time, the military government adopted a state plan to increase the Bengali population in the hill areas. In 1980, military ruler Ziaur Rahman served as head of government and implemented a strategy aimed at suppressing 'hill violence' by relocating landless Bengalis from the plains to the hills. While this initiative contributed to a decrease in separatist sentiments, it inadvertently led to the emergence of land disputes as a new challenge. Approximately four to five hundred thousand individuals from the plains were relocated to the hill areas during this time, commonly referred to as 'Bengali Settlers'. Subsequently, under the administration of General Ershad, another army leader, the policy of suppressing hill ethnic people continued, exemplified by the introduction of the 'cluster village' policy (Annie, 2022). The 'cluster village' was a state project initiated by Zia and Ershad. During that period, Bengalis migrated from the plains with direct support from the state to the cluster villages that they were assigned to which made it easier to exert control over the hill population. Under this policy, the government resettled landless and poor Bengalis from riverbanks and char areas to permanent settlements in the hilly areas by allocating them special land. The Bangladesh Army also played a direct role in implementing this policy. The main objective was to increase the Bengali population in areas inhabited by Adivasi communities.

After the fall of the army-backed Ershad government, a democratic government came to power in Bangladesh in the 1990s, which did not necessarily improve the political landscape in CHT. The democratic political parties, the Awami League and the BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party), failed to hold any fruitful talks with the PCJSS. After the Awami League came to power in 1996, several rounds of talks were held between the hill leaders and the government, with Santu Larma leading the discussions for the hill group. After extensive negotiations, an agreement was reached on December 2, 1997, between the Government of Bangladesh and the Chittagong Hill Tracts, known as the 'Peace Accord' (Rashiduzzaman, 1998). One of the main points of the peace agreement was the withdrawal of all temporary army camps from the hilly areas and the reduction of military power. Although some temporary army camps were removed after the peace agreement, according to a recent study there are still currently around 200 temporary army camps in the entire mountainous area[13]. While there is no official military rule in the Chittagong region, as it will be shown in the following chapters, the excessive presence of the army in the daily lives of the ethnic people

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[13]. See also: https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/provision/withdrawal-of-troops-chittagong-hill-tracts-peace-acord-cht.

and the frequent searches conducted in the name of 'security' have created a culture of fear among the residents.

However, the discriminatory relationship between the mountains and plains did not end there. In 2010, the government of Bangladesh constitutionally defined the people of 'ethnic communities' living in the country as 'small ethnic minorities' instead of recognizing them as 'Adivasi'. On June 30, 2011, Parliament enacted the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which explicitly refused to recognize the people of 'ethnic communities' as 'Adivasi'. As noted above, the Fifteenth Amendment refers to the hill communities as a small ethnic minority (Gerharz, 2014). However, the roots of this discrimination have been present since the birth of Bangladesh. In 1972, when a twelve-member Hill delegation led by Chakma Member of Parliament Manvendra Narayan Larma met with the then President, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, to present a document containing their demands, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman rejected their demands outright and stated, 'No, we are all Bengalis. We cannot have two systems of government. Forget your national identity and become Bengalis' (CHTC, 1991). This type of crisis has evolved over time, presenting new challenges from different perspectives.

As this chapter shows, there is a long history of strained relations between the hills and the plains, which the 1997 'Peace Accord' attempted to resolve. However, despite the peace process, army camps were not removed from the hilly areas; instead, tourist spots were established with the Army's help, further strengthening its position in the hills. The next chapter will discuss the role of the state and the involvement of the army in the development of tourism in the hill regions of Bangladesh.

Chapter 5: Tourism in the Pre- and Post- 'Peace Accord' Era: Understanding the Expansion of Tourism, Army Involvement, and Bengali Mobility

As noted earlier, in the state-society relations in Bangladesh the Peace Accord has marked the beginning of a new era. It had direct effects on the hill tracts, that is, the changes in how it is governed, and the kind of development interventions envisioned for the region had left its mark in the everyday life in the hill tracts. This chapter highlights the situation of tourism in the hills before and after the 'Peace Accord', the army's role in developing and using tourism, and the increased mobility of Bengalis in the region due to tourism.

5.1 'Peace Accord' in Relation to Hill Tracts Dynamics

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, 1997 (Appendix C), is a formal agreement signed on December 2, 1997, between the Government of Bangladesh and the Chittagong Hill Tracts Jana Samhati Samiti (Locally known as Shanti bahini). Abul Hasnat Abdullah represented the Government of Bangladesh, and Santu Larma, the leader of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Jana Samhati Samiti, represented the Shanti bahini (Ara and Khan, 2023). The peace accord had both positive and negative aspects. One of the interlocutors, an academic who completed his PhD on the sociocultural impacts of the 'Peace Accord', elaborated as follows:

> "A positive aspect of this agreement was that, after it was signed, armed conflict in the hill areas stopped or was significantly reduced. However, despite the decline in armed conflict, many other types of conflict—such as land grabbing by various corporate groups, evictions, and inter-ethnic tensions—have increased in Bangladesh".

Similarly, it was observed that the 'Peace Accord' did not bring any positive memories among the local Adivasi. Before 1997, the hill region was politically unstable. According to most of the Adivasi interlocutors, Adivasi communities hoped the 1997 'Peace Accord' would bring social stability to the area. However, various factors, such as conflicting positions between the state and Adivasi communities on the implementation of the agreement and inter-communal mistrust, have cast doubts on its implementation. One of the Adivasi interlocutors, who has been in the restaurant business for five years and is also involved in local politics, spoke about the inter-community divisions surrounding the 'Peace Accord':

"...on the day the 'Shanti Bahini' surrendered their arms at Khagrachari Stadium, another group of Adivasi people (mostly youth) displayed a 'black flag' and opposed the agreement. Members of this group later formed a separate armed organization called the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF). Subsequently, the hill community became involved in internal conflict. It is well known that this new party is backed by the army".

It is worth noting that the peace agreement has led to an 'inter-communal' conflict instead of bringing peace to the Adivasi people in the hilly areas. Patwary (2023) states that after the 'Peace Accord', the PCJSS and the UPDF became enemies, and within a decade, the inter-communal conflict between the two groups resulted in approximately five hundred deaths in the hills. As a result, the state and the army have benefited from the infighting, as it has allowed them to maintain control over the hilly areas.

5.2   Pre- 'Peace Accord' Tourism in the Hill Areas

The difference in hill tourism in Bangladesh before and after 1997 is like night and day. In the 1990s, tourists avoided the hill areas due to a lack of security. Political unrest, including armed conflict at the time, further discouraged tourists from visiting the mountains. The hill armed group, (Shanti Bahini) was very active in these areas and frequently clashed with the Bangladesh Army. As a result, these unsuitable travel destinations had little private investment in tourism and tourists avoided the hilly areas altogether. Additionally, there was an informal ban on travel to the area for Bengali tourists and a formal ban for foreign tourists, enforced by the government.

According to my interlocutors who traveled to the hill areas before the peace accord and also some local Adivasi, there was also no direct road connection between the hilly areas and Dhaka. In the hilly areas, particularly in Rangamati or Khagrachari, before the year 2000, there was only one direct bus service to Dhaka, operated by the 'Dolphin' company. This bus service ran only during the day, and there were no buses available for night travel. If there was any issue on the road, the bus would stop, and passengers from these areas had to travel to Chittagong or Feni city to take a separate bus to Dhaka. After 2000, several more bus services (such as BRTC, S. Alam, and Shanti) began operating for travel to Dhaka from this mountainous region. Additionally, before 1997, it was difficult for people to travel with their families in the mountainous areas. In some cases, university students would travel in groups for study tours. Another category of travelers at that time were families whose members were serving in the army and who would travel in the hills using army references. One

of the development practitioners, who has been involved in various development projects in the hill areas, explained this transformation as follows:

> "I first went to Rangamati in 1991 with my friends. There was no direct bus from Dhaka to Rangamati back then, and when I visited Rangamati again in 1993, the same transportation system was still in place. At that time, the only accommodation option in Rangamati for travelers or those on business was the 'Rangamati Tourism Motel'. Before 1997, there were no quality hotels for tourists in the hilly areas. The existing accommodations, called 'Boarding', were typically used by people from surrounding areas who were visiting for business or other purposes".

Again before 1997, Bengali tourists did not travel to the hilly areas due to 'security' issues. One of the Adivasi interlocutors, who was born and raised in Rangamati city, said,

> "Bengali tourists were afraid to travel before 1997. This fear was something created by the state. It was propagated that Bengalis traveling in hilly areas could be kidnapped or killed by the 'Shanti Bahini'. However, the 'Shanti Bahini' never said that tourists couldn't come to this region. On the other hand, there was no ban from the state, but there was negative propaganda about the hill region among the Bengalis".

At the same time, there was no stability in the lives of the people of this region. Before 1997, the people living in the hills of this area constantly feared eviction because the army brought Bengalis from various parts of the plains and established 'Bengali villages', and forced many Adivasi people to leave their homes. Therefore, due to poor transportation systems, strained relations between the state and the hills, the fear of eviction, and military repression, tourism did not develop or expand in the CHT before 1997.

5.3 Post- 'Peace Accord' Tourism in the Hill Areas

The 1997 'Peace Accord' was a landmark for the expansion of tourism in the hills The agreement clearly shows that the government can promote tourism in the hills for development while preserving the local people and culture. Since the peace agreement, various tourist spots have been gradually developed, and many hotels and resorts have been established under private ownership. Additionally, several tourist spots are being managed by the army and police, which encourages businessmen and women to invest in the region, as they feel it is safe due to the involvement of the army and police in tourism. At the same time, structural development in this area has also occurred since 1997, including improved roads and various

NGOs running social development programs. Since then, people in Bangladesh have increasingly tended to travel on the hill. One of the interlocutors, who is involved in tourism policymaking in Bangladesh, stated,

> "Due to the rise in per capita income and disposable money, people in Bangladesh now enjoy traveling more than before, seeking to escape from their busy social lives. As a result, 'traveling' has become as fundamental to the people of this country as other basic rights. That is why people no longer view 'travel' as merely staying in hotels and sightseeing; instead, they now prefer adventure. And hills provide excellent opportunities for adventure".

One of my interlocutors, a social researcher and professor of anthropology, also emphasized adventure in hill tourism but differently, saying:

> "As tourists, people are attracted to the 'exotic' or the 'other'. To tourists from Bangladesh, the mountainous region was considered 'exotic' or 'other' due to its natural beauty and cultural diversity. However, initially, after 1997, while tourists could venture into the deep forests, there were not many resorts or hotels in the hill areas. Moreover, the few resorts or hotels that existed were primarily owned by various army personnel. Nevertheless, Bengali businessmen soon began investing in tourism in the hilly areas, recognizing that tourism in this region would eventually flourish".

According to policymaker interlocutors, culture-based tourism and community-based tourism were also emphasized in Bangladesh's tourism policy that came into effect in 2010. The region was highlighted as important because it was considered a fertile field of tourism. Similarly, hotels and resorts were developed in hill tourist spots to meet the needs and budgets of various tourists. This has increased interest in mountain travel across different social classes, ages, and genders. Therefore, it can be said that the 'Peace Accord' was the first step in the development of tourism in the hilly areas. Since then, tourism in the hilly regions of Bangladesh has grown due to the tourism policy, an increasing desire among tourists to explore, and a rising tendency to invest in hill tourism due to improved security in the region.

5.4 Tourism, the Army Intervention, and Business Hub

In the 'Peace Accord', the Hill District Council[14] was initially designated to implement tourism, but in the hill areas, tourism has become a major industry dominated by three distinct groups: the Army, the Bengalis, and the wealthy Adivasi classes. Interlocutors (social researchers and local Adivasi) of this research mentioned that the Army has occupied land in these regions, often by evicting the Adivasi people. Meanwhile, Bengali businessmen have entered the tourism sector by leasing land from both Adivasi communities and Bengali settlers or through partnerships. Additionally, there is a wealthy class of Adivasi who are either governmental employees, entrepreneurs, or politicians. This group has purchased land from various Adivasi people and invested in the tourism industry. The emergence of this new wealthy Adivasi class occurred after 1997, when the state began offering various public and private benefits to the Adivasi people. Many Adivasis also started forming NGOs, as substantial funds began flowing in from abroad through various international organizations for the development of the hilly regions. As demonstrated further in the next chapter, this led to the expansion of the role development of local NGOs. What is significant is that a 'business community' centered around tourism has developed in the hills. As one of my interlocutors (social researcher) noted,

> "There is no difference between Bengalis and Adivasis in the context of tourism. These groups complement each other, and their main motive is profit. For example, the 'Sairu' resort is the largest and most expensive resort in Bandarban (one of the hill districts of Bangladesh), with a minimum room rate of 16,000 taka (124 euros) per night. The owners of this resort are a Bengali and a Mro Adivasi, who are operating the business in partnership".

The army dominates tourism in the region, and as many interlocutors in this study (e.g., local Adivasi, sociologists, businessmen) mentioned, the army is the 'King of Kings' in the hills. They decide '*where tourist spots will be developed in the hills*' and '*who can be involved in this business*'. Simultaneously, the army and police are increasingly involved in the tourism industry, setting up hotels and resorts, conducting business, and encouraging others to invest capital in various tourism sectors. The presence of the army in hilly areas encourages people from the plains to invest in tourism there. As a result, large numbers of tourists are traveling

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14. Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council is the local government body responsible for the welfare and some administrations of the Chittagong Hill Tracts districts, which include Bandarban, Khagrachari, and Rangamati Hill District.

to the mountains. The presence of the army is encouraging both tourism investors and tourists to visit the hills. One of the Adivasi interlocutors, who owns an NGO in Rangamati, stated,

> "The Police have established Polwell Park in Rangamati. The entrance fee to this park is 40 taka, and the resort rates range from 6,000 to 10,000 taka per night. About 60% of the revenue generated from this park and resort is sent to the police headquarters, while the remaining 40% stays local. The police administration then distributes the local share among its personnel. Similarly, in places where the Army has built tourist spots in Bandarban and Rangamati, they earn substantial profits, which are distributed within the Army's own management".

