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TOURISM DESTINATION MARKETING
Case Study-Kuakata Sea Beach, Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

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Kuakata is the second largest sea beach in Bangladesh and it is situated on the southernmost tip of Bangladesh. This sea beach is enriched with different natural beauties. Despite of many potentialities, the tourism of this place did not develop as much as it should be now. It can be said that, this place is much neglected by Bangladeshi people and the beauty of this place is yet to be discovered properly by Bangladeshi and international tourists.

The purpose of this research was to discuss the present scenario of Kuakata including all tourism facilities, expectations, concern and demand of the tourists. Moreover, the importance of marketing of Kuakata sea beach as a tourists destination and what kinds of marketing methods can be used to attract more tourists to Kuakata sea beach, was also discussed here.

The theoretical part of this research consisted of literatures which were closely related to the thesis topic involving destination marketing, branding in tourism, online marketing and sustainability. In empirical part, semi-structured interviews with visitors were implemented as qualitative research methods. Moreover, text analysis was also combined with information gained from the interviews to get concrete results and to end up with some helpful suggestions.

After the research, the author found, that there were not enough promotional activities to develop tourism in Kuakata. Moreover, the services related to tourism in Kuakata were not enough and up to mark. So, there are many things to improve in Kuakata to make it popular to domestic and international tourists.

Key words
Branding, destination, Kuakata Sea Beach, marketing, qualitative research, tourism attractions, tourism development, tourism of Bangladesh

ABSTRACT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GRAPHS

TABLE

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism destination marketing and management to develop tourism industry has a key impact on economic growth in developing countries. Globally, tourism is the only sector which is growing very fast. So to gain the maximum benefit from tourism sector, there should be some good strategies developed to survive in competition in this competitive era. Nowadays, traditional patterns of travelling, long holidays are being replaced with more frequent and shorter length stay. Activities have also been modified in greater extent. People now travel not only for the sake of pleasure but also to learn something new and to watch something exceptional and exciting. Again individuality has increased rather than mass standardization of products.

Now tourists are more conscious about security, safety, environmental issues, and quality of services, available information and expenses rather than visiting a place without proper prior information. Distance is no more a big obstacle to visit a place while available information and branding of the destination is more important.

Bangladesh, a south Asian country crisscrossed with great streaming rivers, is indeed a land of green and natural beauty. Despite having lots of potentialities, the tourism industry of this country is growing very slowly. Forty years have has passed of Bangladesh's tourism industry, but still its tourism is in a nascent position compared to its neighboring countries. At present Bangladesh is not known as a tourist destination in the international market. The number of tourist's arrival in Bangladesh is very low and tourism growth is very slow. In 2010 only 300,000 tourists came to Bangladesh. Among them more than 70% came for business and official purposes. The contribution of tourism in country's total economy is less than 1%. Though, tourism as an industry got recognition in Bangladesh in 1999, it never got so much attention by the government to become a vibrant sector. Many countries like Maldives, Malaysia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Lao PRD who stated to develop their tourism sector later than Bangladesh has developed much faster than Bangladesh. For example, in 1998 Bangladesh received 171,961 international tourists whereas Cambodia received only 96,000 tourists. But after 11 years, within a same span of time, Cambodia developed its tourism sector in such a level that it could attract more than 2 million tourists whereas Bangladesh attracted only 267,000 tourists. It indicates that there were not enough steps by Bangladesh government to raise its tourism sector and to

compete with others. Bangladesh lags behind in project to market its own tourist's attractions through advertisement and electronic media which its neighboring countries do. As Bangladesh is not known as tourism brand in international market, first it needs to work to rebuild its tourism sector to introduce it as a tourism brand in the international market. Because branding in tourism not only attract tourists but also attract international investors to invest money. (Newage, 2012.)

To make a tourism brand appropriate; infrastructure development, proper management and marketing is essential. Even Cox's Bazar which is the longest sea beach in the world and known as the tourists' capital in Bangladesh has grown in an unplanned and uncontrolled way. Appropriate regulation is absent there. Kuakata which is the second most potential sea beach and full of many natural beauties is very much detached from the whole country. Its beauty is yet to be discovered properly. There is no easy communication system to this tourist destination and not enough steps to discover its hidden beauty to domestic and international tourists. While the most important foreign revenue earning sectors in Bangladesh like RMG (readymade garments product), shrimp and jute are facing huge competition in the global market, tourism can be an effective tool to earn foreign remittance and develop the country. No other sector except garments can create so many jobs opportunity as tourism can do. The effect of tourism development starts from grassroots level and helps to reduce poverty and overall development of the country very rapidly. (Newage, 2012.)

In Bangladesh, overall some 40% tourists come from Asian countries, mainly from China, followed by India, Thailand, Singapore and other 20% come from Europe, mainly from France and Italy and 10% from North America. So, we can see that the tourist arrivals in Bangladesh from other continents and from many different countries are minor. Like the overall scenario of Bangladesh, Kuakata sea beach which is well known as Sagor Konna (daughter of sea) in Bangladesh did not develop as much as it should be until now. Due to the lack of proper infrastructure development and marketing, this potential tourist destination did not attain so much popularity in the domestic tourism market, let alone the international field. To make Kuakata as a tourism brand, there are lots of things to do and many things to improve. Through this research work, there was an effort to uphold the present scenario of Kuakata and to find out some suggestions which can be taken as key terms to improve to attract more tourists to visit Kuakata. (Newage, 2012.)

The primary purpose of this work is to find out the in general interest of domestic and foreign tourists to visit Kuakata sea beach. The secondary purpose of this research was to find out the current situation of Kuakata, its strength and weaknesses and to offer some suggestions to attract more tourists to Kuakata sea beach. Kuakata is known as one of the most competitive, safest and most beautiful tourist spots in Bangladesh.

Through this research, the author will try to find out the real scenario of Kukata including all strength and obstacles. Moreover, the reasons behind the slow development of tourism at Kuakata and how tourism in Kuakata regions can be promoted overcoming all those problems were also discussed here. So, the ultimate goal of the research is to find some good path ways and innovative ideas to promote tourism at Kuakata sea beach and to take it to a satisfactory level to bring more tourists in Kuakata regions by using some competitive ways of destination marketing tools. There are some other common objectives in this research, such as evaluating tourism services, cost of services, sustainability, political stability, level of security, accommodation facilities, transportations and some other good and bad things of Kuakata sea beach. At the end of this research there will be some suggestions which can be worked as milestone to take Kuakata from a sluggish to prime tourist attraction in Bangladesh and in South Asia.

Tourism potential at Kuakata sea beach is diverse. It has got the natural beauty, the climate, and cheap food and accommodation facilities and so on. But so far, no research was done precisely on tourism phenomenon and development of tourism in Kuakata. There were many researches on Cox's Bazar and overall tourism prospect of Bangladesh. But Kuakata did not get that much attention by the researchers. However, people often say that Kuakata can be a unique destination for domestic and international tourists, but there was not enough effort to make this tourism potential to a tourism product to sell and earn revenue. So, this research will open a new window and a broad sense for the experts and authorities who are working behind tourism development of Bangladesh.Moreover, importance of tourism destination marketing and using different marketing tools for promoting tourist attractions, technique of selling different tourism product was discussed here thoroughly in theoretical part, which might give a strong base with practical knowledge and information.

2   TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

Tourism is complex, perhaps the most complex term of social science which discusses human behavior, social phenomenon, and economic change policy field and so on. It can bring a big change in the society by creating job opportunities very fast or can destroy them in the other way. It brings people in the same platform or can divide them into many groups. (Smith 2010, 1.) To understand tourism and its activities, studying tourism is a must. Hence, the goal of this chapter is to review some important terms of tourism which are closely related to this research work. These literatures will help to understand the research work theoretically and to implement them practically.

