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Transport Accessibility for Environmental Friendly Tourism in Coastal Tourism Spot of Bangladesh: A Case Study in St. Martin Island

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is an aspect of recreation but it has been dependent upon transport to great and increasing extent. Tourism is without doubt and of the major social and economic phenomena of modern time. There are lots of tourism spot in coastal region of Bangladesh like Saint Martin Island. In the present day tourism industries in the world that is now becoming more competitive. Transport is a necessary and an essential element of tourism. Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourist and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. Transport is vital elements for development of tourist and attracting tourist in the coastal offshore tourism spot of Bangladesh. The present study attempts to assess the current trend of tourist's arrival and possibility of tourism development in Saint Martin Island. In this study, data were collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data and information are gathered through questionnaire survey using random sampling 105 tourists were interviewed. Secondary data have also been collected from various sources. The paper finds that the transport facilities and environment are not satisfactory.

Keywords: *Transport Accessibility, Coastal Tourism, St. Martin Island, Environment.*

INTRODUCTION

In the present day tourism is one of the leading industries in the world that is now becoming more competitive. Tourism brings new employment, extra income, and foreign currency and improves quality of life of people emaciated with the industry especially in developing countries. Therefore, it is time to think about the sustainability of the quality of tourism destinations considering respective ecological problems (Saito and Toda, 2003). Tourism is the largest and fastest growing sector, which has become increasingly a popular field of research since the late 1980s. Sustainable tourism developments meet the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity,

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essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life supportive system's (UN, 1992).

Transport is vital elements for development of tourism and attracting tourist in the coastal offshore tourism spot of Bangladesh. And belongs to vast, largely unknown and spoiled natural beauty and reserves is unique and fascinating truly (Afroze, 2000). Transport is an important part of our daily life. There is a close relationship between the volume of transport and the level of economic activities because they are interdependent. It has to link all other sectors of the economy together and has a profound influence on the development in almost every sphere on national life (Sampson, 1972). Thousands of tourists from all regions of Bangladesh and from abroad visit the Island every year.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives covered by this study are:

1. To study the Transport availabilities and impact on coastal tourism environment.
2. To assess the possibility of transportation development in the Saint Martin's Islands by analyzing the existing transport support facilities.

METHODOLOGY

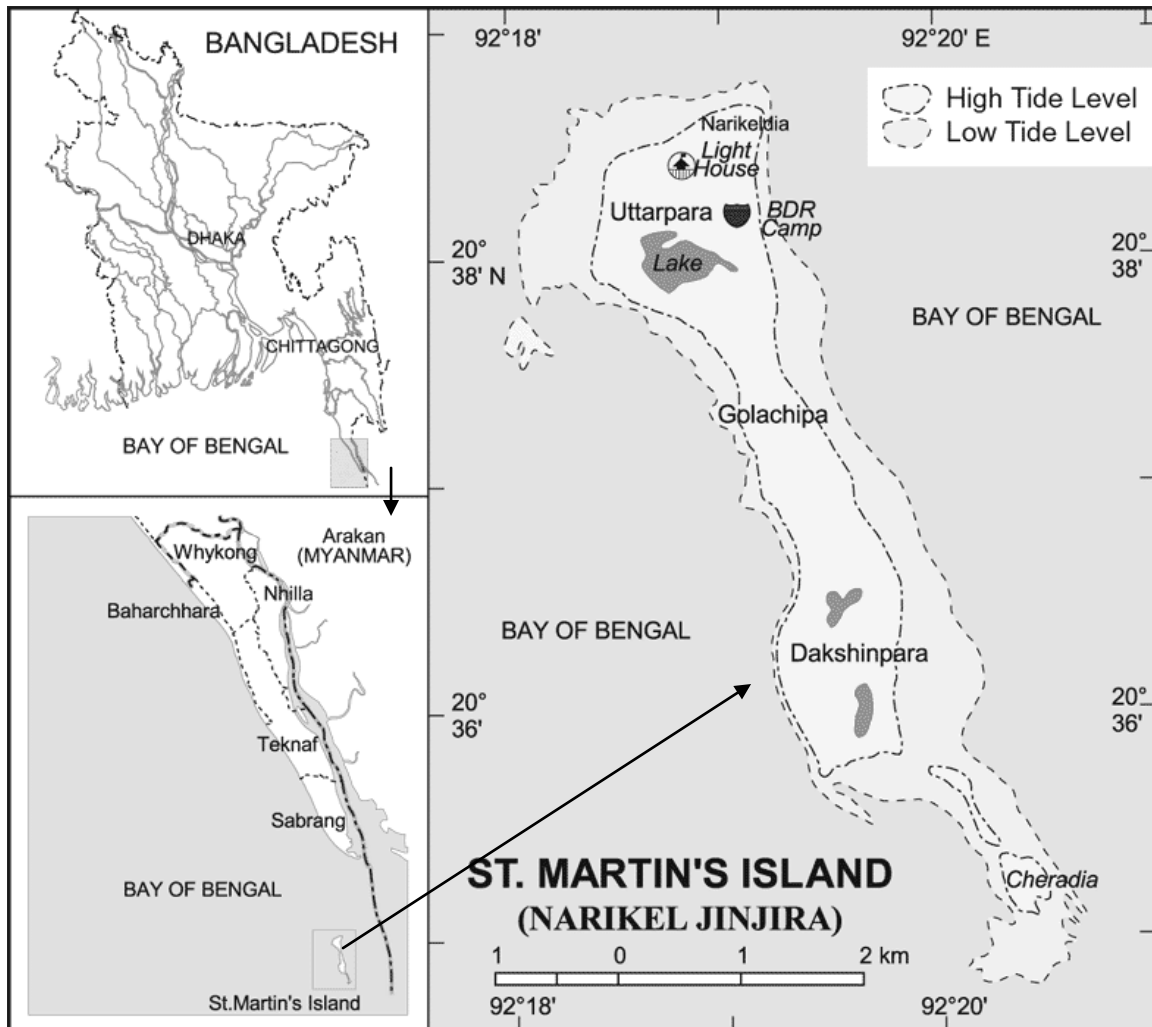
In this study, both primary and secondary sources are used. Primary data and information are gathered through questionnaire survey. Respondents are selected by using random sampling. Total number of 105 tourists is interviewed through questionnaire survey for gathering primary data. Secondary data have also been collected from various sources: books, reports, unpublished brochures of Ministry of Environment & Forest, and Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism of Bangladesh. Finally data were presented using graphs, maps, pie charts and bar diagram.