According to some interlocutors (social researchers and development practitioners), a significant weakness of the tourism policy is that it allows the army to become involved in tourism in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. When the tourism policy was formulated in Bangladesh in 2010, it was seen as a case of '*something is better than nothing*' (the Bangladesh tourism policy will be discussed in detail in the next chapter). However, by 2024, the same policy has proven ineffective due to a lack of clear guidance for the various stakeholders in tourism. One Adivasi interlocutor, who is a lawyer, noted,

> "In the absence of a proper policy, the army has become involved in tourism activities in the hill areas. However, the army's role is not to develop tourist spots or engage in business. This situation reflects both a failure on the part of the state and a latent desire to exert control over the mountainous regions".

Since the post-peace agreement period, the Army has played a key role in expanding tourism in the hilly areas, transforming the region into a business hub and creating opportunities for wealthy Bengali and Adivasi investors to participate in the tourism industry.

5.5   Reviving State-Controlled Migration Through Tourism

This section discusses how tourism plans in the post-peace accord process have paved the way for ongoing state-led migration. However, migration (both forced and voluntary) in the hill areas began with the construction of the Kaptai Dam in 1962. The construction of the Kaptai Dam displaced one lakh people, 70 percent of whom belonged to the Chakma community. Additionally, approximately 22,000 acres of cultivable land were submerged in water, which equals about 40 percent of the total cultivable land in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Of these, 18,000 families lost their only source of income, agricultural land and the hills of Jhum.

With no alternative livelihood, there was no option but to leave the place, and the Chakma people refer to this calamity as 'Bar Padong', which translates to 'Great Migration' in English (Nobi, 2021; CHTC, 1991). On the contrary, the Kaptai Dam opened the door for Bengalis to freely enter the areas inhabited by Adivasi people. From the workers employed by the government to the construction of the dam, the contractors and businessmen were all Bengalis. Many of them sought and received compensation and resettlement by posing as refugees of the Kaptai project with the connivance of Bengali government officials (Talukdar, 2021). So, as a by-product of the Kaptai dam, voluntary Bengali infiltration in the hilly areas occurred.

Then, through the state migration project named 'cluster village', the Bengali population also increased in these areas. The state, through the 'cluster village' scheme, facilitated the mass migration of Bengalis to the hilly regions. Second, this migration led to 'Adivasi-Bengali' conflicts, where the army sided with the Bengalis, resulting in the forced migration of many Adivasis. One of my interlocutors (social researcher) said,

"…It was during the first few months of 1979, 1980, 1981, and 1982 that several thousand Bengali families settled in different parts of the CHT. The Bengali families who settled during those three to four years were referred to as 'Settler' by both the Shanti Bahini and the local Adivasi people. The 'Settler' Bengali soon became targets of deadly attacks by the 'Shanti Bahini'. In retaliation, Bengalis attacked and set fire to neighboring Adivasi villages. Consequently, the Adivasi people fled their villages and sought shelter in nearby forests, with some eventually crossing the border to India as refugees".

Therefore, it can be said that the 'cluster village' policy played a significant role in both the marginalization of the Adivasi population and the increase of the Bengali population in these regions. According to my different interlocutors (Social scientists and Adivasi), even after the 1997 'Peace Accord', this process is still ongoing, but it now relies on different methods, such as 'tourism'. Many Adivasi lands are being seized, and inhabitants are being evicted to make tourist spots. As a result, these Adivasi communities are being forced to leave their homes. Additionally, the development of these tourist spots has led to an increase in the internal mobility of Bengali tourists. Many Bengali tourists from the plains visit the hills daily, and numerous Bengali businesses—such as hotels, resorts, and transport services—have started operating in the hills based on this tourism industry. One of the Adivasi interlocutors, who is a resort manager in Sajek, provided an example from Sajek as follows,

"Due to the Sajek tourist spot, this area may become a settlement for Bengali people in the future. Currently, those who own hotels or resorts or are doing business from outside the hilly areas may apply to the Union Parishad to become voters of Sajek after five to ten years. At that time, the Union Parishad could consider their (Bengalis) residence in this area and grant them voting rights in this union. With this voter card, they (Bengalis) can then apply to the District Commissioner (DC) for a certificate to obtain citizenship15 status in the hills. Anyone with this special citizenship certificate can buy land in the hills. As tourism is a business, and as the scope of this business grows, the investment and profit will continue to increase, which will also lead to an increase in the Bengali population in this area."

Furthermore, during the tourist season, many workers migrate from various areas of the plains to these tourist spots to work in hotels or resorts (seasonal migration). Thus, it is evident that, as in the past, the state is currently promoting the influx of Bengalis into the hills through tourism and maintaining a Bengali presence there. According to most of my interlocutors (local Adivasi and businesspeople) from Sajek, tourists visit Sajek almost year-round, with a significant influx during the winter and monsoon seasons. On weekends (Friday and Saturday) and public holidays, the number of tourists can be so high that the local resorts often lack accommodation. Many tourists spend the night outside in tents or in jeeps. To manage the increased pressure from these visitors, especially in the post-COVID period, more new resorts are being built. This growth in the Bengali population serves as a strategy to control Adivasi groups in hilly areas. The use of this strategy as a tool to expand the influence of powerful groups in conflict zones worldwide is known as 'demographic engineering' (Üngör, 2012).

From the above discussion, it can be said that the 'Peace Accord' is a landmark in the development of tourism in hilly areas. The Army also appears as the dominant force in hill tourism, having developed it into a lucrative business and investment sector. The state, army, and wealthy businessmen benefit economically from the tourism sector in the hill region, but most local Adivasi remain deprived of economic development. This tourism has increased the mobility of Bengalis in the hills, effectively ensuring Bengali predominance in these areas. In parallel, after the peace accord, the government created a tourism policy that briefly

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15. Ethnic groups or Bengalis residing mainly in the three hill districts (Bandarban, Rangamati, and Khagrachari) have separate citizenship certificates. These certificates must be obtained from either the King (Chakma, Marma, Tripura, etc.) or the District Commissioner. Ethnic people receive their certificates from the King, while Bengalis obtain theirs from the District Commissioner.

addressed ethnic tourism, promoting tourism as a development tool for Adivasi communities. The next chapter will discuss tourism policy, the role of NGOs in shaping the development narrative around tourism, and the participation of local people in tourism development in hill areas.

Chapter 6: 'Hill Tourism as a Tool for Local Development': Tourism Policy, Role of Local NGOs, and Local-Level Participation

In the post-peace accord process and the rise of tourism, in addition to army and state-led projects, we also observe an increasing role of local NGOs. However, there is a gap between the development narrative and reality, resulting in the local Adivasi culture being overlooked in Bangladesh's tourism policy. In this section, I will elaborate on the limitations of Bangladesh's tourism policy, the relationship between NGOs and tourism, and local-level participation in tourism in hill areas.

6.1   Bangladesh Tourism Policy and Disregard for Adivasi

In the context of Bangladesh, the document that stands out as the 'tourism policy' is the 'National Tourism Policy-2010'. However, the state's reluctance to formulate and modernize Bangladesh's tourism policy is evident. Prior to 1990, there was no official tourism policy or law in Bangladesh. In 1990, the government commissioned a strategic master plan for tourism development, but the document included no specific information about hill tourism (Hassan and Burns, 2014).

The 'National Tourism Policy-2010' (Appendix D) document is comprised of six chapters. The first chapter provides a brief background on Bangladesh's tourism potential and the causes of past failures. The second and third chapters outline the aims and objectives of tourism in Bangladesh and various key aspects of the tourism policy, respectively. The fourth chapter addresses the strategy for implementing the tourism policy, including various structures and committees. The fifth chapter elaborates on the activities outlined in the previous chapter, while the sixth chapter discusses the branding strategy for tourism in the country.

The current tourism policy of Bangladesh was originally formulated after the 1997 'Peace Accord'. However, this policy does not provide any guidelines for considering the unique context of Adivasi communities or for promoting a tourism industry that is friendly to Adivasi cultures. The only reference to Adivasi culture appears in Section 5.9 of the fifth chapter, which states that training will be provided for the preparation of handicrafts and souvenirs that are characteristic of indigenous cultures. Additionally, the policy mentions that various short, medium, and long-term activities will be undertaken to train tour guides in different languages from among the young, educated members of Adivasi communities.

According to development practitioners' interlocutors, the training provided to Adivasi youth does not give sufficient importance to local culture. In this context, a development practitioner with ten years of experience at an international NGO stated,

> "The Bangladesh Tourism Corporation is organizing tourism training for the local Adivasi youth of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, but the training is quite problematic. For example, participants are told they cannot wear their traditional dress to the hotel or resort, but must instead wear pants and shirts. Furthermore, they are being trained on 'behavioral' changes, such as how to serve tourists in 'five-star' hotels. However, the type of 'behavioral' training and 'dress code' requirements conflict with the culture of the ethnic group. It is crucial to ensure the maximum 'participation' of local people and respect for their culture in the development of local tourism. Unfortunately, these issues are not addressed in the tourism policy of Bangladesh".

The policy, however, fails to address the participation and benefits of Adivasi communities in tourism or the importance of obtaining their prior consent for tourism ventures. Despite the tourism policy's limited focus on Adivasi people and culture, local NGOs and their development activities have promoted tourism among local communities since the peace agreement.

6.2 Involvement of Local NGOs, Adivasi Wealthy Class and Tourism Development

Before the 1970s, the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts were largely unfamiliar with the formal concept and institutionalized practice of development. In the previous decade, projects like the construction of the Kaptai Dam were labeled as development both officially and internationally. However, with few exceptions, there was little local support for these initiatives. When the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board was established in 1976, the local population still did not show any significant enthusiasm for development. However, post-peace agreement, the situation changed rapidly. Development became the central focus of worship, discussion, and activism for many (Tripura, 2020). Similarly, this time, the state chose tourism as a means to ensure economic development in the hill areas and provide social security for the ethnic people (Rosy, 2024). As a result, the state continues to encourage public and private investment in the tourism sector of the hill region (Khokaneswar et al., 2023). Additionally, the history of local NGOs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts is relatively recent. The 'Peace Accord' of 1997 opened the door for various international and national

NGOs to undertake 'development' work in the hilly areas. Before this, there was no conducive environment for NGOs to operate in these mountainous regions. One interlocutor, a government officer in the Rangamati district stated,

"After the Peace Accord in 1997, NGOs began working towards the socio-economic development of the disadvantaged people of the region. There are forty-two local NGOs, seventeen national NGOs, and six international NGOs currently operating in the district, under the Rangamati Zilla Parishad and Rangamati District Administration. Additionally, almost all United Nations affiliates have established their offices in the hill areas. These include UNDP, ADB, UNICEF, FAO, ILO, and UNFPA".

Local NGOs operating in the hills do not consistently work toward the region's development; while some NGOs are fully committed to their work, many others treat it merely as a business. One of my interlocutors (development practitioner) stated,

"...after the peace agreement, local NGOs sprang up like 'toad-stool' in the hilly areas because a lot of foreign funds flowed into the region. Influential (Adivasi) people of the area, especially those involved in politics or Shanti Bahini, began working with these funds through NGOs. Many of them took advantage of the situation as 'development workers' by laying down arms. 'Tongya', known as Debashish Roy's (King of Chakma circle) NGO, 'CIPD', is associated with one of the top leaders of Jano Songhoti Samiti, Rupayan Dewan, and 'Hill Flower', linked to regional council member and Jano Songhoti Samiti leader Neelu Kumar Tangchangya, are among the influential NGOs in Rangamati".

As a result, over the past two decades, national and local NGOs, along with foreign development organizations, have invested substantial amounts of money in the development of this region, but there has not been a significant visible improvement in the lives of the common people of the hills. Behind the prominent NGOs in the hills is the patronage of political and social influencers, which has led these NGOs to focus more on their own interests than on fostering genuine development. Consequently, an 'Adivasi wealthy class' has emerged in the hills through the activities of these NGOs.

According to some of interlocutors (policymaker and social researchers), various NGOs worked to improve the livelihoods of the different Adivasi groups in the area. To achieve this, they provided skill development training to the ethnic people so that they would not have to rely solely on 'Jhum' cultivation. NGOs also facilitated the sale of their produce and

handicrafts locally. Such initiatives by various development organizations have helped involve people from different Adivasi groups in the hilly areas with tourism, although this involvement was initially limited to the sale of handicrafts. One of the interlocutors, who is involved in tourism policymaking and has worked as a tourism board member, said,

> "After the Peace Accord, the NGOs considered how to utilize the expertise of the ethnic people in tourism, as the handicrafts made by these groups were very popular among tourists in the plains. Therefore, the NGOs working in the mountainous areas focused on development work related to tourism. For example, the 'Bawm' ethnic group was very skilled in weaving. However, the tourists visiting the mountains were unaware of this craft. Different NGOs explained to the Bawm people that there was a demand for their weaving, encouraging them to increase production on a larger scale. The NGOs provided support in the form of thread or financial assistance needed for this large-scale production".