2.1 Tourism destination management

A tourist destination is a place which is very often visited by many domestic and international tourists. It can be a city, town, historical place, sea beach, mountain, an amusement park, museum or some kinds of religiously important place. A tourism destination may contain one or more tourist attractions and sometimes some tourist traps. For many reasons, a place can be very important to domestic and international tourists. These can be natural tourist attractions like forest, river, big waterfall, hill or lake. Again, people can make an ordinary place into an important tourist destination by their own effort like making amusement park, statue, big hotels or by making a new city or town. Tourists have different choices and that is why different tourists choose different kinds of tourist destinations. Like a simple place can be the most important and illusive place to someone who love sports if any big sports event is arranged in that place. (Yeoman 2008, 4-13.)

Destinations are places with some form of actual or perceived boundary, such as the physical boundary of a blend, political boundaries or even market created boundaries. The desire to become a recognized destination presents difficult marketing challenges. The most visible benefit of tourism are employment in hotels, restaurants, retail establishment and transportation, and the second benefit consist of supporting industries and professions and finally is the multiple effect as tourists' expenditures are recycled through the local economy. Tourism also helps to shift the tax burden to non-residents of a place. It also

creates or stimulates exports of local products such as handicraft, looms, food and showpieces. Many tourist destinations also find government supported market areas for the sale of locally produced handicrafts. Destinations may not welcome tourists unfortunately because of the location, climate, limited resources, size and cultural heritage. "Some places have few economic choices other than to participate in tourism" (Kotler, Bowen & Makens 2010, 750-752.)

Destinations that fail to maintain the necessary infrastructure or build inappropriate infrastructure face significant risks. A destination's attractiveness can be diminished by violence, political instability, natural catastrophe, and adverse environmental factors and overcrowding. So destination marketing is an important part of developing and retaining a particular location's popularity. Tourism marketing is called service marketing. Services industry varies greatly and service marketing has some specific criteria than others commercial product marketing. Government offer service through employment services, hospitals, police and fire departments. Many non- profit organizations also offer services through social work, healthcare, charity etc. Business organizations offer services by different organizations like airlines, banks, hotels, insurance companies and others. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 244).

The hospitality and travel industry is just one part of the service industries. But in service sector, hospitality and travel industry cannot grow so quickly as others service sectors. Most of the times, the marketing of tourism products are done by the manufacturer and the seller has less control over the product. Moreover, the hospitality and travel industries are complexes in nature and it is dominated or controlled by small businesses like restaurants, motels, resorts, travel agencies etc. Again, for the lack of training, it is very difficult for the service industry to find the right person for the right place. (Morrison 2009, 30-31.)

2.2 Tourism marketing

At present tourism is being a very competitive business. Now the customers' demand to a service provider is more than before. Only providing the basic things and service is not enough because someone will provide something extra. So, tour operators are conscious

about some additional factors like comfort, safety, entertainment and environmental issues along with the services available to them. On the other hand, customers expect something more than usual. They always look for the service which is better in cheap price. They have lot of options to choose and the best one will get the preference. Hence, the term hospitality marketing appears.

Hospitality is described and measured by the amount of care, handling to detail towards an excellent reception to your customers who are the tourists. However, everyone does not want the same kind of package being offered by the service provider and it creates the environment for market segments in hospitality marketing. These categories are budget, mid-market and luxury. With the changing environment in the business world there will always be high and low points in the tourism industry capacity and this affects the acceptable volume and value. This is hospitality marketing capacity which includes organizations that offer star rating classification for hotels and restaurants, intention of travel to the choice of destination, emerging markets that offer different experiences. (Bowie & Buttle 2004, 4-10.)

It is always nice to have a preplanned holiday trip to an unknown place. When tourists plan for a trip, they look for available information, services and facilities, tour operators, things to see and do, safety and security, accommodation and transportation and others necessary information about the location from different sources. Internet is the mostly used media for getting information in this modern age. Besides surfing on internet, people also visit travel agents, tour operator and other organizations to get reliable and realistic information. Here stands the term of tourism marketing. All these above tools which are used for the publicity of tourism destinations are known as tourism marketing. (Weiermair & Mathies 2004, 97-100.)

To be successful in tourism marketing, it is highly important to meet the demands of tourists. Firstly to attract the travelers to a certain destination and then providing necessary information, available services and information about what the resort, city, state or region has to offer in an appealing and honest manner. Again it is important to highlight the destination in a demanding way. It is not wise to describe a location with too lofty promises or painting an unrealistic picture for the tourists whom might fails to meet the expectations of the tourists. This will lead to a negative impression to the destination.

2.3 Tourism marketing promotion

Advertising is the best way for initial publicity of tourist attractions. Advertising is defined as any paid marketing activity which motivates potential customers to take the goods and services. Advertising is precisely timed for general public. The result of advertising may be short term or long term and it is very difficult to get feedback from the customers instantly. This promotion tools is used to generate publicity and it gives basic idea of goods and services. (Belch 2004, 13-16.)

There are many different advertising methods that organizations can choose according to their needs and demands. These methods are printed media, broadcasting media and online. Printed Medias are magazine, newspaper, journal, billboard etc. These are used mainly for faster marketing and to give a quick message to the people. Printed media are sometime more expensive than online marketing. It is mainly used for local and domestic marketing.

Broadcasting marketing tools are advertisement on TV and radio. It is very expensive way of marketing. But the advantages of these methods are; it can cover large area at the same time, audience can depend on the source of information and it gives a brief idea about the whole package which might increase the interest to the listeners. Some tour operators who telecast their own television shows about traveling to different destinations around the world, while participating in activities, events that are integrated in the cultures of the people living in the area. This generates large following and the audience can rely on information provided by the companies to travel to such destinations.

Electronic media are websites, emails, YouTube, Facebook etc. These kinds of marketing tools are used highly in this modern age. These are also some effective ways of international marketing. These marketing methods do not have any border limit. Sometimes these are the cheapest way of marketing goods and services. Again customers can get all information like price, facilities, opening time, contract information, and recent activities of the company and history of the company very easily through those links. Customers can mail to the service provider for any information if they needed. (Sweeney 2008, 3-10.)

2.3.1 Branding in Tourism

Before we know branding, we must know what is brand and also the elements of branding. Marketing concepts constantly are being improved and renamed by the researchers. The concept of brand and branding is also changing. A brand is a name, term, sign or symbol or the combination of them and that is to know the goods and services of one seller to differentiate them from others. (Keller 2011, 24.)

But it is very much old definition now and out of date. Now we find the modified definition of brand and it is the summation of all perceptions, experiences and beliefs that is linked with a product, service or anything that make it unique. It is actually an offer for satisfying customer needs and it is also like a container for a customer full of experiences with the offer and the company. A brand is more than a product and it create a good image for the company because, it continuously innovate new brands to become market leader. Brands differentiate through performances. Moreover, brands create image in customer minds. Brands may have some identities and those are brand name, logo, symbol, character, packaging and slogan etc.

GRAPH 1. Place branding (adapted from Allan 2007)

The graph shows the importance of place branding. Place branding leads to economic, cultural, educational and social development. It encourage the private investors to invest money in tourism field when they see that a place is expanding its reputation very quickly and get the attention of people from different nook and corner of the world.