Study Area:

St. Martins is an offshore bar islands; in the long geomorphologic process this island was formed of coral formation during Maya sin period. Saint Martins Island which is also locally known as Narikel Jinjira is a small island in the North-eastern part of the Bay of Bengal. It lies about 9 km South of Cox's Bazaar – Taknaf Peninsular tip. It is the southern most tip of Bangladesh. It is about 8 km west of the north – west coast of Myanmar, and lies exactly on the mouth of the river Naf. The island is located between 20⁰34'W - 20⁰ 38.03'N latitudes and 92⁰18.2'E-92⁰ 20.8'E longitudes (Fig-1) and separated from the main land by deep see channel (NCSIP1, 2001).The surface area of the island is about 8km² depending on tidal level.

Average temperature recorded shows that it ranges between 21.25⁰C and 30.45⁰C. Maximum rainfall is observed from June to October and its ranges from 24.7 cm to 88.1 cm and minimum rainfall level are about 0 to 25.0 cm from November to May.

Fig. 1. Study Area



Sources: Banglapedia, 2003

Results and Discussions:

Tourists have been arriving at Saint Martin since early 1980's but the number of tourists visiting the island has not been systematically monitored in the past. For the first time an imitative has been taken by the ministry of environment and forest since 2001 -2002 to enumerate the tourist who visit the island (Rashid, 2005). Tourism in the study area is season based because of the existence of unfavorable weather during the month of June to September. In this period sea becomes rough and heavy rainfall occurs due to south west monsoon wind. This is why tour operators and outside tourists do not dare to across the deep sea. It was observed majority of the (92.19%) tourist start to arrive here from October and arrival of Tourists increase gradually in the month of December (Late winter).On the other hand only (7.81%) Tourists visit here early winter. So it indicates that January and February is the peak time for tourist (Table 1).

Table.1: Tourist arrival time at St Martin Island

Time of Tourist Arrival	Percentage (%)
Early Winter	7.81
Late Winter	90.69
Early Summer	1.50
Late Summer	0.00

Sources: Field Survey, 2007

The bulk of tourists are increasing due to introduction of new sea going vessel; sea track in December 2002 and another famous vessel “keari Sinbad” in November 2003 by a private company. It is noticed in the table 2 that 47.61 percent tourists use keari Sinbad to visit St. Martin Island, 23.80 percent use sea track 19.04 percent use troller and 9.55 percent tourist use boat. So these two vessels (sea truck and keari sinbad) have added new dimension for acceleration of tourist arrival in St. Martin Island.