Along with their development work, many local NGOs began to associate directly with tourism. Many local NGO owners also realized that the hills would gradually become a tourism hub. For this reason, they started buying land in the mountains at low prices while continuing to run their NGOs. Later, they built resorts on this hilly land and engaged in the tourism business. An interlocutor who is both an NGO and resort owner spoke about his involvement in tourism,

> "The participation of the private sector in the development of the tourism industry in the hilly regions of the country was initially very limited. Despite its various potentials, this industry had been stagnant in the mountains for a long time due to a range of complications. However, since 2010, the industry has been expanding rapidly, and the amount of investment has been increasing day by day. In 2009, I purchased hill land from a Mouza16 Headman in Rangamati for my NGO. At the time, the land was utterly desolate. With a determination to build a socially responsible business, I established a private tourism center there in 2010. As the amount of land increased through phased purchases over subsequent periods, the site was developed into a full-fledged resort, taking into account local needs, the potential of the tourism industry, issues of tourist accommodation, industry development, and local participation".

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[16]. The informants of this study stated that the land of the Adivasis in the hilly areas is primarily known as *Mauza* land. Unlike in the plains, not everyone possesses a land deed for the land; instead, they share it among themselves through the 'Karbari' of the neighborhood.

This account is not as unique as most NGOs because many NGOs in the hill region belong to a specific wealthy class and promote tourism as a means to improve the quality of life for local Adivasi communities. However, a gap exists between this narrative and the reality of tourism, as the decision-making power and ownership related to tourism do not involve local people; instead, they are controlled by the state, army and elite groups.

6.3 Tourism and Development: Local-Level Participation Based on Class

Tourism serves as a component of hill development for Adivasi people. However, the involvement of Adivasi people in the tourism-oriented development process is often neglected. Rosy (2024), in her research on tourism and development in hill regions, shows that ethnic people can participate in tourism development through decision-making and direct investment. However, this participation is tied to money and power, which most ethnic people lack. Meanwhile, the state views the locals as incapable of making 'development decisions'. As a result, the main decision-makers and beneficiaries of tourism in this region are the state, the army, and the elite class.

Through interviews with various interlocutors, this research also found that not all hill Adivasi (hosts) benefit from tourism; those who are poor and dependent on the hill for their livelihoods are more negatively impacted by it. In contrast, the wealthier Adivasi people are directly involved in and benefit from tourism. So, it is important to discuss not what kind of development the 'local' people are experiencing through tourism, but rather which class and identity groups are benefiting from this tourism. While it is true that land grabbing is occurring due to tourism, the wealthy Adivasi people in the hill areas are also opportunistically buying land from poorer Adivasis (locals) at low prices. In this way, they are becoming an exploitative class themselves. One Bengali interlocutor, who is a resort owner in Sajek, mentioned,

> "Many Adivasis feel that it is better for hill land to be owned by Paharis (who live in the hill) rather than Bengalis. As a result, they are becoming interested in buying hill land. But what is noticeable now is that Bengalis or the Army are creating tourist spots by occupying or leasing this land. Similarly, some Adivasis are buying land and building resorts there. So, where is the difference between the 'Pahari' and the Bengali or Army? In fact, just as the 1997 peace accord opened the door to tourism and development in the hills, it also made many hill people greedy and ambitious".

Since local Adivasi's participation in the decision-making process and investment in tourism is very insignificant, local people in the area typically work as day laborers in hotels and resorts or sell fruits and crafts at tourist spots. One of the interlocutors, a college student who grew up in Sajek, described this issue as follows:

"Most of the resort offers locals contract-based jobs instead of permanent positions. They work during busy tourist seasons but are unemployed at other times. Their work is primarily on a daily labor basis".

Similarly, tourists in the hills must hire or reserve a jeep, locally known as a *'Chander Gari'*, to reach tourist spots, as regular vehicles from the plains cannot operate on the hill tracts. These jeeps are owned by wealthy local Adivasi and Bengali individuals, while the drivers are from poorer Bengali and Adivasi backgrounds. Similarly, the privately owned hotels and resorts in this region are also owned by affluent Adivasi and Bengali people. As a result, both hotel and jeep owners are making significant profits from tourism, but Bengalis and Adivasi people from poorer backgrounds are being neglected. Therefore, the narrative of 'economic development' centered around tourism is problematic. While tourism is promoted as a tool for economic development in the hill tracts, it primarily benefits a particular class and group of people. Although tourist spots in the area have been developed with a focus on Adivasi culture, the actual profit or benefit to the Adivasi community is minimal.

Based on the above discussion, Bangladesh's tourism policy lacks a well-structured plan for hill region tourism. Although, in the post-peace accord, local NGOs played a role in promoting tourism and attempted to create a positive impact, the benefits remain limited to certain classes or groups due to the failure to ensure the participation of the majority of local Adivasi communities. The next chapter will discuss how developing a tourist spot bypasses local participation and the types of socio-cultural challenges residents face daily in a tourist destination like Sajek.

Chapter 7: Tourism and Socio-cultural Consequences: Pieces of Evidence from 'Sajek' Tourist Spot

In recent years, Sajek has become one of Bangladesh's most popular tourist destinations. The army played a prominent role in developing it as a tourist area, but local Adivasi participation was largely neglected in this process. Meanwhile, Adivasi inhabitants face various sociocultural challenges, including privacy concerns and fear of eviction, and in some cases, they have developed their own coping mechanisms to adjust to these difficulties.

7.1 The Army's Desire and Power Demonstration: Establishing Sajek as a Tourist Spot

This section will briefly on the establishment process of Sajek as a tourist destination, with special consideration given to its history, as well as the displacement and negotiation processes from the perspective of the informants. Sajek mainly comprises two neighborhoods, 'Ruiluipara' and 'Kanglak Para'. Although various Adivasi communities inhabit Sajek today, local interlocutors in my research stated that it was originally home to only two Adivasi communities: the 'Lusai' and 'Tripura'. However, the 'Lusai' population has significantly decreased over time. One 'Lusai' interlocutor, whose ancestors settled in the area around 150 years ago, explained:

> "There were once 100-150 Lusai families in Sajek. Initially, the Lusai were the majority, but now they have become a minority, with only about 15-20 families remaining. During the 1980s, when there were clashes between 'Shanti bahini' and the army, the army conducted night raids on the villages to capture 'Shanti bahini' members. During these raids, they harassed the Adivasi people in various ways, leading many families to migrate to Mizoram in India".

Before 1990, Sajek was an inaccessible mountain village with a fragile transportation system. In the span of 20 years, this isolated village has transformed into a tourism hub in Bangladesh. According to most of my local interlocutors, before the 90s, Sajek had no paved roads, making it impossible for vehicles to operate. During that time, the Adivasi of the area traveled on foot to nearby markets in Machalong or Baghaihat. Additionally, no outside tourists could visit, though the army patrolled the village on foot due to the presence of a nearby army camp. A retired Army Major stationed at the Masalong Army Camp near Sajek in 1987 described the situation as follows:

"While I was in that camp, I used to go to Sajek twice a month on Long Range Patrol (LRP) missions, mainly to maintain our dominance over the area. Sajek was located 12 to 13 km east of the Masalong Army Camp. At that time, Sajek was inhabited by a few hill settlements of the Lusai ethnic group, who had converted to Christianity long ago. Sajek was then a completely remote and inaccessible area, with no hint of tourism or any tourist center at all".

In 2013, Sajek was developed as a tourist destination, but the Army began working around 2004 to establish direct road connectivity between Sajek and Khagrachari district. Primarily, this area's emergence as a tourist spot is due to the army's efforts, which significantly changed local lives. One Adivasi interlocutor, a school teacher in Sajek for the past five years, shared,

"The initial announcement to build a tourist center in the Ruilui area of Sajek Union, in the Baghaichhari Upazila of Rangamati, came from Major General Sabbir Ahmed, head of the Chittagong Division of the military. Although he wasn't the tourism minister of Bangladesh, he made this announcement in his capacity as an Army Chief (Hill Area). The army's decision to turn this area into a tourist destination has drastically altered our lives. Most locals are now involved in the tourism business—something they might never have imagined."

The Army initially built and managed a resort named 'Runmoy Resort', but over time, 250-300 privately owned hotels have been established in the area. According to local interlocutors in the study, most hotel and resort owners in Sajek are Bengalis from outside the hill regions. To build a hotel or resort here, one must obtain permission from the Army, along with informal approval from both the UPDF and PCJSS. Additionally, Bengali people must lease land from local Adivasi people to construct a hotel or resort. However, conducting business in this area is not possible without these permissions. A Bengali interlocutor who owns a resort and lives in Dhaka, said:

"…. the informal permissions from the JSS and UPDF are managed by the headman and the landowner, and money must be paid to both organizations. I personally handled the formal permission process with the Army, which involved lobbying in several areas (details not provided). Afterward, I submitted an application to the head of the Army camp here in Sajek. Essentially, once I received approval for the main application from the Army camp, I started construction on the resort. Both informal and formal permissions are crucial for building a resort in Sajek".

In Sajek, locals are entirely excluded from participating in the development of tourist spots, where the army exerts an invisible power over the mountainous regions. Reflecting on this, an interlocutor who has lived in Kanglak Para for nearly 50 years said that *it feels like the people of Sajek were living in a village and then suddenly woke up one morning to find that their village had become a tourist spot.*

In the case of Sajek, a tourist spot, it is noteworthy that the army built it under their own authority without consulting the local Adivasi. This process of establishing the tourist spot reveals the Army's authoritative attitude.

7.2 Sociocultural Consequences of Tourism

Although the sociocultural impacts of tourism are discussed concerning rural and ethnic communities, with consideration of their various vulnerabilities, these impacts on ethnic groups are more frequently explored in sociology and anthropology (Smith & Krannich, 1998; Cohen, 1996; Deitch, 1989). According to my interlocutors—local Adivasi and social researchers—the deterioration of local customs and culture significantly impacts the socio-cultural landscape in Sajek due to tourism. Local people have started dressing differently, preparing various foods, and modifying their cultural practices to meet tourists' demands. Moreover, these sociocultural adjustments serve as strategies that people have developed to protect their personal and communal privacy, alleviate fears of eviction, and, for some, simply to adapt to changes in their professions.

7.2.1 Increasing Tourists and Decreasing Privacy: Individual and Communal Sufferings and Negotiations

Sajek, a picturesque hill area located in the CHT of Bangladesh, has recently experienced a surge in tourist numbers. This increase has also led to a decrease in privacy for the Adivasi people who call Sajek home. Tourists, eager to experience the natural beauty and culture of Sajek, often visit Adivasi villages and interact with the local people. However, these interactions sometimes cross boundaries of privacy. Tourists may take photos of Adivasi individuals without their consent, enter their homes without permission, and ask personal questions about their way of life. For the Adivasi people of Sajek, this invasion of privacy can be deeply uncomfortable and even traumatic. One older Adivasi interlocutor discussed the privacy of Adivasi women as follows:

"....tourists often view local women as accessible, making various inappropriate comments and paying to watch traditional dances. Since women operate shops in

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tourist areas, they have stopped wearing their traditional dresses or tight-fitting clothes. Instead, these women have begun wearing 'Oorna' (veils) and loose-fitting dresses".

Although *'Oorna'* is not a traditional Adivasi dress, it is worn by Bengali women. In other words, Adivasi women have altered their clothing to avoid the unwanted attention of male Bengali tourists. According to local Adivasi interlocutors, this intrusion significantly limits girl's freedom; they go out during the day to work but avoid going out at night. While boys continue to move about normally, girls now have their movements restricted, which was not the case before.

Due to tourism, the daily life of the local Adivasi has changed, especially their sleeping patterns. According to the local Adivasi interlocutors, when there was no electricity in the area, they completed their daily tasks during daylight hours. An interlocutor who owns a shop with his house attached expressed his problem this way:

"Very late at night, especially after two in the morning, many groups, particularly youth groups, go out for walks. They often talk loudly, shout, and sing, which frequently disturbs my sleep, as my shop is next to the road. Since I have no opportunity to sleep during the day, it has become difficult to sleep at night. Now, I only get three to four hours of sleep in 24 hours".

Now, with the influx of tourists, visitors stay out late at night, making noise and playing loud music on speakers. As a result, the residents have difficulty sleeping, and because they sleep late, they also wake up late. This has altered their sleep patterns.

Local people also claimed that they are facing problems with the observance of religious rituals due to tourism. Sometimes, tourists enter without permission during religious rituals and take pictures, disturbing these practices. Now, they are trying to adjust to this situation by implementing some measures. One Adivasi interlocutor (a student) mentioned a specific measure:

"On Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, the church next door opens for prayer. Visitors often enter the church and take photos, compromising the sacredness of the location in several ways. As a result, we keep the church doors closed during these times".

Due to tourism in Sajek, most Adivasi people face regular personal (such as issues with women's clothing and sleeping times) and collective (such as religious) challenges. However, the solution to these problems is beyond their control, as the area is governed by the army, so they are trying to adapt to these challenges.

7.2.2 Expansion of Tourism through Eviction and Land Grabbing

Many Adivasi communities have been living in Sajek for generations, but they are facing the threat of eviction for various reasons. The most common reason for eviction is the Army's push to convert the area into a tourist destination. Sajek has witnessed the eviction of local Adivasi to develop a tourist spot, but no such news has appeared in the mainstream media or newspapers in Bangladesh. However, according to a local newspaper in the Chittagong Hill Tracts named 'CHT Vanguard', the Bangladesh Army acquired five acres of land in 'Ruilui Para' to build the Sajek Tourism Center, resulting in the eviction of 65 Tripura families from that area (Samadder, 2020). The eviction process has been a traumatic experience for the Adivasi people of Sajek. They have been forced to leave their homes, their lands, and their way of life behind without proper compensation or alternative arrangements. Many have been left homeless and destitute, with no means of livelihood or survival. An Adivasi interlocutor who is a driver has been driving the Khagrachari to Sajek Jeep route for the past eight years and described the recent evictions in Sajek like this:

> "About six or seven months ago, eight Tripura families were forcibly removed from the Sajek Ruilui Para by the Headman. Without informing these families, the Headman sold five and a half kanis of land to a Bengali businessman named Salim, who owns Salim Market in Khagrachari. The affected Tripura families sought legal assistance but received no help. The district commissioner did not respond to their concerns. Eventually, the evicted families were given three lakhs taka, whereas the actual value of the land was 2.5 to 3 million taka. In contrast, the eviction situation for the residents of Kongkal Para is less severe than for those in Ruilui Para".