Branding is the process or act of transforming product into customer satisfying value added propositions to create preferences in one's favor and against rivals. It is everything a marketer does to its offer so that customers discriminate a brand in its favor. It is also a company's combined effort which is shown or presented to the customer.
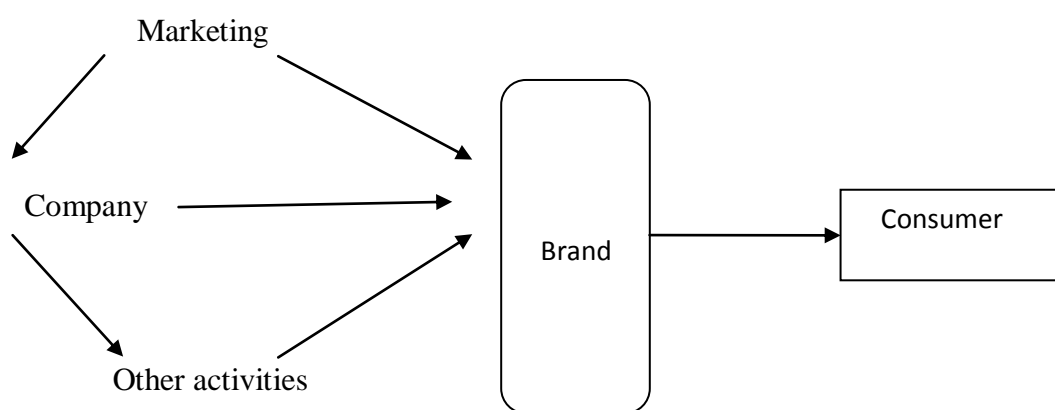
GRAPH 2.Marketing and other activities affecting the company's brand and consumer (adapted from Keller 2011)

This graph shows the marketing activities of a company affecting the company's brand along with other activities which raise the popularity of a product and leads the consumer to take those services.

So after knowing this discussion we definitely say that branding should be applied in tourism or destination marketing because everything depends on branding. If people can make or create good brand image about a tourist attraction, then it will be popular in the world overnight. Branding is like a life blood for any product or destination (Keller 2011, 25-26.)

2.3.2 Using websites as a marketing tool

When someone buys a computer he/she may buy different parts of computer from different companies. The manufacturer of the computer, printer and software are different similarly a traveler will use air travel, a rental car, a hotel room and purchase meals from different companies providing these services. It means the goal of the traveler is to have enjoyable experiences. A properly designed web site can facilitate the travelers' planning, helping to ensure they make the right choices and have an enjoyable experience. It can also serve as the distribution point for all the services they will need as they plan their vacation. Tourism destination emerges as umbrella brands and they will need to be promoted in the global market place as one entity for each target market they try to attract. The emerging globalization and concentration of supply increase the level of competition and require new internet marketing strategies for destination. A vertical marketing system should be in place, bringing together a set of products related with each destination available for selection.

This implies that each tourist destination must have a major portal website acting as a gateway to the destination rather than relying solely on a fragmented number of individual websites to put on line by the trade. This would have links from and to the websites of the other organization that have business related to the destination. A portal site for marketing tourism destinations should provide information on four core areas. Such as; how to get there, getting around, places to stay and things to do.(Kotler, Bowen & Makens 2010, 716-717.)

2.3.3 Using social media for tourism marketing

Nowadays, the Internet has become a part of our life. People spend a big portion of their time everyday using the internet, chatting with friends and acquaintances and always want to be connected with them by different social media like Facebook, YouTube, and different blogs and so on. Again the number of internet users is increasing day by day. Hence, for tourism marketing, social media can be effective tools. We can already see that most of the tourism organizations have their videos or online advertisement in YouTube, similarly they have different pages on Facebook to connect people and give up-to-date information about their services. The concept of social media marketing means optimizing the site in which the written content garners links which act as trust endorsement in the purpose of listening to what the community often does and responses. It helps to boost up the brand awareness and raise the visibility of product or services in the targeted customers. In addition, social media is defined as a process that empowers individuals to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels and to communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not have been available via traditional advertising channels. (Scott 2010, 77-79.)

2.4 Sustainable tourism marketing

People who make the plan may take into account the capacity of a location's environment to support all. Without this planning a destination can be damaged to the point that travelers will stay away. Sustainable tourism can mean giving up current revenues from tourism by limiting capacity to ensure that there will be demand for tourism in the future. It means to prevent problems that occur when capacity is exceeded. This carrying capacity can be determined by an environmental impact assessment (EIA) and it follows inventory the social, political, physical and economic environment and also project trends.

In tourism, there are two main industries and those are hospitality and travel industries. Hospitality marketing is highly dependent on the entire travel industry. Fox example in

many hotels on resort guests purchase travel hospitality packages assembled by travel agents. There are few industries that are as interdependent as the travel hospitality and it makes or increase complexity in this sector. In the hospitality sector in particular, marketing is a term often used when referring to selling and advertising. (Kotler & Bowen 2010, 35-37.)

If sustainability in tourism industry is not maintained tightly, the sector will destroy very soon causing huge negative effect on environment and in surrounding areas. Polluting the nature, destruction of forest and wildlife, excessive use of chemical may destroy the ecological balance and in return it will hamper the normal way of life. Again, if a tourist destination is not environment friendly, safe and clean, then conscious tourists will keep them aloof from visiting that place. So, sustainability should have higher importance as different branches of service industry are developing very fast. (George, Mair & Reid 2009, 7-8.)

3 THE TOURISM PROSPECT OF KUAKATA

The word tourism or tourism prospect were not being used in connection with Kuakata for so long. Earlier, Kuakata was only known as a sea shore to local people and people did not think so much about its potentialities. Moreover, people from all over the country had negative idea about Kuakata as this place is one of the corners of Bangladesh which is affected by floods and natural disasters. But recently, Kuakata has emerged as an asset to nurture and a beauty spot to preserve.

3.1 Kuakata at a glance

Kuakata is a panoramic sandy sea beach and one of the rare beauty spots on earth which is situated on the southernmost tip of Bangladesh. It is locally known as Sagar Kannya (Daughter of the Sea) and is the second most popular sea beach in Bangladesh. It is about 30 km in length and 6 km in breadth. This place is 320 km from the capital, Dhaka and 70 km from the Patuakhali district headquarters and one hour distance by speed boat from the largest mangrove forest (Sundarbans) in the world. This is among few places in the world from where people can enjoy the full view of sunrise and sunset from the same place. Kuakata is enriched with beautiful natural beauty having a long sandy sea beach evergreen forest, blue sky, colorful sailing boats, towering cliffs, surfing waves and so on. (Pandey 2004, 109-110.)

GRAPH 3. Sunrise and sunset picture of Kuakata sea beach (adapted from Travelobd 2013)

Every year innumerable migratory winter birds come to this sea beach, which enhance the beauty more on that time. There are also series of coconut trees along the sea shore which might attract someone's eyes during the visit at the beach. There is also unique customs and culture of 'Rakhyne' tribal families and very old Buddhist Temple indicate the ancient tradition and cultural heritage of Kuakata. During 'Rush Purnima(full moon)" and 'Maghi Purnima (full moon)" many Hindu and Buddhist people come here to celebrate their religious festivals. (Parjatan 2013.)