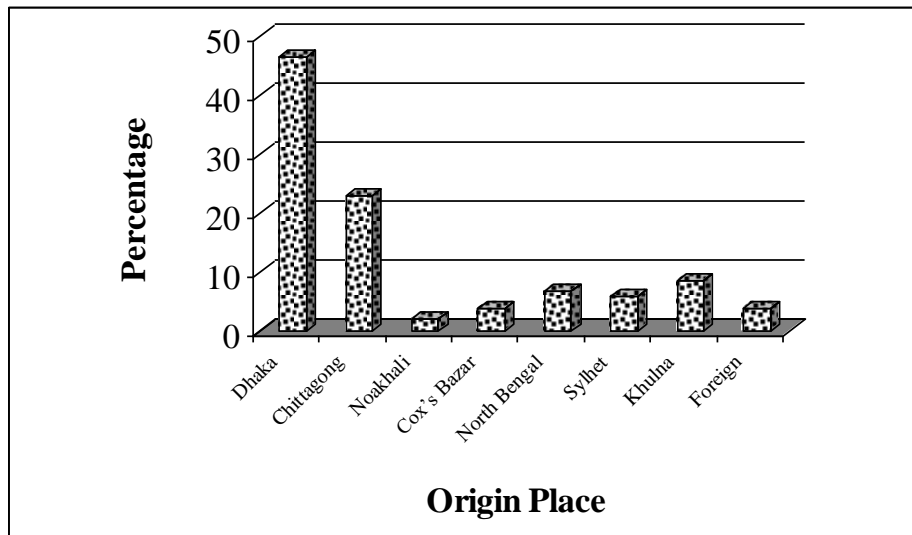
Table 2. Types of vessels to arrival in St. Martin

Vessels Type	Percentage (%)
Sea Truck	23.80
Ship	47.61
Troller	19.04
Boat	9.55
Total	100.00

Source: Field survey, 2007.

Almost all the tourists visit the Saint Martins island is of domestic origin (**Figure 2**) Foreign tourists are seen less in island due to evocative attitude of local people towards the western types of ‘beach behavior’ (i.e. the use of bathing suit) lack of proper communication and accommodation, lack of health care hazardous. So it is clear that, number of tourists comes from within the country.

Figure 2. Origin of Tourist



Source: Field survey 2007

Majority of the tourists are male (79.04 %) and rest 20.95 percent are female. Mainly four types of tourists are observed to visit the island (**Table- 3**) Firstly they are the young adult tourists in an age group 15-34. Their percentage is 65.71. The primary reasons for visiting Island are curiosity and adventure. The second type tourists are students of colleges and universities arriving for excursion. These groups generally stay over night in the island with suitable distance, observe terrestrial flora and fauna along with marine organism. The third type is family tourists, and fourth and fifth types are naval and coast guard personnel from naval relatives, businessman Private and public sector are also found to visit this island (Personal observation and questionnaire survey).

Table 3. Age groups of tourist in St. Martin Island

Tourist Age Groups	Percentage (%)
0-14	1.92
15-34	65.71
35-49	21.90
50-59	7.62
60+	2.85

Source: Field survey 2007.

The reasons behind arrival of female tourists are people’s conservative mentality in Bangladesh. Poor socio-economic condition, low literacy rate in security and strict adherence of women is to work in house.

Increments of arrival of tourist in the Saint Martin depend on introduction of water going vessel from Taknaf to St. Martin. Before 2002 only motor boats were repeated to carry the tourist but in December 2002 a private company introduced a ship (sea truck) with carrying capacity of 180 persons and an air-conditioned ship with carrying capacity of 350 persons were introduced in November, 2003 by another private company. Motor boat with low carrying capacity takes two and half hours to reach the destination and there is no life security equipment in the boats. Whereas sea truck has sufficient life Jacket and other facilities. These scenarios represent the total coastal tourist spot of Bangladesh.

Table 4 Indicates that most of the tourists; give negative remark about traveling network system of St. Martin Island. Unsuitable road network (43.47%) & low quality of vehicles or vessels etc are identified by the tourists.

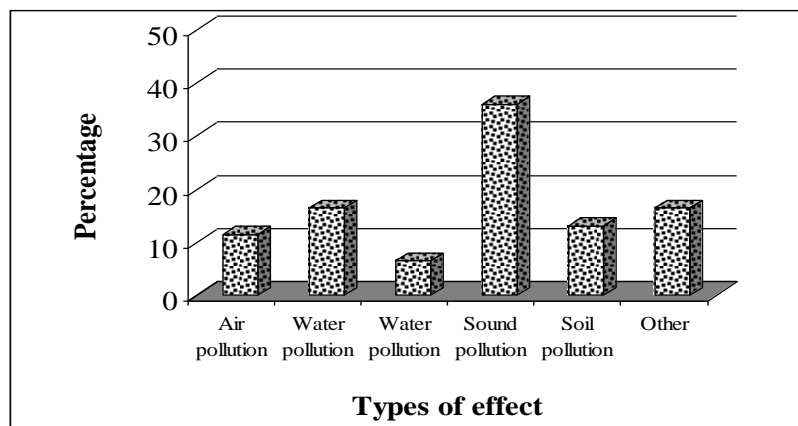
Table 4. Tourist Facing transport problem in St. Martin Island

Major Transportation Problems	Percentage(%)
Bad Road Network	43.47
Bad Quality of Vehicles	23.91
High Transport Cost	13.07
Long Distance	4.34
Others	15.21

Source: Field survey 2007.