The land systems in the hills and the plains differ significantly. Customary land management prevails among the Adivasi in hilly areas. In this system, Adivasi land ownership is collective or social, with no individual holding permanent ownership. The village 'Karbari' leads or manages this system, which relies on oral practices, so no documents are issued for land ownership (Ahsan, 2012). As a result, the Army exploits this lack of property documentation to acquire Adivasi land easily for tourism. Similarly, the Army has evicted Adivasi

communities from Sajek to develop tourist spots and is now expanding these areas with various private investments.

The Adivasi people of Sajek have faced eviction and witnessed land grabbing for tourism development. Kujendra Lal, both a Member of Parliament and of Tripura ethnicity, used his political influence and identity to acquire the site and build the 'Khasrang Hill Resort' on approximately eight acres of land. A school teacher from Sajek, who is ethnically Lusai, expressed frustration about the land grabbing, stating:

> "When Adivasi people understand everything and build resorts in the hills, there's little left to say. We can protest when Bengalis occupy our land to create tourist spots. But who can we protest against now? By doing this Kujendra Lal is, on one hand, encouraging the hill people to build resorts in the hills, while on the other hand, legitimizing the actions of the Bengali and military forces".

In this way, some powerful Adivasi individuals also became part of the tourism expansion in the hills, which was facilitated by the state and the military. This eviction and land grabbing for tourism is clearly an act of aggression against the Adivasi people of the hilly areas.

7.2.3 Shifting from *Jhum* Cultivation and Eagerness to Learn *Bengali*: Adivasi Traditions and Cultures in Decline

The Adivasi people of Sajek, a hilly region in Bangladesh, have long engaged in their traditional professions, primarily Jhum cultivation. However, with the rise of tourism in recent years, the local economy has undergone significant changes, and many of the Adivasi have had to abandon their old professions to adapt to the new reality. As more and more tourists began to flock to the area, the demand for accommodation, transportation, and other services skyrocketed. Many local residents saw this as an opportunity to capitalize on the influx of tourists and started setting up food carts, tea stalls, and souvenir shops. This shift in the local economy has led to a rapid transformation of the area's social and economic landscape. One Lusai interlocutor (Jhum cultivator) said,

> "Jhum farming was a part of our culture. But it is disappearing day by day. Earlier, Jhum farming was practiced by all of the Lusai communities in Sajek. They raised Jhum as a means of subsistence. However, they are now avoiding Jhum due to the onset of tourists. They are involving now in a variety of tourism-related activities. The locals here now make more money working in the tourism industry than they did cultivating Jhum. The biggest problem with this change is that our next

generation will gradually forget what 'Jhum' farming is. Due to the expansion of tourism in this area, they may lose touch with our traditions."

The change in profession has also brought about changes in the cultural practices of the Adivasi people. As they become more reliant on the tourism industry, they have started to modify their traditional practices to cater to the needs of tourists. For example, traditional food and dress have been modified to suit tourists' tastes and aesthetics. Additionally, a trend of Adivasi people learning the Bengali language has emerged due to tourism. These communities have their own unique languages, and Bengali is not native to them. A university student, one of the interlocutors, noted:

"Previously, only a small portion of the Adivasi people in Sajek spoke and understood Bengali. Generally, Bengali was learned by those who interacted with or worked with Bengalis. But with the rise of tourism, learning Bengali has become more frequent and necessary. Locals now feel compelled to learn Bengali to support themselves through business opportunities".

The discussion in this chapter clearly shows that the Army developed Sajek as a tourist spot, exercising full control. Local Adivasis do not participate in the decision-making process. Meanwhile, the majority of Adivasi people in Sajek face and negotiate daily challenges, such as eviction, loss of privacy, changes in their professions, and threats to their language due to the establishment of the tourist spot.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Tourism is not just about leisure, pleasure travel, or being the foundation of a country's economy and a source of employment. It also generates various socio-economic dynamics, including mobility, development activities, power struggles, and environmental risks. The use of state power through tourism can serve as a contemporary example of establishing authority over Adivasi peoples, as seen in the expansion of tourism in the highlands of Bangladesh. However, the development of tourism in hilly regions raises some important issues: What was the context in which tourism developed in this region? Does it have any connection to the past? What roles did different stakeholders (the state, Adivasi groups, the army) play in the development of tourism? Is tourism truly a means of development for everyone, or not? Tourism does not hold the same meaning for everyone—what kind of socio-cultural changes has tourism in the hills brought to Adivasi communities?

This study answered these questions using a qualitative approach. Although the expansion of tourism in the highlands became more pronounced after 1997, contemporary tourism can be understood in connection with the region's broader history. The growth of tourism in the area is not only tied to the national economy but also represents a new strategy to maintain control over the region's inhabitants. Historically, from the British colonial period to the establishment of Bangladesh, the Adivasi people of the hilly areas have been exploited and oppressed by the state for their language, appearance, and identity, despite being part of a state-administered region primarily inhabited by people from the plains. As a result, in the 1980s, the state initiated a 'Bengali' settlement project, with direct involvement from the army, which created conflict between the Adivasi population and Bengali settlers. Finally, in 1997, a 'Peace Accord' was signed between the government of Bangladesh and representatives of the Adivasi groups in an effort to resolve the issues in the hill region.

A significant difference is observed in tourism before and after the 1997 peace agreement in the hill regions. Political unrest, including armed conflict, was a major obstacle to the development of tourism at the time. After the peace agreement, the doors of tourism opened in this area. Simultaneously, various domestic and international organizations began working to improve the livelihood, health, and education of the local Adivasi communities. These efforts continue in collaboration with local NGOs, often led by influential local politicians. Consequently, since 1997, the scope of work for various development organizations has expanded in the hill regions, along with the growth of tourism. However, the expansion

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of tourism has also brought socio-cultural challenges to the local Adivasi communities, such as those in Sajek, including compromised privacy, displacement, changes in traditional professions, and alterations to their daily routines.

The situation in the hills and the state's intentions cannot be fully understood without considering the historical process and the state's politics regarding hill areas. After 1997, the government's project to promote the 'Bengali' population in the hills was not directly implemented due to the 'Peace Accord'. However, the expansion of tourism in the region, though new, proved equally effective. In this expansion, the army, with full state support, has been transformed into the 'God' of hill tourism. Due to the establishment of tourist spots, such as Sajek, in various parts of the hill tracts, thousands of Bengali tourists visit these areas daily, and many Bengali people involved in the tourism industry stay there. As a result, it appears that the previous state-led migration project continues through the current tourism-driven 'short-term mobility' and 'seasonal migration', with the primary objective of increasing the Bengali population in the hills, which altogether serves the purpose of demographic engineering. However, this initiative disproportionately benefits a specific elite Adivasi class, while the opinions of the local Adivasi people are largely ignored.

In the context of Bangladesh, hill tourism can be interpreted as a form of 'internal colonialism'. Pinderhughes (2011), quoting Blauner, notes that there is no fundamental difference between colonialism and internal colonialism. Exploitation occurs in both processes, but in colonialism, the exploiter is external, while in internal colonialism, the exploiter is the internal state. In the earlier part of this study, it was shown that the hill regions and the Adivasi communities living there have faced exploitation and neglect by rulers in post-independence Bangladesh, as well as by the rulers of the British and Pakistan periods. In the post-independence period, the state and army implemented in-migration schemes to increase the Bengali population in the hills, aiming to establish control over the Adivasi communities (Adnan, 2007). After 1997, tourism in the hill also played a significant role in fulfilling nearly identical objectives for the state and army. However, local Adivasi remain excluded from the decision-making process regarding the establishment of tourism spots. As a result, the state and the army have evicted several villages and many local Adivasis to develop tourist spots in these regions. Consequently, many local Adivasis have been uprooted and forced to leave their ancestral lands. In some cases, those who still live near tourist spots remain at risk of eviction. In addition to leaving their homes, many Adivasis have had to adjust or abandon traditional social and cultural practices, such as Adivasi women's clothing, for tourism, and

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in some cases, have even had to give up practices like Jhum farming. As a result, they are experiencing both physical and cultural displacement.

These tourist areas are gradually expanding into business hubs where many Bengalis, some wealthy Adivasi individuals from outside the hilly areas, and the army are involved. Hotels, resorts, and transport businesses in the hills are primarily owned by outsiders or the local elite, while most local Adivasi people primarily work as laborers, as seen in Sajek. Consequently, the state, the army, Bengali people, and some wealthy Adivasis economically benefit from tourism in the region, while most local Adivasis are deprived of economic progress. Oakes (1995) also refers to this type of state-controlled tourism as 'internal colonialism' in his work.

On the other hand, Michaud (1995), in his work on the hill areas of India and Thailand, terms the state's efforts to establish authority through tourism development, outsider settlement, and military presence as 'internal colonialism', a phenomenon also observed in the hilly regions of Bangladesh. The army has established permanent camps next to each tourist spot and temporary camps at various locations to ensure the safety of tourists visiting these areas. Additionally, Army escorts are provided from Baghaichari to Sajek for tourists traveling to Sajek. In effect, the army has created a security zone in the hill areas with a focus on tourism. It is also aiming to establish control over these regions and the Adivasi populations by setting up camps throughout the area. Since the establishment of Bangladesh, and especially after 1975, the hill regions have been under army dominance (Chakma, 2010; Rahman, 2011). The forces deployed in the hills were entirely Bengali, and the army consistently sides with the Bengalis in Adivasi-Bengali conflicts (Partha, 2016). Although the peace agreement mandates the removal of army camps from this region, the state and the army are legitimizing the presence of these permanent and temporary camps through tourism. Thus, tourism has become a 'new' way for the Army to showcase its control. This economic, cultural, and army exploitation is being carried out with the direct support of the state against the Adivasi of the hilly areas, where 'tourism' has now become a major tool. This process of tourism in Bangladesh thus serves as a policy of 'internal colonization' aimed at controlling Adivasi groups.

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Appendix A: Interview Guideline

Tourism, Development, and Migration: Resemblance of Internal Colonization in Bangladesh

KII guideline for Social Researchers/ Development practitioners

Theme	Main question	Probe question
Background information	How and why is your academic background related to tourism, peace accords, and development in the Chittagong hill tracts of Bangladesh?	- Personal identification - Professional engagement - Academic works - Development works
History of tourism in hill areas	How has hill tract tourism changed over the decade and what is the current situation of tourism in hill areas of Bangladesh?	- Why did the state focus specifically on expanding tourism in the hilly areas after 1997? - What aspects of the 1997 'peace accord' provoked this attitude from the state? - What changes occurred in Bangladesh's tourism policy after 1997? - Do you find any similarities between the state's 'cluster village' policy and the current tourism boom? If yes, what are they and why do you think that is the case?
Tourism policy	Could you please tell me about the tourism policy of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh?	- What changes occurred in Bangladesh's tourism policy after 1997? - Why did the state focus specifically on expanding tourism in the hilly areas after 1997? Or where there other areas they also initially tried to support? If that didn't work out, do you know why? Is it due to local dynamics or other level interventions? - What aspects of the 1997 'peace accord' provoked this attitude from the state? - Despite the Land Act of 1900, which stipulates no

		land ownership for Bengalis in the hilly areas, how are resorts and hotels being established under Bengali ownership?
Tourism and 'Development'	How do you see the 'developmentalist' narrative of the state in relation to the development of tourist spots in the hill regions?	- Do you think the state uses tourism as a development agent in hill areas? If yes, how? - What are the gaps between the tourism-centric development narrative and actual development practice?
Socioeconomic and Sociocultural impacts	How would you explain the socio-economic and sociocultural impacts of tourism in the hilly regions of Bangladesh?	- Who is benefiting from tourism, and who is losing? - How are local ethnic groups being impacted by the development of tourist spots, particularly in terms of eviction from their homes? - How has this new tourism trend marginalized the culture and voice of ethnic people? - Despite the Land Act of 1900, which stipulates no land ownership for Bengalis in the hilly areas, what are the legal and political grounds for Bengali ownership of resorts and hotels? Why do you think the state facilitated this process? - Do you think we can say that tourism used as a 'soft' power to control ethnic people in hill areas? Does this resemble any other state policy on minorities in your view or is it considerably different? Either way why so?

Tourism, Development, and Migration: Resemblance of Internal Colonization in Bangladesh

KII guideline for Policymakers / Local government officials

Theme	Main question	Probe question
Background information	Could you please tell me about yourself?	- Personal identification - Professional engagement
Tourism policy	Could you please tell me about the tourism policy of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh?	- What changes occurred in Bangladesh's tourism policy after 1997? - Why did the state focus specifically on expanding tourism in the hilly areas after 1997? Or where there other areas they also initially tried to support? If that didn't work out, do you know why? Is it due to local dynamics or other level interventions? - What aspects of the 1997 'peace accord' provoked this attitude from the state? - Despite the Land Act of 1900, which stipulates no land ownership for Bengalis in the hilly areas, how are resorts and hotels being established under Bengali ownership?
Socioeconomic and Sociocultural impacts	How would you explain the socio-economic and sociocultural impacts of tourism in the hilly regions of Bangladesh?	- Who is benefiting from tourism, and who is losing? - How are local ethnic groups being impacted by the development of tourist spots?