Despite lots of tourism potentialities, this place is still undeveloped and developing very slowly. Most of the tourists visiting this place are domestic and the numbers of foreign tourists are very minor compared to the other tourist attractions in South Asian countries. The tourist facilities of this place are very poor. For example, there is no bank or ATM in Kuakata. So, people feel little interest to visit this place. (Leung & Meggitt 2009, 289)

3.2 Transportation

As Kuakata is situated on the southernmost tip of Bangladesh, going to Kuakata seems a long and laborious journey for international tourists. The journey is pretty long and it may take 10-12 hours from Dhaka to reach Kuakata. Inbound tourists come here by bus or boat

and those are their popular means of transportation. Normally, foreign tourists wishing to go to Kuakata first go to Dhaka. From Dhaka there is direct bus service to Kuakata. Again from Dhaka, there are air, bus and boat transportation connecting to Barisal division. From Barisal to Kuakata (112km), there is only bus and boat transport. Boats are very popular in those area and the amenities in boats are good enough. As there are lots of rives and canals in the southern part of Bangladesh, there is no rail communication to Kuakata or even to Barisal. The fares of buses and boats are quite reasonable. The roads are now being repaired and widened. Before there were five ferries to cross on the way to Kuakata from Barisal, but now all of them are being replaced with nice bridges. Now the transportation facilities are better and faster than before. But if someone wants to have more luxury and avoid hassle in buses and boats, it is wise to go with a private car. (Ruposhibangla 2013.)

3.3 Accommodation

Accommodation facilities in Kuakata are not so developed. There are more than 30 hotels and motels in Kukata. Among all of them, ten hotels are very popular among tourists. Most hotels are run by the local people and they serve the demand of domestic tourists. Very few hotels are of international standard. (Tourbangladesh 2013.) The rent is different for domestic and international tourists. There are many restaurants surrounding the beach area. Most of these restaurants serve local food. There are also some food made of sea fish and dry fish are available almost in all restaurants. These types of food are very cheap and popular to Bangladeshi tourists. But there are not enough facilities to have fast food or foreign food. This is the price of an ideal hotel (Parjatan Holiday Homes) in Kuakata under Bangladesh Porjatan Corporation. This hotel serves everything for international tourists. (Tourismbangla 2013)

TABLE 1: Rent off different hotel rooms in a hotel at Kuakata (adapted from Tourismbangla 2013)

Rooms	Bed Type	US$ (International)	BDT (Local)
Economy Deluxe	1 Double	US$ 50.00	Tk. 1000.00
Premier Double	2 Single	US$ 60.00	Tk. 1200.00
Deluxe Non AC	1 Double	US$ 70.00	Tk. 1800.00
Deluxe AC	1 Double	US$ 80.00	Tk. 2000.00
VIP Suite AC	2 Single	US$ 90.00	Tk. 2800.00
All taxes & service charge are included			

The above table shows that the rent of hotel rooms varies a lot for domestic and international tourists. While the domestic tourists pay 1000 TK (BDT) which is equal to 13 dollar, but the foreign tourists need to pay 50 Dollar which is about four times more than normal.

3.4 Attractions and entertainment

Kuakata is not like a place which has only one attraction and some limited things to offer. It is a place, which gives the tourists a refreshing time at a sea beach along with some other natural beauty. Tourists come here to get rid of their urban life and to pass some days enjoying nature in a calm environment.

GRAPH 4. Natural beauty of Kuakata; rows of coconut trees (adapted from Travelobd 2013)

Most of the entertainments in Kuakata are related to visiting to its nearby places. When someone is at Kuakata, he/she can easily go to see the beauty of the largest mangrove forest in the world Sundarbans and Fatrar Chor; a fairly forest big forest in Kauakata (Interactivebangladesh 2013).

There are also Gangamoti reserved forsest, Jhaubon (a forest created by government initiative) which is surrounded by coconut trees, echo park at Jhaubon, Rakhain tribal community at Kuakata, very old Kuakata Buddhist temple (the biggest Buddhist Statue in South Asia), Kuakata Shutki Polli (dried fish village), Narikel Bagan (coconut garden) and so on. (Kuakatatours 2013.)

All these places are very close and within the walking distance. But one can take auto rickshaw, motor bike or boat to travel around. There is not any artificial entertainment facility for tourist. So, during day time, tourists are busy watching those, but at night they do not have anything special to do.

4. RESEARCH IMPLEMENTAION

The aim of this section is to introduce research methodologies which are used in this research. Firstly it describes different research types and how those methods can be used for a certain research. Later on, the author will discuss a little bit deeper about the methods adopted in this research.

4.1 Research approach

Research methodology is a universal phenomenon. Research methods are used in every field of research including leisure and tourism. Every field of knowledge has its own way of research. For example, scientific research is mainly related to laboratory experiments whereas tourism research is done on social and human behavior experiment. It is research of activities and characteristics of people, place, culture and happenings. Social science researches are three types. They are (i) descriptive research (ii) explanatory research and (iii) evaluative research. Among all these research methods, evaluative research is made for the need to make judgment on the success or effectiveness. Through evaluative research, researcher tries to find out the quality and potentiality of the research field. (Veal 2006, 1-5).

The aims of this chapter are to review different research methodology and to provide a clear understanding of research methods used in this report. Moreover, the data collection procedure, empirical findings, reliability and validity are also discussed.

4.1.1 Quantitative research process

Quantitative research is the process by which the reasons behind any kind of happening are described by collecting and analyzing the data and information. It is closely connected with numerical data and information. Through quantitative research methods, how things are happening is described rather than why things are happening. (Muijs 2011, 1-4.)

In other words, quantitative research involves statistical analysis. Here to find conclusion or to test hypotheses, it relies on numerical evidence. In quantitative research, to get reliable result, the research is done mainly on a large group of people. Data is collected by questionnaire survey, observation involving counts or from secondary sources and the result is attained mainly by using computer software. (Veal 2006, 40.)

4.1.2 Qualitative research process

Qualitative research can be described as a broad umbrella term which covers a wide range of techniques and philosophies. It allows a researcher to examine people's experiences in detail. (Hennink, Helter & Biley 2011, Chapter 2.)

There are some fields of study where quantitative research is not appropriate. When there is urge to analyze something more deeply, then qualitative research methods are the best way to do that.

Qualitative research is the collection of qualitative information to find out why things are happening rather than how things are happening. It describes something in a deeper and more significant way. It is not merely connected with numerical data. It gathers vast information from a smaller number of people while quantitative research method deals with a limited amount of information from a large number of people. Observation, informal and in-depth interview and participation observation are some ways of collecting data in qualitative research methods. But it is possible and sometimes necessary to use quantitative and qualitative methods together. (Veal 2006, 40)

4.2 Data collection methods

Qualitative research is a very flexible approach of research. Here, the interviewer tends to be very flexible towards the interviewee. There are many types of qualitative research methods which are used by the researcher based on research types and suitability. Some common types of qualitative research methods are; structured and semi-structured interview, in-depth or unstructured interview, group interview, participant observation, text analysis, biographical methods and ethnography. Data in research can be collected in sequential or recursive ways. In the sequential approach, from collecting data to writing the summary is done step by step where each step is related with the previous one. On the other hand, in the recursive process, data analysis and collection take place concurrently; and writing is often an ongoing process, rather than a separate process, which happens at the end of the project. Some advantages of qualitative research methods can easily be understood. Through qualitative research the researcher might get some additional key points by the face-to-face contract, gestures and reaction which might give researcher something more to point out. On the other hand, for people who are not statistically trained, qualitative research information is more understandable. (Veal 2006, 195-196.)

The empirical part of this research was done based on semi-structured interviews and text analysis. It would be very nice, if the research could be carried out by going to research field personally and taking interview from different groups of people like tourists, transportation and accommodation provider, local people and from the authority who are working behind this tourism sector.