St Martin is an isolated island and it is detached from rest of the country in term of transport and communication. As, stated earlier, the environment of the island is very fragile and so tourism and other types of activities should comply with this reality. A very high population density of over 625 per sq. km creates another pressure on the environment (Reshid, 2005). The eco-system of this island and islanders lives are affected by all kinds of highly pronounced impacts.

Figure 3. Effect of transport related pollutant in local tourism activities.



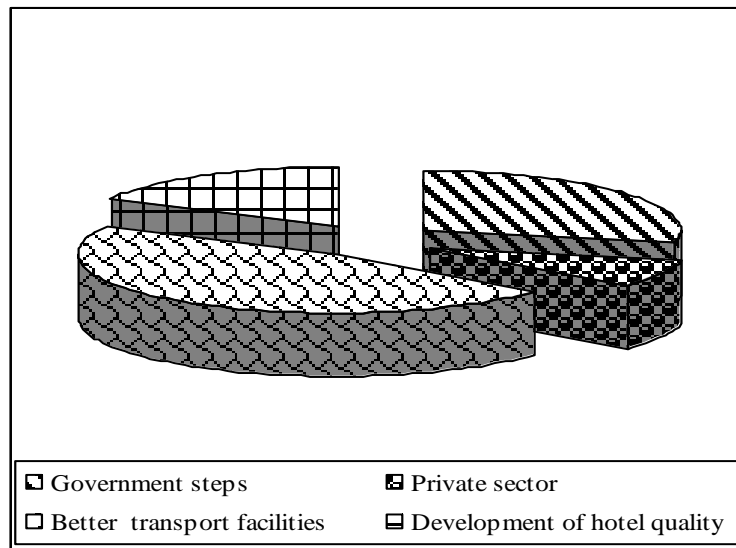
Source: Field survey 2007.

In the Figure (3) Show that 35 % sound pollution impact on local sustainable environment, 16.39% is responsible for water pollution. Air pollution (11.47%), waste pollution (6.55%), soil pollution (13.11%) etc was also responsible for destroying the coastal tourism environment greatly.

The local community of the island having simplicity and a relatively crime-free society is susceptible to outside influence socio-cultural interaction with tourist may be treating for the existing system of social order since the islanders follow a unique social system based on coastal activities and lead their lives as a mutually supportive social unit. Therefore, so far been observed sustainability is a vital issue for the tourism of this island. Its bio-geographic condition, economic activities and social norms make it highly vulnerable to manifolds negative impacts and deserve for strategies to minimize them. The coastal tourist spot of Bangladesh plays a vital role in terms of earning currency through tourism activities.

Figure-4 Shown that 52.68 percent of the respondent gave their opinion for better transport facilities, 19.39 percent suggested for govt. steps and other emphases on private sector activities (8.60%) and accommodation facilities (19.35%). So, for the development of St. Martin Island as tourist spot behind the existing transport support facilities.

Figure 4. Suggestion for development of St. Martin Island.



Source: Field survey 2007.

CONCLUSION

Transport and tourism are interrelated phenomena which change the socio cultural pattern in a particular region. The coastal tourist spot of Bangladesh having its tremendous attractive scenic beauty with the having costal resources such as beaches, coral, mangrove forest, lagoon, marine fish, birds, dolphins etc. The existing transportation systems in the study area represent the poor quality of status. Transportation and communication system vessel and mismanagement of public and private sector have an impact on tourist

accreting from home and abroad. Any enhancement of tourism on the island needs to be planned and handled very carefully, incorporating principles and objectives of sustainability. In this paper are practical guidelines for the long-term sustainability of tourism. Besides controlled tourism can be exerted through various methods such as entry restrictions of only one entry point, Teknaf; limited number of facilities; pricing; introducing deposit refunds. Transport facilities in St. Martine Island are not satisfactory due to Government and NGO's proper plan and activities. So it needs to take immediate steps for proper and sound development in the coastal tourist spot. Bangladesh the country having an enormous possibility in tourism like St.martin Island should given more emphasis on transport facilities development, to ensure proper security and well accessibility.

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