Tourism, Development, and Migration: Resemblance of Internal Colonization in Bangladesh

IDI guideline for Resort owners

Theme	Main question	Probe question
Background information	Could you please tell me about yourself?	- Personal identification - Professional engagement
Tourism in hill areas	Despite the Land Act of 1900, which stipulates no land ownership for Bengalis in the hilly areas, how are resorts and hotels being established under Bengali ownership?	- How did you build your resort/hotel? - How or through whom did you acquire or lease the land? - Did you face any difficulties in developing the resort/hotel here? - Who needs to grant permission to build a resort/hotel here (Bangladesh Government or Army)? - Did you face any obstacles from the local residents while building this resort/hotel? - Did you receive any support or positive feedback from the locals?
Socioeconomic and Sociocultural impacts	How would you explain the socioeconomic and sociocultural impacts of tourism in the hilly regions of Bangladesh?	- Who is benefiting from tourism? - Who is losing from tourism? - How are local ethnic groups being impacted by the development of tourist spots?

Tourism, Development, and Migration: Resemblance of Internal Colonization in Bangladesh

IDI guideline for Tourist (who already visited Sajek)

Theme	Main question	Probe question
Background information	Could you please tell me about yourself?	- Personal identification - Professional engagement - How often have you visited? - Do you know the history of tourism in this region? - Do you know anything about ethnic groups? If you know, could please tell me about this?
Tourism in hill areas	In terms of tourism development, how do you perceive the area and its people as a tourist?	- In your view Who is benefiting from tourism, and who is losing? - How are local ethnic groups being impacted by the development of tourist spots, particularly in terms of eviction from their homes? - How has this new tourism trend marginalized the culture and voice of ethnic people? - Do you believe that the actions taken by Bangladesh's government and the military regarding tourism in the hilly areas are appropriate?

Tourism, Development, and Migration: Resemblance of Internal Colonization in Bangladesh

Oral history guideline for Ethnic community members

Theme	Main question	Probe question
Background information	Could you please tell me about yourself?	- Personal identification - Where are your ancestors from? - How did they come to the region? - What is your occupation?
History of tourism in hill areas	How has hill tract tourism changed over the decade and what is the current situation of tourism in hill areas of Bangladesh?	- What was the condition of hill tourism before 1997? - Since when and how has Sajek developed as a tourist area? - What has been the role of the army in developing Sajek as a tourist area? - What has been the role of the local ethnic community in making Sajek a tourist area? - Despite the Land Act of 1900, which stipulates no land ownership for Bengalis in the hilly areas, how are resorts and hotels being established under Bengali ownership?
Socioeconomic and Sociocultural impacts	How would you explain the socio-economic and sociocultural impacts of tourism in the Sajak?	- Who is benefiting from tourism, and who is losing? - In your view, how has the current tourism affect your and other ethnic communities' everyday life? - How are local ethnic groups being impacted by the development of tourist spots, particularly in terms of eviction from their homes? - Do you think we can say that tourism used as a 'soft' power to control ethnic people in hill areas? What was the response of ethnic

			communities to the establishment of tourist spots, and how do they negotiate with various actors such as local settlers, Bengali business owners, and the military operating in these areas?

Appendix B: Interlocutors List

Category	Informants	Gender	Ethnicity	Profession	Mode of Interviews
Social researchers/ Development practitioners	Informant-1	M	Tripura	Researcher	Phone
	Informant-2	F	Bangali	University Teacher	In-person
	Informant-3	M	Bangali	University Teacher	In-person
	Informant-4	M	Chakma	NGO owner	In-person
	Informant-5	M	Bangali	Teaching/ Researcher	Zoom
Policymakers/ Local government officials	Informant-1	M	Bangali	Retired army officer	Phone
	Informant-2	M	Bangali	Local government of officials	Phone
	Informant-3	M	Chakma	Cultural officer	In-person
	Informant-4	M	Bangali	Tourism bord member	In-person
Resort owners/Employees/Manager	Informant-1	F	Bangali	Owner	In-person
	Informant-2	M	Bangali	Owner	In-person
	Informant-3	M	Tripura	Manager	In-person
Tourists	Informant-1	M	Bangali	Businessman	In-person
	Informant-2	F	Bangali	Housewife	In-person
Ethnic community members	Informant-1	M	Chakma	Lawyer	Phone
	Informant-2	M	Marma	School teacher	Phone
	Informant-3	F	Mro	Student	Phone
	Informant-4	M	Marma	Shopkeeper	In-person
	Informant-5	M	Bangali	Businessman	In-person
	Informant-6	M	Tripura	Driver	In-person
	Informant-7	M	Lusai	Cultivator (*Jhum*)	In-person
	Informant-8	M	Lusai	Student	In-person
	Informant-9	F	Lusai	School teacher	In-person

* I committed to my interlocutors that I would not use their names in my research.

Appendix C: The Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, 1997

TRANSLATED ENGLISH VERSION OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS CONSTITUTED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PARBATYA CHATTAGRAM JANA SAMHATI SAMITI

Reposing full and unswerving allegiance in the State-sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bangladesh regarding its hill tracts region within the ambit of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts on behalf of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti on behalf of the inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tracts region have reached the following Agreement, comprised of four Parts (A, B, C, D), with a view to upholding the political, social, cultural, educational and economic rights of all the citizens of the Chittagong Hill Tracts region and expediting their socio-economic development process and preserving and developing the respective rights of all the citizens of Bangladesh:-

(A) GENERAL:

1. Both the parties, having considered the Chittagong Hill Tracts region as a tribe-inhabited region, recognized the need of preserving the characteristics of this region and attaining the overall development thereof.

2. Both the parties have agreed to make alter, amend and add to, in consonance with the consensus and responsibilities expressed in the different section of this Agreement, the relevant laws, regulations and practices according to law as early as possible.

3. In order to monitor the process of implementation of this Agreement, an Implementation Committee will be formed with the following members:

a) A member to be nominated by the Prime Minister: Convenor

b)The Chairman of the Task Force formed with the Purview of this agreement: Member

c) The President of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti: Member

4. The Agreement shall come into force from the date of its signing and execution by both the parties. This Agreement shall remain valid from the date of its effect until all the steps are executed as per this Agreement.

(B) HILL DISTRICT LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL/HILL DISTRICT COUNCIL:

Both the parties have agreed to alter, amend, add to and repeal the Parbatya Zilla Sthanio Sarkar Parishad Ayin, 1989 (Rangamati Parbatya Zilla Sthanio Sarkar Parishad Ayin, 1989, Bandarban Parbatya Zilla Sthanio Sarkar Parishad Ayin, 1989 and Khagrachari Parbatya Zilla Sthanio Sarkar Parishad Ayin, 1989) and its various sections, as may be in force till the date of commencement of this Agreement, in the manner set forth here under:

1. The word "Tribe" used in the various sections of the Council Act shall remain in tact.

2. The name of "Parbatya Zilla Sthanio Sarkar Parishad" shall be amended and this Council shall be re-named as "Parbatya Zilla Parishad".

3. "Non-tribal Permanent Resident" shall mean a person who is not a tribal and who has lands of lawful entitlement in the hill districts and who generally lives in the hill districts at a specific address.

4. a) There shall be 3 (three) seats for women in every Hill District Council. One third (1/3) third (1/3) of these seats shall be for the non-tribals.

b) Sub-section 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 4 shall remain in force as per the original Act.

c) The words "Deputy Commissioner" and "Deputy Commissioner's" appearing in the second line of sub-section (5) of section 4 shall be substituted by the words "Circle Chief" and "Circle Chief's" respectively.

d) The following sub-section shall be added to section 4: "Whether a person is a non-tribal or not and, if so, which community he is a member of, shall be determined, subject to his producing a certificate from the concerned Mouza Headman/Union Council Chairman/Municipality Chairman, by the concerned Circle Chief and without a certificate in this connection being received from the Circle Chief, no person shall be eligible as a non-tribal to be candidate for the post of a non-tribal member".

5. It is provided in Section 7 that a person elected to the post of Chairman or Member shall, before assumption of office, swear or affirm oath before the Commissioner, Chittagong Division. This shall be amended by provisions to the effect that the Members shall swear or affirm oath before "a Judge of the High Court Division" instead of the "Commissioner, Chittagong Division".

6. The words "to the Commissioner, Chittagong Division" appearing in the fourth line of section 8 shall be substituted by the words "as per election rules".

7. The words "three years" in the second line of Section 10 shall be substituted by the words "five years".

8. It shall be provided in Section 14 that in the event of the post of Chairman falling vacant for any cause or of his absence, a tribal member elected by other members of the Council shall preside over and discharge other responsibilities.

9. The existing Section 17 shall be substituted by the following sentences: "A person shall be entitled to be considered as legally eligible for enlistment in the Voters' List if he is (1) a citizen of Bangladesh, (2) not below 18 years of age, (3) not declared by any competent court to be of unsoundly mind, (4) a permanent resident of the hill district.

10. The words "delimitation of constituencies" appearing in sub-section 2 of Section 20 shall be distinctly incorporated.

11. There shall be a provision in sub-section 2 of Section 25 to the effect that the Chairman and in his absence, a tribal Member elected by the other Members shall preside over all the meetings of the Council.

12. Since the entire area of Khagrachari district is not encompassed by the Mong Circle. the words "Khagrachari Mong Chief" appearing in Section 26 of the Act regarding Khagrachari Hill District Council shall be substituted by the words "Mong Circle Chief and Chakma Circle Chief". Similarly, there shall be made a scope for the attendance of the Bohmang Chief in the meetings of Rangamati Hill District Council. In the same manner there shall be provision that the Bohmang Circle Chief, at his will or on being invited, shall be entitled to attend the meetings of Bandarban Hill District Council.

13. It shall be provided in sub-section (1) and (2) of Section 31 that a Chief Executive Officer of the rank of a Deputy Secretary to the government shall be the Secretary of the Council and the tribal officers shall be given preference for appointment to this post.

14. a) There shall be provision in sub-section (1) of Section 32 that the Council shall be competent, subject to approval by the government, to create posts of officers and employees of different categories for the purpose of smooth completion of the works of the Council.

b) Sub-section (2) of the Section 32 shall be formulated in the following manner "The Council shall, as per Regulations, have competence to appoint Class-III and Class-IV employees and to transfer, suspend, dismiss, remove or otherwise punish them.

Provided that it shall be the condition attached to such appointments that the tribal residents of the district concerned shall have right of preference".

c) It shall be provided in sub-section (3) of Section 32 that the Government shall, as per Regulations, have the authority to appoint officers in consultation with the Council and to transfer elsewhere, suspend, dismiss, remove or otherwise punish them.

15. The Words as per Rules shall be inserted in sub-section (3) of Section 33.

16. The words "or in any other way determined by the Government" appearing in the third line of sub-section (1) of Section 36 shall be deleted.

17. a) The provision starting with "Fourthly" in sub-section (1) of Section 37 of the original Act shall remain in tact.

b) The pharae "as per as" shall inserted in clause 'D' of sub-section (2) of Section 37.

18. Sub-section (3) of Section 38 shall be deleted and sub-section (4) shall be formulated as follows: "At any time before the expiry of a financial year, a budget may be prepared and approved, if necessary, for that financial year".

19. The following sub-section shall be added to section 42: "(4) The Council shall be competent to prepare, undertake and implement, with the help of money receivable from the Government, development projects in respect of the matters transferred to it and all development programs at national level shall be implemented through the Council by the concerned Ministry/Department/Institution".

20. The word "Government" appearing in the second line of sub-section (2) of Section 45 shall be substituted by the word "Council".

21. Sections 50, 51 and 52 shall be repealed and in their stead the following Section shall be enacted: "In order to ensure harmonization of the activities of the Council advice or instructive orders, if necessary, if the Government be convinced on having received such evidence that any activity done or proposed to be done by or on behalf of the Council is inconsistent with law or contrary to public interest, it shall then have the authority to call for in writing from the Council information and explanation about the matter concerned and give advice or directive in that regard.

22. The words "after the expiry of the period of being defunct" in Sub-section (3) of Section 53, shall be deleted and instead thereof the words "Within 90 days of cancellation of the Council" shall be inserted before the words "this Act".

23. The word "Government" will be replaced by word "Ministry" in the third and fourth lines of Section 61.

24. a) Sub-section (1) of Section 62 shall be amended as follows: "Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, Sub-Inspectors and all members of ranks subordinate thereto of the Hill District Police shall be appointed by the Council as per Regulations and prescribed procedure and the Council shall be competent to transfer them and take punitive action against them in accordance with the procedure prescribed by the Regulations;

Provided that, the tribals of the district shall have preference in case of the said appointment.

b) The words "subject to the provisions of all other laws for the time being in force" as appear in the second line of sub-section (3) of Section 62 shall repealed and substituted by the words "as per law and rules".

25. The words "to render assistance" in the third line of Section 63 shall remain in tact.

26. Section 64 shall be amended and enacted as follows:

a) "Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, no land and premises, including the leasable Khas lands, within the territorial limits of the Hill Districts shall be transferable by Ijara, settlement, purchase or sale except with the prior permission of the Council;

Provided that this provision shall not be applicable in respect of the area of Reserved Forest, Kaptai Hydro-electric Project, Betbunia Satellite Station, State-owned in the industries and factories and the lands recorded in the name of the Government".

b) "Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, No land, hill or forest under the controlled and within the jurisdiction of the Council shall be acquired or transferred by the Government without consultation with or the consent of the Council.

c) The Parishad may supervise and control the works of the Headmen, Chainmen, Amins, Surveyors, Kanungos and Assistant Commissioner (land).

d) The reclaimed fringe lands of Kaptai Lake shall be leased out on priority basis to the original owners.