But, this was not possible due to lack of money and time. So, author decided to conduct the interview by phone. It is really a big challenge to find someone for interview from a far distance to use their information for research purpose. It may take time and need some good techniques, but not impossible at all. In this research process, interviewee persons were selected randomly and also pre-planned ways by telephone calls and mail. Interviewees were found from different websites related to the tourism in Kuakata, tourist pages and social media to interview them for research purposes.

4.2.1 Semi-structured interview

Semi-structured interview is one of the most effective ways of data collection in qualitative research methods. It is characterized by its structure, length and depth. Normally, the semi-structured interview tends to be longer and more personal than the questionnaire-based interview. The duration can be half an hour to several hours long depending on the topic and area of discussion. Here, the interviewer asks some preplanned questions which cover all the information related to the research and gives the opportunity to talk freely to the interviewees. While in questionnaire-based interviews, data are collected from many respondents on some certain topics, but in in-depth interview data are collected from a small group of people or even from a single person by discussing very deeply. Here, the interviewer keeps himself/herself aloof from giving personal opinion; rather asking some explanatory questions to inspire the interviewees. The interview can be recorded for the benefit of making a summary with time but the interviewer must take prior permission to do that and promise that all the information given by the interviewee will be kept confidential and will be used only for the research purpose. (Veal 2006, 197-198.)

4.2.2 Text analysis

Textual analysis is a way of gathering information, here the researcher gathers information from different printed text and media and tries to find out the thinking of other human being in that area (Mckee 2003, 1). Nowadays, text analysis does not mean only printed media like books, novels or newspaper, but also posters, record music, films, television programmes, maps, landscape and so on. To make the research more authentic and practical text analysis method was also used with in-depth interview. The author was pondering and surfing different websites, blogs, videos, advertisement, newspaper articles and reading different journals, books and magazine related to the research field. All this collective effort gave the author a strong point to conclude any issues. (Veal 2006, 203.)

4.2.3 Interview process

The semi-structured interview was carried out by phone for this research. The interviewee persons were found from different blogs and webpages like Facebook and the researcher contacted them by mail and phone and motivated them to take part in this research. So, in total there were six interviews. Moreover, one interviewee was chosen by the author's own choice who is working as a lecturer of marketing at a government university 70km away from the research area. All these interviews were taken within two days. The interview was taken at the convenient time of the interviewee persons. One interview was taken by Skype calls and others were by mobile calls. Four interviews were recorded by taking permission from the interviewed persons. From other two interviews, notes were taken for important issues. The interviews were recorded by a recording device borrowed from Centria University of Applied Sciences. One interview was carried out in English. The others were conducted in Bengali and later on the transcript was written in English.

4.3 Reliability and validity

Validity is the extent to which the information that was collected by the researcher truly reflects the phenomenon being studied. Finding valid and reliable data for leisure and tourism research is sometimes difficult because the information given by the interviewees is greatly concerned with their attitudes, behavior and experiences. The instruments are subject to a number of imperfections, which means the data of leisure and tourism research are rarely can be as certain as in the natural sciences. (Veal 2006, 41.)

The data of this research was collected from interviewees who are in different ages and from different locations. Some of them visited Kuakata many times and some were for the first time and their excitement was more than the people who go there so often. On the other hand, the person who went to Kuakata more than once and stayed there during a longer time had experienced something more than others. So, the information given by all those people might rather scarce due to their unconscious and unaware motive. To get the

most valid research data, information should have been collected by spending a long time in the research area practically and examining a large group of people which is not possible all the time.

Reliability is the extent to which research findings would be the same if the research would be repeated at a later date or with different sample of subjects. Like in natural sciences, the experimental findings and information is always mostly the same even after a long period of time. But in social sciences is quite opposite of this characteristics as social sciences deal with human behavior and society. As the change of our society is a continuous process which affects the human behavior, it is not wise to expect the same kinds of output to a research topic in a later period of time. Even though, the identical questions were about the same topic in the future, the result will certainly be different. It happens for time, location, people and social facilities. (Veal 2006, 41.)

As the development of tourism in Kuakata is proceeding very fast, the results of this research might not be the same or true for future. But, now and for a certain period of time these findings might help the people who are working behind the development of Kuakata sea beach to understand the present scenario and work accordingly. Moreover this research results will work as a background history of tourism at Kuakata sea beach in Bangladesh.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this chapter is to examine the results from the structured interview and text analysis. It is expected that the findings of the interview will eventually reflect the actual situation of the research field and will accomplish the ultimate goal of the research. The data from interview was mostly descriptive and there was nothing which can be figure out by any specific number or ranking. The author has tried to take interviewees from some tourism experts who are directly related to the travel and tourism of Kuakata. Unfortunately, no one could be found who was interested to take part in an interview. Later on, data were collected from the interviewees who had visited Kuakata and examined the situation practically.

One of the interviewees was a lecturer of marketing of Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) which is only 70 km from Kuakata sea beach and he was very much aware of the place and things going on there. Another interviewee was a student of marketing from Dhaka University who was doing his internship in a real estate company. He was also found to be very informative and much conscious about the overall tourism situation of Bangladesh. In the interview process, most of the research questions were opinion-based and related to one's personal situation. All the interviewees have tried to explain their experiences from their own perspective. So, no information can be unique and cannot be put in a certain frame. Moreover the knowledge, experiences, financial situation, social status and expectations of all the interviewees were not same. But there are some common factors which are the same to everyone. There were something where the opinion of few can represent the vast group of people. Hence, the results of this research were drawn by analyzing all interviewees' information which was close to each other. Any information which seemed to have big difference with others was not taken into consideration.

5.1 Main findings

All the interviewees were from 19 to 32 years old. Four of them were students. Four interviewees had visited Kukata only once in their life and two of them several times in the past few years. The reasons behind visiting Kukata were almost same. Holiday trip and family tour are two common reasons behind travelling. All the interviewed persons visited Kukata within the past one year. Two of them went to Kukata less than six months ago. Two of them were visiting with family members; three were with friends and one with his wife. All of them were in Kukata from one to six days. So, the findings of the interview and summary of them were also discussed based on some topics which were sent earlier to most of the interviewees, so that they can think a little bit about what to say.

The most interesting thing which was found from those interviews was; Kuakata is developing very fast. Among six interviewees, some of them visited Kuakata more than six months ago and some were there less than one month ago. So, there were big differences within this time period. While, interviewees were talking even about same issues, there were many new things which are positive about that tourist attraction. The interviewee questions were divided into a few headings to get targeted information to find out the actual scenario.

5.1.1   Attractions of Kuakata for tourists

Kuakata is a very attractive tourist destination for all tourists. This place is well known to everyone. Everyone came to know about this place subconsciously. To all of them, Kukata is the second most attracting sea beach in Bangladesh after Cox's Bazar. Almost everyone knows about Cox's Bazar and went there more than once. So, they wished to visit Kuakata for leisure trip. Kuakata is situated on the southernmost tip of Bangladesh. So, to visit Kuakata, tourists need to take a little longer preparation. They need more money, time and energy to cover this long distance by boat, bus and some other vehicles. About information and marketing of Kuakata, "There was not any marketing in local media to promote solely this place (Islam)".

There were only some advertisements in TV to promote overall tourism of Bangladesh by Bangladesh Parjotan Corporation. On the internet there was information about Kuakata but those are very basic. Before, visiting tourists do not feel any need to collect information from the internet for available services, hotel booking and communication. To get reliable information, information was collected from friends and acquaintances because they think, information given in different pages is not enough and most of them are not updated on time. Before going to Kuakata everyone knew only about the beauty of the beach and did not have any ideas about the other attractions which were surrounding Kuakata.

GRAPH 5. Tourism promotional activities by Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (adapted from YouTube 2013)

Most of the tourists visiting Kuakata are from inside the country and the majority comes from the nearest cities. "Sometimes some tourists come here as a part of their study tour from their educational institution (Hossen)". International tourists are very minor in number and cannot be seen very often. One of the major reasons behind not to travel to Kuakata is the negative image of Kuakata as a flood affected place. In November 2007 Kuakata was highly affected by the devastating cyclone Sidr which caused huge damage to the life of local people. Kuakata is an undeveloped part of Bangladesh. Now this place is on the way to its development. So, people think that this place may fail to meet their expectations and enjoyment there.

There were some basic questions about interviewees visit. It consisted of time of travel, duration, reasons behind visiting and company of visitors. The reasons behind travelling

were almost the same for everyone. Those were for leisure and tourism purposes. Kuakata is a fascinating natural beauty spot. Everyone had wished to visit it for a long time.

The second question to the interviewees was, what they know about Kuakata and how did they come to know about it? "Kuakata is not an unknown place to any Bangladeshi. "I knew about Kuakata from my childhood (Hassan)" Later on they read about Kuakata in books, journal, and newspapers. They also came to know about this place by talking with people and friends and also from television and different travel pages. One information was known to everyone and very important to them was that Kuakata is the only place or one of the two places (another one in Japan) in the world from where people can enjoy the beauty of sunrise and sun set by standing on the same place. Kuakata is also known to everyone as "Sagor Konna" (the Daughter of the Sea). This place is at the one end of Bangladesh and after that there is the Bay of Bengal and one side is Sundarbans. This place is far from most of the cities and that is why tourists do not go there so often.

The author asked the interviewees about the marketing of Kuakata in local media like newspapers, TV, radio and also the internet and ways to attract more tourists to this destination. Almost everyone was of the opinion that, there was not enough marketing about Kuakata. One interviewee said that Kuakat is very much neglected as a tourist spot in Bangladesh. "The tourism potentiality and beauty of Kuakata have not discovered properly yet (Siddique)". Islam said that the reason behind not so much marketing of Kuakata is another sea beach (Cox's Bazar) inside the country which is the largest sea beach in the world. All the efforts go to attract more and more tourist to visit Cox's Bazar and people are much more excited about that. "There were some marketing by private organizations who have invested money in that regions and doing hotel and tour operating business in Bangladesh (Islam)". Bngladesh Parjatan Corporation; a government statutory board under the ministry of Civil Aviation & Tourism of Bangladesh is working to promote the overall tourism of Bangladesh. It is trying to attract tourists to different tourism destinations by television ads, internet marketing and so on. But, this organization is doing nothing special for Kuakata.

About online marketing and promotion, some of the interviewees were not aware about the situation. Others told that, nowadays internet marketing is being used more and more to attract tourists. There are available information in the internet about Kuakata and other

things of Bangladesh. But, the overall marketing situation is not satisfactory at all and it should be improved by taking some certain actions.

The author also tried to find out what kinds of tourists are going there. Interviewees answered this question directly without any confusion. They replied mostly tourist from inside the country mainly from Dhaka city; some come from nearby cities and very few foreign tourists. Interviewees also added that foreign tourists do not come here because they do not know so much about this place. Moreover, foreign tourists consider Bangladesh as a problematic country with a lot of population, everywhere crowded, polluted and unsafe place. Again, when some come to Bangladesh, they do not feel the interest to visit Kuakata as it is time consuming and troublesome to get there.

5.1.2 Transportation to Kuakata

About the transportation facilities, the author came to know some important reasons behind the improvised tourism of Kuakata and low tourist inflow to the destination. The interviewees opined that visiting Kuakata was a very tiresome journey. They think that its beauty is not fully discovered due to bad transpotation. The roads were really very bad tilled last year. Two of the interviewees went there before five months and they told that the roads to Kuakata are very bad; it is very muddy and bumpy. In some places it is dusty too. But from the recent visitors, the author came to know that now the roads are quite good, new roads were made and some roads were repaired. "The main problem is ferries (Hossen)". Though the distance to Kuakata from Dhaka is about 300 km it took a longer time than expected for the visitors to reach Kuakata due to five ferries on river which were needed in order to get across. The ferry services are very poor and cannot carry many vehicles at a time to reduce crowd. Sometimes it takes double time than expected; lots of hassle to cross the river makes the tourist get bored on the way.

But, visitors think that this problem will be solved very soon as three bridges are being constructed on the river to Kuakata. There is no direct air and rail communication to Kuakata. Buses and boasts are the two means of transportation. Air communication is

available only from Dhaka to the Barisal division. Visitors prefer to visit the Barisal division by boat and then by bus to Kuakata. "There are also direct bus services from Dhaka to Kukata from two main bus stations in Dhaka city (Hossen)". The bus services are just ordinary and most of the time they did not maintain time schedule.

One interviewee informed that there are very big differences between the bus services of Cox's Bazar and Kuakata. "From Dhaka, there are many luxurious buses and there are buses for all class of people according to their standard and need. But to Kuakata, same types of buses are used to carry all kinds of tourists (Islam)". So, the high class tourists and foreign tourist are being bound to travel in the same class of transport which dissatisfies tourists' need and expectations. But there were sufficient transports available everywhere. The ticket fare was reasonable and sometimes negotiable. Tourists should go to Kuakata by own private car or they can rent a car very cheaply to go directly and this is the best way to go if someone wants to save time and avoid hassle on the road as the interviewed persons suggested. Boat is also one of the luxurious ways to go to Kuakata, but it takes a long time to reach. Visitors think that buses and other transports are ok for them as Bangladeshi standard but it may fail to satisfy foreign tourists. (Vimeo 2013)

GRAPH 6. Tourism in Bangladesh; problem and prospect (adapted from Newage, 2011)

This news article was published in a popular English daily newspaper in Bangladesh in 2012. It has mentioned some points why Bangladeshi tourism sector is not growing very fast. It mentioned that lack of proper initiative is the main cause for undeveloped tourism sectors.

5.1.3 Accommodation and food

About accommodation issues, different interviewees expressed different opinions. Some thought that it is quite ok while others thought that there are lots of things to improve. Accommodations facilities in Kuakata are not as standard as other tourist attractions in Bangladesh. "In Kuakata, hotel/motel business is mainly run by local people where most houses are used as a guest house as well (Molla)". But these hotels were built without following regulation and run without proper monitoring. "Among 30 to 50 hotels only four five hotels are very much standard have all modern amenities (Islam)". There is one hotel called Parjatan Hotel Kuakata that was built by government initiative and other hotels are private owned. Parjatan Hotel has all arrangements for upper-class domestic and international tourists. They have also well-trained chef from UNESCO to serve standard food for foreign tourists. "Now many big and small hotels are also being built which are five stars hotel standard. Most of the times, the customers of good hotels are business class people who are investing money to different sectors in Kuakata region like housing and accommodation. They come to visit Kuakata so often and stay there (Jubaer)".

There is one good thing at Kuakata which is that, there are hotels and all kinds of arrangements which can meet the need of all kinds of people. If someone is very economical and wants to manage everything very cheaply, they can easily do that. There is a very big gap in range of rent. The cheapest hotel room can be found within 500 BDT (5 Euro) and the expensive one is more than 10,000 BDT (100 Euro) (Molla).