27. Section 65 shall be amended and formulated as follows: "Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, the responsibility of collecting the Land Development Tax of the district shall rest in the hands of the Council and the collected tax of the district shall be deposited in the fund of the Council."

28. Section 67 shall be amended and formulated as follows: "in the event of necessity for harmonization of the works of the Council and the Governmental authorities, the Government or the Council shall raise proposals on specific subject and the harmonization of the works shall be effected through mutual communications between the Government and Council".

29. Sub-section (1) of Section 68 shall be amended and formulated as follows: "With a view to carrying out the purposes of this Act, the Government may, upon consultation with the Council, make Rules through Notification in the Government official Gazette and the Council shall have a rights to apply to the Government for review of the said Rules even after they are already made".

30. a) The words "with prior approval of the Government" in the first and second lines of Sub-section (1) of Section 69 shall be repealed and after the words "may make" in the third line the following proviso shall be added:
"Provided that if the Government does not agree with any part of the Regulations made, it shall be competent to give advice or directive to the Council towards amendments of the said regulations".

b) The words "conferment of the powers of the Chairman on any officer of the Council" in clause (h) of sub-section (2) of Section 69 shall be deleted.

31. Section 70 shall be deleted.

32. Section 79 shall be amended and formulated as follows:
"If, in the opinion of the council, any law made by the National Parliament or any other authority as applicable to the hill district is one which creates hardship for the said district or is objectionable for the tribals, the Council may, upon stating the cause of hardship or abjection, apply to the Government in writing for amending or relaxating the application of such law and the Government may take remedial measures in accordance with such application".

33. a) The word "discipline" appearing in Item No. 1 under the heading the activities of the Council in the First Schedule shall be substituted by the word "supervision".

b) In Item No. 3 of the Council's activities, the following shall be added: "(1) Vocational education, (2) Primary education through mother tongue, (3) Secondary education".

c) The words "reserved or" appearing in Clause 6(b) of the Council's activities shall be deleted.

34. The following subjects shall be included in the functions and the responsibilities of the Hill District Council:
a) Land and land management;
b) Police (local);
c) Tribal law and social justice;

d) Youth welfare;
e) Environmental protection and development;
f) Local tourism;
g) Improvement Trust and other institutions concerning local administration, other than Municipality and Union Council;
h) Issuing license for local commerce and industries;
i) Proper utilization of rivers and streams, canals and Beels and irrigation system other than water resources of the Kaptai Lake;
j) Maintaining of the statistics of birth and deaths;
k) Wholesale business;
l) Jum cultivation.

35. The following items shall be added to the subjects for imposition of taxes, rates, tolls and fees by the Council as stated in the Second Schedule:
a) Registration fees of non-mechanical transports;
b) Tax on buying and selling of commodities;
c) Holding tax on lands and buildings;
d) Tax on selling of domestic animals;
e) Fees for community adjudication;
f) Holding tax on Government and Non-government industries;
g) A specified part of the royalty on forest resources;
h) Supplementary Tax on Cinema, Jatra and Circus;
i) Part of the royalty received by the Government against granting Licenses or Pattas for the exploitation of mineral resources;
j) Tax on business;
k) Tax on lottery;
l) Tax on catching Fish.

(C) CHIITAGONG HILL TRACTS REGIONAL COUNCIL:

1. Subject to amendment and addition of the various sections in the Parbatya Zilla Sthanio Sarkar Parishad Ayin, 1989 (Act IXX, XX and XXI of 1989) for purpose of making the Hill District Council more powerful and effective, a Regional Council will be formed comprising the Local Government Councils of three Hill Districts.
2. The elected Members of the Hill District Councils shall, by indirect mode, elect the Chairman of this Council whose status shall be equivalent to that of a State Minister and who shall be a tribal.
3. The Council shall consist of 22 (twenty-two) Members including the Chairman. Two third of the Members shall be elected from amongst the tribals. The Council shall determine the modality of its functioning.
The constitution of the Council shall be as follows:
Chairman ————————— 1 person
Member ————————- 12 persons
Member (tribal female) ———— 2 persons
Member ————————- 6 persons
Member (non-tribal female) —— 1 person

Of the male tribal Members, 5 shall be elected from the Chakma tribe, 3 from the Marma tribe, 2 from Tripura tribe, 1 from the Murung and Tanchangya tribes and 1 person from amongst the Lusai, Bowm, Pankho, Khumi, Chak and Khiang tribes.

Of the male non-tribal Members, 2 persons shall be elected from each district.

Of the female tribal Members, 1 person shall be elected from the Chakma tribe and another from the rest of the tribes.

4. There shall be reserved 3 (three) seats for the women in the Council and one third (1/3) thereof shall be for the non-tribals.

5. The Members of the Council shall, by indirect mode, be elected by the elected Members of the three Hill District Councils. The Chairman of the three hill districts shall be ex-officio Members of the Council and they shall have right to vote. The qualification and disqualification of candidature for membership of the Council shall be similar to those of the Members of the Hill District Councils.

6. The tenure of office of the Council shall be 5 (five) years. The procedure and other matters regarding the preparation and approval of the budget of the Council, dissolution of the Council, framing of the Rules of the Council, appointment and control of the officers and employees, etc. shall be similar to the procedure and other matters as are applicable to the Hill District Councils.

7. There shall be the Council, a Chief Executive Officer of the rank equivalent to that of a Joint Secretary to the Government and the tribal candidate shall be given preference for appointment to this post.

8. a) If the post of Chairman of the Council falls vacant, one person from amongst the other tribal members shall be, by indirect mode, elected Chairman for the interim period by the Members of the three Hill District Councils.

b) If the post of a Member of the Council falls vacant for any reason, it shall be filled up by by-election.

9. a) The Council shall coordinate all the development activities carried out by the three Hill District Councils, and shall also superintend and harmonize all the affairs of and assigned to the three Hill District Councils. Besides, in the event of lack of harmony or any inconsistency being found in the discharge of responsibilities given to the three Hill District Councils, the decision of the Regional Council shall final.

b) This Council shall coordinate and supervise the Local Council, including the municipalities.

c) The Regional Council shall coordinate and supervise the three hill districts in matters of general administration, law and order and development.

d) The Council shall coordinate the activities of the NGOs in addition to disaster management and carrying out the relief programs.

e) Tribal law and community adjudication shall be within the jurisdiction of the Regional Council.

f) The Council shall be competent to grant License for heavy industries.

10. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board shall discharge the assigned duties under the general and overall supervision of the Council. The Government shall give preference to the eligible tribal candidates in appointing the Chairman of the Development Board.

11. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation of 1900 and other related Acts, Rules and Ordinances being found inconsistent with the Local Government Council Acts of 1989, it shall be removed by law as per advice and recommendations of the Regional Council.

12. Until the formation of the Regional Council through direct and indirect election, the Government shall be competent to constitute an interim Regional Council and to empower it to discharge the responsibilities of assignable to the Council.

13. In making any law in connection with Chittagong Hill Tracts, the Government shall enact such law in consultation with and as per advice of the Regional Council. If it becomes necessary to amend any law which bears an adverse effect on the development of the three hill districts

and welfare of the tribal people or to enact new law, the Council shall be competent to apply or submit recommendations to the Government.

14. The sources of the Council Fund shall be as follows:

a) Money received from the District Council Fund;

b) Money or profits received from all the properties vested in or managed by the Council;

c) Loans and grants from the Government and other authorities;

d) Grants given by any institution or person;

e) Profits earned from the investments of the Council Fund;

f) Any money received by the Council;

g) Money received from other sources provided to the Council as per direction of the Government.

(D) REHABILITATION, GENERAL AMNESTY AND OTHER MATTERS:

In order to restore normalcy in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region and, to that end, in respect of the works and matters of rehabilitation, general amnesty and allied issues, both the parties have been arrived at the following consensus and agreed to undertake programs as follows:

1. With a view to bringing the tribal refugees staying in the Tripura State of India back to the country, an agreement was signed on the 9th day of March,'97 at Agartala of Tripura State between the Government and the Leaders of tribal refugees. In pursuance of that Agreement, the tribal refugees started coming back to the country since 28th day of March,'97. This process shall remain un-hindered and to that end all possible cooperation shall be given from the end of the Jana Samhati Samiti. After ascertaining the identity of the Internally Displaced Persons of the three hill districts, rehabilitation measures shall be undertaken through a Task Force.

2. After the signing the Agreement between the Government and the Jana Samhati Samiti and implementation thereof and rehabilitation of the tribal refugees and internally displaced tribals, the Government shall, as soon as possible, commence, in consultation with the Regional Council to the constituted under this Agreement, the Land Survey in Chittagong Hill Tracts and finally determine the land-ownership of the tribal people through settling the land-disputes on proper verification and shall record theirs land and ensure their rights thereto.

3. In order to ensure the land-ownership of tribal families having no land or lands below 2 (two) acres, the Government shall, subject to availability of land in the locality, ensure settling 2 (two) acres of land per family. In the event of non-availability of required land, grove-lands shall be tapped.

4. A Commission (Land Commission) shall be constituted under the leadership of a retired Justice for settlement of disputes regarding lands and premises. This Commission shall, in addition to early disposal of land disputes of the rehabilitated refugees, have full authority to annul the rights of ownership of those hills and lands which have been illegally settled and in respect of which illegal dispossession has taken place. No appeal shall be maintainable against the judgement of this Commission and the decision of this Commission shall be deemed to be final. This provision shall be applicable in case of Fringe-lands.

5. This Commission shall be constituted with the following Members:

a) Retired Justice;

b) Circle Chief (concerned)

c) Chairman/Representative of the Regional Council;

d) Divisional Commissioner/Additional Commissioner;

e) Chairman of the District Council (concerned).

6. a) The tenure of office of the Commission shall be three years. But its tenure shall be extendible in consultation with the Regional Council.

b) The Commission shall resolve the disputes in consonance with the law, custom and practice in force in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

7. The loans which were taken by the tribal refugees from Government agencies, but could not be properly utilized on account of the state of belligerency, shall be remitted along with interest.

8. Land allocation for rubber and other plantation: Out of the lands allotted to non-tribal and non-local persons for rubber and other plantations, the lease (allocation) in respect of the lands of those who did not undertake any project during the last ten years or did not properly utilize the lands shall be cancelled.

9. The Government shall allocate additional finance on priority basis for the implementation of increased number of projects towards developments in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Government shall implement new Project on priority basis for the construction of required infrastructure for the development of the region and shall allocate necessary finance to this end. Keeping in view the environment of this region, the Government shall encourage the development of tourism facilities for the tourists, indigenous and foreign.

10. Quota reservation and stipend grant: The Government shall maintain the quota system for the tribals in respect of government service and in institutions for higher studies until their attainment of parity with other regions of the country. To the aforesaid end, the Government shall grant increased number of stipends for the tribal male and female students in the educational institutions. The Government shall provide necessary scholarships for higher education and research in foreign countries.

11. The Government and the Elected Representatives shall strive to uphold the characteristics of tribal creed and culture. The Government shall patronize and help the cultural activities of the tribes towards their efflorescence at national level.

12. The Jana Samhati Samiti shall, within 45 (forty five) days of the signing of this Agreement, submit lists of all its members to the Government including the armed ones, and the particulars of arms and ammunitions in its possession and within its control.

13. The Government and the Jana Samhati Samiti shall, within 45 (forty-five) days of the signing of this Agreement, jointly determine the date, time and place for deposit of arms. After the determination of the date and place for deposit of arms and ammunitions of the listed members of Jana Samhati Samiti, all sorts of security shall be provided for the return of the members of Jana Samhati Samiti as per list also of their family members to normal life.

14. The Government shall declare amnesty for those members who will deposit arms and ammunitions on the scheduled date. The Government shall withdraw all those cases which were lodged against them.

15. In the event of any person's failing to deposit arms within the specified time limit, the Government shall take legal action against such a person.

16. A general amnesty shall be given to all the members of the Jana Samhati Samiti after their return to normal life and a general amnesty shall also be given to all the permanent inhabitants connected with the activities of the Jana Samhati Samiti.

a) For the purpose of rehabilitating the returning members of the Jana Samhati Samiti, Taka 50,000/00 per family shall be given at a time.

b) After deposit of arms and return to normal life of all such members, including the armed ones, of the Jana Samhati Samiti against whom cases were filed, warrants of arrest were issued, 'hulias' were published or sentence was given on trial in absentia, as against them all cases shall be withdrawn, warrants of arrest and 'hulias' shall be called back and sentence given in absentia shall be remitted as early as possible. If any member of the Jana Samhati Samiti is in Jail, he too shall be set at liberty.

c) Similarly, after deposit of arms and return to normal life, no case shall be filed against or punishment be given to or arrest be made of any person merely on account of his/her being a member of the Jana Samhati Samiti.

d) The loans which were taken by such members of the Jana Samhati Samiti from Government Banks and Establishments, who could not have utilized such loan properly on account of the state of belligerency, shall be remitted with interest.

e) Those of the returned members of the Jana Samhati Samiti, who were previously in the service of the Government or of government organizations shall be reinstated to their respective posts and the members of the Jana Samhati Samiti and members of their families shall be given employment in accordance with their qualification. In this respect, government policy regarding relaxation of age-bar for them shall be followed.

f) Priority shall be given to the members of the Jana Samhati Samiti in giving bank loans on simple terms with a view to helping their self-employment generating activities such as cottage industries, horticulture, etc.

g) Education facilities shall be provided to the children of the members of the Jana Samhati Samiti and their certificates obtained from foreign Boards academic Institutions shall be treated as valid.