The service quality of those hotels also varies a lot. "Cheap hotels just serve the basic needs while expensive hotels have many additional arrangements for tourists (Islam)". Good hotels have their own websites and advance reservation facilities. On the other hand, cheap hotels do not have any website and sometimes cannot be reached even by telephone

calls. The demand for those hotel rooms and rent depend on times of year. In peak seasons, hotel rooms are not always available and rent goes up. While, in off seasons, accommodation are comparatively cheaper and in most of the cases the rent is negotiable. Cheap hotels are not so neat and clean but expensive hotels provides very cozy environment to the tourists. Most of the hotels staffs speak only Bengali, in better hotels staffs are more skilled and have the skill to communicate with foreign tourist effectively. One of the interviewees (Jubaer) opines that, hotels' staffs and the service provider do not feel the need for any second or foreign language to practice as most of the tourists coming here are from inside the country. When they will feel the urge to use, they must learn in that time.

Siddique said, there are many good hotels and restaurants surrounding the beach area. Most of those restaurants provide typical Bangladeshi food. There are also some other foods made of different sea fish and vegetables which are not so common in all over the country. Besides, big restaurants there are many small tea stalls and other typical Bangladeshi food shop available everywhere. Tourists can easily buy those foods and fresh drinks like coconut for water very cheaply at any time of the day. Some good hotels have attached restaurants and if they do not have they arrange for the tourist if requested. Interviewees could not tell so certainly about the services for the foreign tourists, but they thought that as there were some foreign tourists they might have arranged something for them as well. Interviewees expressed very big shock about the hygiene and quality of food in the beach area. They told that, there were big differences between good restaurants and poor ones. Good restaurants serve food in a very tidy environment and they maintain hygiene so tightly, where cheap hotels do not maintain at all. They said that, as a local tourist it was not a surprise for me, but it might catch the attention of foreign tourists (Hossen). Prices of those foods were very cheap and anyone could manage it very easily. Food shops were available from dawn to 10 o'clock at night but some shops which sold different fried items were open till 11 o'clock to 12 o'clock.

5.1.4 Safety and security issues

The author was trying to find out the safety and security issues in Kuakata. All the interviewees answered almost similar. They thought that it was a quite safe and secure place for them. "As a Bangladeshi I am not scared by strangers and very calm environment in the beach area (Molla)". About the safety measures which were available in the beach area, they must be improved a lot. There was not enough information about the beach, its depth, where to go and where not to go. Some information was available but those were only in Bengali, information should be in English and there should have some symbols as well, the tourists thought. There are not enough lifesaving matters if needed. There was a hospital for sick people but that was not so close. For Bangladeshi tourists these kinds of factors are very less important as they are used to this kind of environment. But, for foreign tourists it is better to have a tourist guide with them otherwise they can be scared by intrusive talking of local people.

5.1.5   Entertainment facilities

According to the tourists' opinion, entertainments in Kuakata were all natured based. Walking on the long sandy sea beach, or watching the natural beauty nesting to the beach and forest by hiring motorbike, or going to middle of the sea by small boat, visiting the place of royal Bengal tiger in the Sundarban forest were common to everyone. In Kuakata, tourists were always busy visiting many places nearby like Lalkakarchor (island of red crab), Shutkipolli (dried fish village), Fatrarchor (another island), Buddhist temple, Rakhaine market (tribal people's market) and so on. The most fascinating things for the tourist were enjoying sun rise and sun set from the same place. They knew that this is the second place (another one is in Japan) on earth from where people get the opportunity to enjoy sunrise and sunset standing in the same place.

One interviewee added that, in some other tourists place in Bangladesh there is not so many things special, but in Kuakata there are lots of things which are unique. "It is much

natural and the people who want to get rid of busy and crowed life this place may bring a peaceful environment to them Islam)".

When the author wanted to ask that, was there any artificial entertainment arrangements for the tourists, most of the interviewees replied nothing like that. Kuakata is a nature based beauty spot and this is its specialty. What the visitors will get after visiting Kuakata cannot be fulfilled by other sea beaches. One interviewee compared the Kuakata with Cox's Bazar sea beach and said, in Cox's Bazar, there is sea beach in one side and another side is full of rows of hotels and building whereas in Kukata one side is sea beach and another side is forest. Another interviewee was adding with lots of enthusiasm that "You cannot watch the Kuakata sea beach area within a short time. You must have to plan for a longer trip if you want to cover all beauty spots there (Hassan)". He was there for six days and still he thinks that was not enough for him!

Despite all those things, some tourist may get bored at night as there was nothing special for night time like big market place, good place to sit and gossip, and hang around. There was no night club or bar which a foreign tourist might expect from there.

5.1.6 Other factors related to Kuakata

The author was also trying to get some other information to find out the overall tourism scenario of Kuakata by some questions. Those questions were attitude of local people towards tourists, consciousness of people, environment friendly tourism development and so on. The interviewees answered those questions in a same line and there were not so much differences about their opinion. Everyone felt that the people in Kuakata region are very much friendly and supportive. They like tourists who go there. One emphasized that, Bangladeshi people are very much hospitable than other countries. People here like to talk with tourists and try to help them as much as possible. But sometimes they try to force the tourists to buy something or try to influence too much to take a certain services which may make the tourists awkward and dissatisfied. Moreover, one explained that the people in the beach area are not so much educated and well trained. "When they talk with tourists, most of them do not know the proper way of behaving. How the tourists can be bored and when

is time to talk and when not to talk. Sometimes they try to do everything for financial gain which is not a good phenomenon (Jubaer)".

The author was talking about the cleanliness of Kuakata sea beach. Every interviewee informed that Kuakata is a very neat and clean sea beach. Its area is not polluted and water is very much fresh. Interviewees explained that the people in this area are not so much conscious about environment friendly tourism activities and do not care about not polluting the nature by filth and rubbish. "But this place is still much clean as not so many tourists are going there. But when the number of visitors will increase there is a risk of pollution (Islam)". The government should take some necessary steps to keep the environment clean and make people conscious about the importance of sustainable tourism was the interviewed opinion. One interviewee (Hassan) informed the author that now of the Bangladeshi mobile company (banglalink) is work voluntarily to Keep Cox's Bazar sea beach net and clean. So, if any company like banglalink works for Kuakata sea beach that will help for tourism development in Kuakata.

The author was also asking about available ATM booth and other financial services in Kuakata. One of the recently visited interviewee confirmed that now they have ATM booth close to the beach. Other interviewees think that nowadays financial transaction is not a concern in Bangladesh. Everywhere in Bangladesh there are mobile money transfer services where anyone can collect or send money very easily and safely. About internet accessibility, every interviewee answered, at present everyone in Bangladesh can use internet in their mobile very cheaply. So there is no need of cybercafé for internet use.
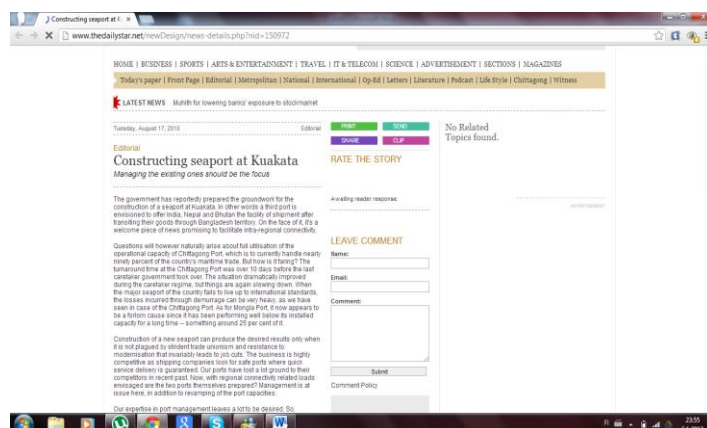
GRAPH 7. Constructing seaport at Kuakata (adapted from Dailystar 2013)

The last question of the author was about how the interviewees felt after visiting Kuakata. All the interviewees expressed that their trip was really very awesome. They had the feelings that they want to go there many times more. One interviewee (Hassan) was telling laughingly that he wish to go there at least ten times in his life. Others were telling that they might visit this place again in future if they get any opportunity. They told that if someone wants to see the beauty of nature, different life style, very cool and calm environment and want to have different kinds of pleasure they should go to Kuakata.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS TO ATTRACT MORE TOURISTS TO KUAKATA

The goal of this research was to analyze the tourism situation of Kuakata sea beach understand its demand and potentialities, people's expectations and feelings after visit, marketing prospect of Kuakata to local and international tourists and so on. So, after a worthy study and research, it is needed to give some suggestions which might help to attain the goal of the study and develop the tourism in Kuakata. These can work to attract more tourists to Kuakata from inside and outside the country.

Below, there are some recommendations which can play vital role to develop Kuakata sea beach.

Government should take some steps only for highlighting Kuakata to domestic and international tourists by some proper marketing as this place is still not so well known to foreign tourists. More importance should be given to electronic media marketing to cover all over the world. In TV, internet, YouTube or social media there should have more marketing to highlight this place.

Still there is not any own website for Kuakata by tourism board of Bangladesh. The information about Kuakata is along with others attractions of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (Govt. tourism organization) website which lacks details information about Kuakata and proper up-to-date information about what is going on there. Some information is available in some other websites and blog which are not reliable and not updated properly due to lack of experts and skills.

Thirdly the government should give more importance to increase to domestic tourists flow because; when this place will be very much popular to local people it might get the attention of neighbouring countries and later on others countries. For that purpose, there need more investment of money and proper planning which was not done so far.

There are many hotels, motels and travel agents in Kuakata region which do not have any websites and can be reached by telephone calls and can be gained details information if needed.

There is not proper monitoring system to control and improve hotel business, security issues and transportations which might be taken seriously.

The environment in Kuakata sea beach is still neat and clean, but it is forwarding towards the way of pollution. So, proper initiatives should be taken to protect it from pollution and local people should be encouraged not to mar the beauty of the beach area.

There is not any easy transportation to Kuakata who wants to go there from long distances. The easiest mode of travel can be boat and bus. So, the government should launch good quality boat to that area. Bus services are not so good. It can be developed as Cox's bazar route. There should have different types of buses based on the need and demand of tourists.

Kuakata is endowed with natural beauty. Tourists remain busy during day time to travel different places. But when it is night they get bored to stay at hotels or to walk around. They need some refreshment and entertainment at night. So, some entertainment facilities for night time should be available. It can be nightclub, theatre, some exhibitions, and good shopping mall for shopping or places to sit outside and gossip.

At the beach, there is not enough information and guide about the beach in English and other languages. So, there should have more signs and information in English and other languages.

After all, there should be proper initiatives and planning to develop tourism of Kuakata. Easy and convenient communication is the most important things to inspire tourists to choose Kukata by the tourists to travel. Now, the local and foreign tourists are very much keen to visit Cox's Bazar and St. Martin Island. But, government should work such a way which create a different impression about Kuakata in their mind and feel free to visit there so often.

6   CONCLUSIONS

This research has hopefully provided the necessary information which is related to the overall situation of Kuakata. The aim of this work was to find out the tourism prospect and development possibilities of Kuakata sea beach by analyzing the current situation of that region. According to the research the inbound tourist of Bangladesh are very much satisfied after visiting Kuakata. Transportation is the main obstacle to the tourists and it is very much time consuming. Again, the foreign tourists rarely know about Kuakata due to lack of marketing and promotional activities. The research found that there is minimal marketing and effort for Kuakata to make it as tourist attractions for tourists from different parts of the world. The development of Kuakata region is forwarding mainly by private companies and local entrepreneurs. Due to the lack of government attention this potential sector of Bangladesh is crippling for many years instead of running. The study found that, bad transportation system is one of the major causes to keep this attraction aloof from other places in Bangladesh. Political instability is also affecting Bangladeshi tourism much negatively in the international arena. Foreign tourists are scared to visit Bangladesh because of over crowd, pollution, political instability and lack of security. Moreover there should have more emphasis on sustainability in tourism to compete with other countries.

The study was done based on qualitative research. But to get more satisfactory results data for qualitative research should have collected from tourism experts who are working behind the tourism development at Kuakata region. But the author did not find any tourism expert by phone calls and sending email. As the research is related to tourism development in Kuakata region; author decided to collect data from the tourist who has visited to that place in past one year. The data was collected from six semi-structured interviews by phone calls. Because of lack of opportunity, resources and time it was not possible to take interview from different group of people, like local inhabitants, tourism service operators, hotels and restaurant staffs, travel agents and international tourists. So the results of this research cannot be in generalized to all. Different group of people might have different opinion and something more to add. So, the results of this research are based on tourist perspective and may not be implement to everyone.

Again, some interviewees visited the area even more than half a year ago. So, there might have some changes about which intervieweed persons are not updated. The numbers of

interviews were not so many to cover a vast group of people. Some information was also collected by text analysis, but there were not so much publications, data and specific information about the research area to get a vast assumption and to make a concrete decision about something. Some data can be found in eBooks but those are very old and there were dramatic change in those areas after that time. So, that information could not be taken into consideration.

Anyway, the research has increased the professional skills of the author in many ways. Being a tourism student, the author is very interested to marketing of tourism, destination branding, developing a tourism sector by good strategies and so on. The vast and deep study related to this research has fulfilled that keen of study to great extent to the writer. In spite of some weaknesses and limitations, the author hopes this work and findings will help to develop the tourism prospect of Kuakata sea beach in Bangladesh in many ways.

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Themes of interview

Personal info:
- Name
- Age
- Profession
- Place of residence

About Visit:
- When?
- Reasons behind travelling?
- With whom?
- For how long?

About Kuakata:
- How did you know about Kuakata?
- Is there available information in internet or local media?
- Is there enough marketing to attract tourist (local and international)?
- Mostly what types of tourist are coming?
  - ➢ From nearby cities/ all over the country, foreign countries?

Transportation:
- What types of transportation facilities are available there?
  - ➢ (air, bus, train, boat, others)
- Quality of services?
  - ➢ Condition of roads, transport, time management etc?
- Did you face any problem during your visit?
- What can be developed for easy and more relaxed communication to Kuakata?

Accommodation:
- What types of accommodations are there?
- Rent?
- Quality of services?
- Available information in internet?
- Online booking service?
- Communication skills of service provider? (local language/ English/other foreign language)

Food:

- Available restaurant, fast-food shop, foreign food, coffee shop/bar?
- What types of food?
- Quality of food?
- Price?
- Opening and closing time?

Safety and Security issues:

- Did you feel safe?
- What kind of safety measures are there?
  - Safety at sea-beach (available information, lifesaving materials, emergency services)
  - Safety at the outside areas?

Entertainment:

- What sorts of entertainment are available there? (day and also at night)
- Things to do around?

Others:

- Local people's attitude to tourist?
- Communication skills?
- Environmental issues? (consciousness of people/ cleanliness)
- Available bank, ATM booth, other facilities?
- Internet accessibility, cyber café?
- Anything special for foreign tourists?

Your feelings after the visit:

- You wish to visit again, never, may be, depend on something…

If you have something to say more…

Thanks for your time and patience