17. a) After the signing and execution of the Agreement between the Government and the Jana Samhati Samiti and immediately after return of the members of Jana Samhati Samiti to normal life, all the temporary camps of the army, the Ansars and the Village Defence Party (VDP), excepting the Border Security Force (BDR) and permanent army establishment (being those three at the three district headquarters and those at Alikadam, Ruma and Dighinala), shall be taken back by phases from Chittagong Hill Tracts to permanent cantonments and the time-limit shall be fixed for its purpose. In case of deterioration of the law and order situation, in time of normal calamities and for similar other purposes, Army Forces may be deployed under the authority of the civil administration in adherence to Law and Rules as are applicable to all the other parts of the country. In this respect, the Regional Council may, in order to get the required or timely help make requests to the appropriate authority.

f) The lands and premises abandoned by the cantonments, the camps of the military and para-military forces shall be make over to their real owners or to the Hill District Councils.

18. Against all the posts of officers of all ranks and employees of different classes in government, semi-government, local government and autonomous bodies of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, the permanent dwellers of the Chittagong Hill Tracts shall be appointed, subject to priority being given to the tribals. But, in case of non-availability of a qualified person among the permanent dwellers of Chittagong Hill Tracts for any post, appointment may be made to such post on deputation from the Government or for a definite period.

19. A ministry on Chittagong Hill Tracts shall be established on appointing a Minister from among the tribals. The following Advisory Committee shall be constituted to lend support to this Ministry:

1) The Minister on Chittagong Hill Tracts;

2) The Chairman/Representative, Regional Council;

3) The Chairman/Representative, Rangamati Hill District Council;

4) The Chairman/Representative, Khagrachari Hill District Council;

5) The Chairman/Representative, Bandarban Hill District Council;

6) The Member of the Parliament, Rangamati;

7) The Member of the Parliament, Khagrachari;

8) The Member of the Parliament, Bandarban;

9) The Chakma Raja

10) The Bohmong Raja

11) The Mong Raja

12) Three non-tribal Members nominated by the Government from amongst the permanent residents of the three hill districts.

This Agreement is prepared in the aforesaid manner in Bengali language and executed and signed in Dhaka on Agrahayan 18, 1404 corresponding to December 2, 1997.

On Behalf of the Government of the

People's Republic of Bangladesh

Sd/Illegible

(Abul Hasanat Abdullah)

National Committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts,

Government of Bangladesh

On Behalf of the inhabitants of Chittagong Hill Tracts

Sd/Illegible

(Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma)

President,

Parbatya Chattgram Jana Samhati Samiti

Appendix D: National Tourism Policy-2010

National Tourism Policy

Ministry Civil Aviation and Tourism
People's Republic of Bangladesh
2010

Chapter 1

1   Importance of Developing Tourism Industry

1.1   Background

Tourism is a multi-dimensional industry. This industry is the unique mode of anthropological connectivity, friendship and global fraternity. Mankind from time immemorial has travelled from place to place owing to its innate habit. Though civilized people have been dwelling within various political states, travelling has become a part of human life. With unprecedented development of technology in the last century, emergence of numerous independent states, economic development, and infra-structure, quick and easy expansion of transport and the urge to see different civilizations, culture and heritages tourism has extensively expanded world-wide. And it has become the fastest expanding commercial activity in the world. During the last half a century it has emerged as a powerful force having impact on political, social and economic arena and number of tourists has increased significantly. In today's world tourism is one of the most important and attractive products for almost all the countries. For many countries tourism is the number one product to earn foreign currency. Diversified tourism and hospitality industry has been playing the most important role to generate employment and increase revenue. In such a populous country like ours tourism can open the door of immense potentiality.

At the outset of twentieth century, tourism got the global attention. United Nations (UN) first used the term 'Tourism' in 1939. Later in 1975 under the auspices of UNO, the international body formed UNWTO. Bangladesh happens to be the founder member of this organization. Considering the importance of this industry in developing economy, human and international relationship many international, regional and multinational organizations are contributing to develop and flourish tourism industry in many different countries through various economic and technical assistances.

1.2   Tourism Industry of Bangladesh

Bangladesh one of the largest deltas of the world is a country of immense tourism potentiality. World's longest unbroken sandy sea beach at Cox's Bazar, mesmerizing sea beach at Kuakata, World's single largest mangrove forest – the Sundarbans, mighty rivers like the Padma, the Meghna, the Jamuna and their tributaries, forests, hills, lakes, tea gardens in Sylhet region with panoramic scenic beauty, Haor-Baor (wet land and water bodies) of Mymensingh and Sunamganj districts stretching towards the horizon are some of the tourist attractions. The wild life including the Royal Bengal Tiger, rich bio-diversity with rare animals, sites of religious importance, famous archaeological sites at Paharpur in Naogaon district, Mahasthangarh at Bogra district, Mainamati at Comilla district, the indigenous groups with their colourful and

attractive life-style, their culture and heritage, traditional folk art, festivals, culture, rural society with its age-old custom, traditional local cuisine etc. could be attractive tourist products of Bangladesh. With the help of proper planning and strategy and by undertaking an integrated work plan all these tourist attractions can be made popular to the international tourist community. Thereby tourism and hospitality industry can contribute to economic development by generating employment and be number one foreign currency earning sector.

1.3 Relevance of National Tourism Development Policy

Tourism of Bangladesh is still in the take-off stage. Despite having huge potentials Tourism of Bangladesh couldn't achieve its expected goal. With increase of purchasing power parity of the mass population domestic tourism has expanded significantly but number of foreign tourist visiting Bangladesh hasn't increased as expected. In order to get more foreign tourists we need to develop infrastructure and other touristic facilities through local and foreign investment and integrated cooperation between government and private sector is a must. Expansion of tourism is the need of the hour to generate employment and overall development of our economy. If we can develop necessary infrastructure through local and foreign investment Bangladesh can also be a destination of choice to international tourists and earn foreign currency and in a country of huge unemployment like Bangladesh we can create job opportunity for the people.

It is expected that expansion of and competition in tourism industry will multiply in the coming days. Bangladesh must follow an updated, strong, specific and integrated tourism policy to compete in the world market and get its share from global tourism earnings. Tourism can wield a significant impact on national economy in near future, if integrated efforts under an updated tourism policy are taken with proper patronization. Against this backdrop, for a planned and balanced development of tourism the existing National Tourism Policy formulated in 1992 hereby, is revised and updated.

Chapter 2

2. Aim and objective of National Tourism Policy

Main aim and objective of the tourism policy is to establish tourism industry as one of the developing and sustainable sectors through generating employment, socio-economic development by involving local people with local government organizations, maintain ecological balance and protect bio-diversity. Other aims and objectives are as follows:

i)   Include tourism in national development strategy, policy and programmes;

ii)   A well planned development and maintenance of tourism in Bangladesh;

iii)   Prepare an integrated tourism plan to develop tourism; prepare and implement short, mid and long term work plan and strategic paper;

iv)   Prepare national, regional and zonal master plans to develop tourism industry;

v)   Categorize tourist products as per international demand; develop and promote the products in accordance with market demand;

vi)   Identify the tourism attractions, develop and take marketing drive;

vii)   Ensure tourism contribution to poverty alleviation through its development and generate employment;

viii) Ensure significant contribution to national economy from tourism;

ix)   Ensure private sector participation in tourism development while government taking the role of facilitator and develop tourist attractions and the industry as a whole, with joint effort of government and private sector;

x)   Ensure tourist attraction and service standard; enact law and update;

xi)   Prepare proper ground for local and foreign investment; provide ancillary facilities to waive tax and lend money as and when necessary;

xii)   Initiate vigorous campaign to attract foreign tourists;

xiii) Take integrated steps to attract foreign tourists;

xiv)   Take steps for integrated marketing, build image of the country, and embassies abroad should be given specific responsibilities with tourism marketing and promotion;

xv) Ensure coordination among ministries and stakeholders to develop and flourish multi-dimensional tourism in Bangladesh;

xvi) Engage local government agencies to develop, expand and manage tourism;

xvii) Socio-economic development of remote local community by developing niche tourism products including Chittagong Hill Tracts;

xviii) Preserve local culture and heritage, turn those into tourist products and start publicity and marketing activities;

xix) Diversify the tourist attractions including the development of rural, riverine, agricultural, health, sports, alternative and community tourism;

xx) Development and maintenance of tourism products by developing eco-tourism while maintaining ecological balance;

xxi) Develop economy domestic tourism;

xxii) Establish and expand quality training institutes for tourism and hospitality industry and develop skilled human resources;

xxiii) Prepare a master plan for research, make marketing work plan for the development of tourism industry;

xxiv) Ensure easy access to data and information on Bangladesh Tourism in internet and introduction of IT in tourism industry;

xxv) Attract foreign tourists by creating and declaring Exclusive Tourist Zone (ETZ);

xxvi) Ensure overall safety for tourists;

xxvii) Create tourism friendly facilities;

xxviii) Provide financial and institutional support to prepare souvenirs on tourism spots;

xxix) Take integrated regional and sub-regional work plan including SAARC and BIMSTEC countries;

xxx) Increase cooperation with all tourism related international bodies including World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and increase number of assistance from them;

Chapter 3

3. Main Aspects of tourism policy

3.1 A great socio-economic change is possible by proper conservation, development of tourism and developing skilled human resources. Main features of the proposed policy to achieve the desired goal are as follows:

3.1.1 Declare the multi-dimensional tourism and hospitality industry as priority industry and allocate adequate budget for the sector. Include concerned ministry and organizations for a multi-dimensional integrated development programme and include tourism and hospitality industry in various development programmes including Millennium Development Goal (MDG).

3.1.2 Encourage private, foreign and nonresident Bengali investment to develop tourism industry and implement the tourism development projects through public-private partnership programme.

3.1.3 Identify newer tourism attractive spots and turn those into tourist attractions, preserve, standardize and ensure marketing of the products by government, local government wings and private entrepreneurs.

3.1.4 Allocate money in the national budget to preserve and develop the identified historical and archaeological sites. Arrange special allocation of fund in the Annual Development Programme (ADP) of the government for an integrated infrastructural development including improvement of rail, air, river and road transports to tourist spots.

3.1.5 Encourage private entrepreneurs participation alongside government steps to develop infrastructures and other surface structures.

3.1.6 Take integrated effort to present our culture, heritage and festivals attractively as tourism products and create demand in the international market by ensuring active participation of groups, individuals or organizations. Protect and develop life-style and culture of the indigenous and ethnic minority groups to encourage tourism activities. Develop cultural tourism by conserving and publicity of these attractions.

3.1.7 Diversification of tourism attractions and development of adventure tourism, trekking, surfing, hiking, kayaking, sports tourism, religious tourism, educational tourism, health and healing tourism etc.

3.1.8 Develop eco-tourism attractions through coordinating the Ministry of Forest and Environment and other related ministries and organizations. To develop tourism ensure

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government close cooperation at the Sundarbans, coastal islands, Chittagong Hill Tracts and other ECAs.

3.1.9 Popularize Bangladesh tourism in the tourist generating countries through proper marketing and easing their travel formalities.

3.2   Develop the Major Tourist Attractions

3.2.1 **Development of Sea-beach and Natural Tourism**

Develop world's longest unbroken sea-beach, daughter of the sea - Kuakata sea-beach, Teknaf sea-beach, St. Martin's and Sonadia islands etc. as ideal holiday-making destinations, introduce all tourist facilities by developing resorts of international standard including cultural centres, clubs, arranging beach football and volleyball and surfing. For development of tourism and quick and easy communication at beach destinations, construction of Cox's Bazar-Teknaf Marine Drive, development of tourism related air, rail and road communications are most essential.

3.2.2 **Eco-tourism Development in Sundarbans and other spots of the Country:** To develop eco-tourism centering the world's single largest mangrove forest – the Sundarbans various facilities including eco-lodges, watch-towers, rope-ways, walk-ways, night-hikings and other facilities to be created in co-ordination with the Ministry of Environment and Forest. Upon proper identification, all the potential spots inside the Sundarbans need to be brought under the development plan. Apart from the Sundarbans, necessary steps to be taken to develop eco-tourism in other areas of Bangladesh such as- Tamabil in Sylhet, Birisiri, different attractive places on the bank of large rivers –the Padma, the Jamuna and the Meghna, the Chittagong Hill Tracts districts and other ecologically critical areas (ECA). This will have to be done in coordination with the concerned ministries, district administration, local government and the national tourism organization.

3.2.3 **Archaeological and Historical Tourism Development:** Development of archaeological tourism is to be done based on the different historical, archaeological and religious sites. Steps to be taken in co-ordination with Department of Archaeology and Ministry of Cultural Affairs to attract foreign tourists through proper publicity of archaeological attractions of the country. Appropriate measures are needed to preserve and conserve the archaeological relics by Department of Archaeology (DOA).

3.2.4 **Development of Riverine and Rural Tourism:** Bangladesh is one of the largest delta criss-crossed by innumerable rivers. The huge long river-ways of riverine Bangladesh can be recognizable tourist attractions as the reflection of traditional rural life-style of the country. Steps to be taken for attracting both domestic and foreign tourists by installing facilities and setting up tourism centers at the attractive places on river banks.

3.2.5   **Development of Pilgrimage Tourism**: Development of infrastructure and creation of facilities to be made based on different religious shrines and rituals such as - Bishwa Ijtema (the world's second largest muslim congregration), shrines of Sufis and Saint, Ibne-Batuta Trail, King Ashoka Trail, Adinath Temple at Moheshkhali and Chandranath Temple at Sitakunda, Langalbandh, Kantaji Temple in Dinajpur, etc. In this purpose intense contact and liaison have to be done with various international and regional organizations such as United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Islamic Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). In this regard, necessary infrastructure will have to be developed and domestic and foreign Buddhist devotees will need to be encouraged to visit Bangladesh through creation of Buddhist Circuit based on Paharpur, Mahasthangarh, Mainamati, Kuakata and other Buddhist religious sites and Pagodas in Chittagong and Chittagong Hill Tracts districts.

3.2.6   **Development of Cultural Tourism**: Cultural tourism needs to be developed drawing different traditional coulurful days, fairs and festivals and other related activities. Steps to be taken to present to foreign tourists – Ekushey February, 1st Baishakh (Bengali New year Celebration), 1st Falgun, Poush Festival, rural fairs and Nabanno Utshabs ((harvest of paddy) and other cultural activities as well as traditional transports have to be introduced as tourist attractions.

3.2.7   **Development of Domestic Tourism**: At present purchasing power parity and enthusiasm of Bangladeshi people have increased for traveling. Process of attracting foreign tourists embarks on the development of domestic tourism. Therefore, steps have to be taken for infrastructure development including economy-accommodation and measures to be taken for loan grant with concessional rate where necessary to private sector in order to develop economy-accommodation facilities for domestic tourists at main religious and archaeological heritage sites.

3.2.8   **Development of Youth Tourism**: Initiative will be taken for organizing package tours, study tours, etc with economy price to students of schools, colleges and universities for encouraging youth tourism.

3.2.9   **Development of Community Tourism**: Conservation of tourist attractions and safety to tourists have to be ensured with the involvement of local cultural activists of tourism attractions areas. Committees will have to be formed locally and organizing attractive functions; and programmes for amusement of domestic and foreign tourists will be encouraged. With arrangement of 'Community Home-stay Operation' for foreign tourists, employment will be generated for local cultural activists and involvement of local community and local government institutions will have to be integrated in community tourism and its management. Different short-medium-long terms programmes and development projects of the government will have to be taken with a view to

developing multi-lingual tour guides by providing training to youths of different ethnic minorities of Bangladesh.

3.2.10 **Sports Tourism**: Sports play an important role in the tourism industry of Bangladesh. Specially the inception of Bangladesh cricket in the international cricket arena potentiality has augmented among the sports loving tourists to visit Bangladesh. For this purpose, necessary steps would be taken for development of sports tourism.

3.2.11 **Miscellaneous**: For diversification of potential tourism and the development of heritage tourism, MICE (Meeting, Incentives, Convention and Exhibition) tourism including all other kinds of tourism, necessary measures will have to be taken.

Chapter-4

4.   **Implementation Strategy of National Tourism Policy**: For the development of tourism as a multi-dimensional industry long-term national planning, sufficient capital investment, obtaining of financial and technical assistance, installation of physical infrastructure, conservation of historical and archaeological relics and sites, preservation of potential tourism spots upon identification, promotion of handicrafts, conservation of forestry and bio-diversity, upgradation of airports and campaign and publicity abroad, etc will be initiated. Apart from these, creation of congenial environment including food and amusement, adoption of effective measures for package tours and different types of accommodation facilities (hotels, motels, resorts, cottages, apartels, farm houses, way-side hotels, high-way inns, tourist homes, time-sharings, home-stays, etc) are necessary. In this perspective, the government will play the role of facilitator and will emphasize the development of private sector-led tourism development and take effective initiative for tourism human resources development in public and private sector, also make vigorous relationship among all the stakeholders related to tourism industry. For sustainability of the tourism development, it is necessary to strike strong a co-ordination among the following ministries – (a) Ministry of Environment and Forest, (b) Ministry of Cultural Affairs, (c) Ministry of Communication, (d) Ministry of Land, (e) Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, (f) Ministry of Information, (g) Ministry of Shipping, (h) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (i) Ministry of Education, (j) Ministry of Home Affairs, (k) Ministry of Religious Affairs, (l) Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operative, (m) Ministry of Youth and Sports, (n) Ministry of Industries and other government and agencies. With a view to implementing these, following activities will be taken in the implementation strategy — creation of institutional infrastructure and its execution, idea generation and planning development and their implementation, inter-ministerial and agencies coordination, investment of both domestic and foreign, enactment of necessary laws with the co-ordination of public and private sector, identification and classification of tourism attractions and determination of their marketing strategy. In this regard, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism will coordinate activities with other concerned ministries/agencies and private sector and play the role of catalysts.

For a well-balanced development of the tourism industry, the following institutional set-up will function from national to local levels:

4.1   National Level

4.1.1   National Tourism Council

Tourism is a multi-dimensional industry and there is involvement of activities of various ministries in the tourism development and the tourism sites. Hence, a National Tourism Council (NTC) headed by the Hon'ble Prime Minister will be functioning for co-ordination of all the ministries/ departments/offices in order for the overall tourism development and promotion.

4.1.2 **Cabinet Committee on Tourism**: For the promotion and development of tourism industry, a Cabinet Committee headed by the Hon'ble Minister for Finance will be functioning.

4.1.3 **Advisory Committee on Tourism**: An Advisory Committee headed by the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism will be functioning for the overall tourism development, promotion and its publicity campaign.

4.1.4 **Inter-ministerial Co-ordination and Implementation Committee**: An inter-ministerial Co-ordination Committee headed by the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism will function for execution of the decisions, instructions or whatever of the National Tourism Council, Cabinet Committee on Tourism and the Tourism Advisory Committee.

4.2 **At Divisional and Local Level**: For preservation, conservation and development of local tourism resources at divisional and metropolitan towns, specific responsibilities will be entrusted as per the national tourism policy upon forming committees on tourism at divisions and city corporations. For preservation and conservation of district level tourism attractions, the 'District Tourism Development Committee' headed by Deputy Commissioner will be functioning.

4.3 **Involvement the Bangladesh Embassy, Mission abroad**: The Embassies and missions of Bangladesh abroad will be involved in publicity and marketing activities of tourism attractions and officials will be assigned with specific tasks.

Chapter-5

5 National Tourism Policy implementation Initiatives

The following measures will be implemented:

5.1 Enacting law

New and relevant laws will be enacted along with time to time updating existing laws to ensure quality tourism service for local and foreign tourists and responsibilities of all concerned government and private organizations/institutions will be entrusted.

5.2 Identification of tourist zones and attractions

Earmarking of tourist zones and identification of attractions across the country will keep continuing with their classifications according to tourists' choices. Identified tourists zones and their uniqueness and boundaries with tourism related necessary facts will be recorded in the Data Base System. Necessary actions will be taken to protect natural beauties and characteristics of potential tourism spots and unplanned establishments will be removed. Enlistment of private tourism spots and get them within government jurisdiction will be made.

5.3 Involve local government organizations

Local government organizations and Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Council as and when necessary will be involved in meaningful development, implementation and conservation of tourism industry.

5.4 Local, nonresident Bangladeshi and foreign investment in tourism

(a) Aiming at tourism promotion and development with the creation of international standard services, local, nonresident Bangladeshi and foreign investment will be attracted through necessary initiatives which are to be taken by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Economic Relation Department and other concerned ministries. And a taskforce will be formed to delegate honors and facilities to the investors like other thrust sectors.

(b) Providing facilities like export oriented industry to foreign currency generator tourism projects.

(c) Offering loans, tax holiday, reduced customs and taxes and other related facilities to encourage private entrepreneurship in tourism sector.

(d) Offering lease towards private sectors to create tourism opportunities jointly and thus supervision

(e) Cooperating private sectors to run all kinds of package tours at different attractive spots with all kind of tourism activities for the development of tourism.

(f) Offering loans in easy conditions to private entrepreneurs for the development of tourism.

5.5 Inter-ministerial coordination

Steps will be taken to harmonize tourism plans with other ministerial and organizational plans to involve private investment through inter-ministerial and inter-organizational cooperation for boosting this multidimensional tourism industry under a good management. In this regard, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism will play a role to coordinate among different ministries as a catalyst.

5.6 Eco-tourism

Efforts will be made to develop and market eco-tourism in Sundarbans including all possible and appropriate regions through effective coordination with concerned ministries.

5.7 Potential Tourist Spots

Private investment will be encouraged by the government initial investment for the development of tourism where tourist facilities are yet to be grown in tourism potential areas.

5.8 One stop service

To provide quick service to local and foreign investors with different statistics, *one stop service* will be established in different places of National Tourism Organization and other appropriate places.

5.9 Ethnic handicrafts and souvenirs

For the development and production of handicrafts and the tourism attractions of ethnic minority groups, proper plan will be taken up. Publications of souvenir containing their own cultural traits and to arrange training among different ethnic groups for awareness building towards conservation of tourism attractions will be done. Moreover, measures will be taken to make tour guides in different languages through training young and educated men and women from ethnic people. For this preparation of short, mid and long term programs will be taken under government development projects and programs.

5.10 Planning and implementation

(a) To prepare future vision of tourism development.

(b) To implement future vision, the identified tourism attractions will be embellished to meet the international market demand through necessary master plan that will be again segmented into international, national and local levels and according to the master plans short, mid and long term programs will be developed.

(c) Plan specifically and implement the master plan in time

(d) Development of infrastructure gradually and identification of attractive tourism spots across the country.

(e) Development of road, rail, water and air communication in tourism spots and thus pave the way to implementing master plan.

(f) Development of tourism villages near and around Dhaka International Airport, prioritization of foreign investment, provides tourists with special facilities, entertainment and information of country's art and culture.

5.11   Regional and International Cooperation

Stapes will be taken for developing integrated regional tourism programmes among SAARC and BIMSTEC countries including other regional organizations with improving communication and cooperation with UNWTO and other international bodies, organize and take part in local tourism fairs and different international tourism fairs, keep in touch with international tour operators and all concerned organizations.

Chapter-6

6   Important initiatives for tourism development

6.1   Identification and development of special zones /spots/islands for foreign tourists

To attract foreign tourists, modern tourism facilities are to be created upon the identification of special zones and thus to encourage local-foreign-private investors to play vital roles. For developing communication, infrastructure and other related facilities, government will initiate proper plans and coordination.

6.2   Joint Initiatives by Civil Aviation and National Tourism Organization

Government/private/foreign airlines and National Tourism Organization will work together to increase tourist arrivals through joint packages and different promotional programs from tourist generating countries and to ensure the participations of private tour operators in this initiative.

6.3   Easy visa process and immigration law for foreign tourists

Quick visa process and easy immigration law for foreign tourists to visit Bangladesh is necessary. In this regard, collective steps between Home Ministry and Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism for introducing visa-on-arrival at land and air ports for group tourists will be taken.

6.4   Identification of tourist generating country in Asia and other continents

Measures will be taken to create special cells in embassies, forecast possible numbers of future tourists, their choices, diplomatic channels with gearing facilities and linking tour operators for having total arrangement for identifying tourist generating countries in Asia and other continents and for collecting tourists.

6.5   Marketing and publicity

To market and advertise tourism attractions and facilities of Bangladesh, Followings are the initiatives:

6.5.1   To make a master plan for the marketing of tourism attractions

6.5.2   Marketing plan will be taken and thus implementation for having and putting different positive changes to build up the image of the country. Basing the current and potential markets of local tourism attractions, foreign investment, current and potential exports of other local attractions, government and private sectors will work together for implementing strategic marketing plan.

6.5.3 A combined publicity plan made by collective efforts of different parties will be implemented to establish Bangladesh as Destination Brand. The existing logo will be exhibited widely in privately established tourism spots / water transports / different transports with entrusting responsibilities.

6.5.4 To air and publish the development work of Bangladesh in world top ranking electronic and print media; to telecast and publish documentary and news of business, investment and tourism attractions; to line up and coordinate different programs based on education, talk show and public awareness regarding tourism development.

6.5.5 To ensure effective roles of Bangladeshi embassies in marketing tourism attractions of Bangladesh; to assign specific duties to the officers of embassies; to keep distributing leaflets, posters, brochures, tourist maps etc containing information of travelling Bangladesh, transportation and food in all foreign embassies in Dhaka and through Bangladeshi embassies out side; to host website loaded with attractions and information with regular updates for strengthening Destination Management Service (DMS).

6.5.6 To bring foreign package tours and to allocate annual budget for the joint participation of national tourism organization with private tour operators, travel agents, hotel associations and civil aviation in international tourism fairs for creating international tourism market.

6.5.7 To set up tourism offices in future for creating tourism market in important places of Asia and Europe; to set up tourism offices abroad with Bangladeshi embassies/missions or with Biman Bangladesh Airlines if it is necessary; to appoint gradually honorary councillor (Tourism) of Bangladesh in potential countries.

6.6 Human Resource development

Development of human resources in tourism and service sector for modern and international standard tourism service with scopes of research for tourism development and other relevant works are necessary. Hence steps will be taken to plan and implement, set up government and private training institutes from elementarily level for developing human resources for tourism; get National Hotel and Tourism Training Institute into International standard. Joint programs with public and private universities which have already introduced diploma, bachelor, masters and MBA, etc degrees in tourism will be undertaken and effort will be made to introduce tourism as subject in primary and secondary level.

6.7 Tourism related research

Initiative in involving tourism degree holders and experienced persons for research related to tourism development will be taken.

6.8 Joint initiatives

Joint initiatives will be taken for ensuring development, growth and marketing of different ministries or agencies owned tourism attractions/spots through government or privately initiated bilateral/multilateral agreement with different ministries/inter-ministerial agency.

6.9 Tourist Safety and Security

Steps will be taken to deploy trained-rescuers with necessary equipments along with tourist police at different locations e.g. river, sea, mountain and likewise special tourist zones for ensuring safety and security to tourists.

6.10 Miscellaneous

In order to provide modern tourism facilities, ensure tourist security and determine national income in tourism industry various steps will be taken such as activation of Quality Tourism Service (QTS) or standard tourism service, logo or sign allocation, installation of money exchange centre and Automated Tailor Machine (ATM) booth with the creation of necessary banking facilities and introduction of Tourism Satellite Account (TSA).

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