

Tourists Satisfaction Level in Sonargoan: An Ancient and Underrated Heritage Tourism Destination of Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

Bangladesh is a small country of Asia with enormous tourism assets. In spite of the fact that it is a small country however, it has numerous legacy locales out of them three are World Heritage. Each inheritance regions demonstrates its fundamental perspectives and qualities. Sonargoan is similarly a heritage the movement business objective. Sonargoan was an outstanding definitive and business concentration in Bengal and It was described by many globetrotters including Ibn Battuta, Ma Huan, Niccolò de' Conti, and Ralph Fitch as a prospering focal point of trade and exchange. It was a definitive point of convergence of Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah's sultanate, the Bengal Sultanate and the Kingdom of Bhati. Numerous royal residences and structures are yet remaining as the observer of antiquated design. Although Sonargoan is having a rich history but due to some lacking, it loses its appeal to the tourist and now it is considered as an underrated tourism destination. In this paper, the tourist satisfaction level of Sonargoan, some reasons for being underrated and their probable solutions have been identified and discussed.

1. Introduction

Heritage tourism is a standout amongst the most imperative parts of the tourism industry. The National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States defines heritage tourism as "travelling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past". There are many heritage tourism destinations in Bangladesh and Sonargoan is one of them. Sonargaon was the capital of the old kingdom governed by Isa Khan of Bengal. Bengal is currently isolated into West Bengal, which is a state in India and Eastern Bengal, which is the country of Bangladesh today. Sonargoan is situated around 14 kilometres from Dhaka city in the Southeast side of the Dhaka-Chittagong roadway. Fakhruddin Mubarak Shah set it up as the capital city in the fourteenth century (it was known as Subarnogram). The main purpose of this research is to measure the tourist satisfaction level of Sonargoan.

2. Objectives of the study

- To know about the history of Sonargoan
- To measure the tourist satisfaction level of Sonargoan
- To identify the reasons behind being underrated
- To find out some probable solutions

3. Methodology of the study

The main purpose of this research paper is to measure the tourist satisfaction level of Sonargoan. For doing this research, data was collected from two different sources i.e. Primary and secondary. Primary Data is collected by performing a public survey of 40 people who have visited Sonargoan recently and Secondary Data is collected from various sources, and those include Books, Journals, Magazines, Newspaper, Articles and Internet.

4. Literature Review

4.1: History of Sonargoan:

Old Sonargaon is home to the absolute most seasoned structures in Bangladesh. Old Sonargaon can be found close Narayanganj and Dhaka, urban communities in Bangladesh, and is viewed as one of the first and most established capitals of Bengal. Sonargaon was known as "The City of Panam" and was a central piece of the prestigious Deva Dynasty until the thirteenth century. Fundamentally centre or high society individuals possessed Sonargaon amid that timeframe. After the thirteenth century Sonargaon was made an auxiliary cash-flow to the primary capital of the Sultanate of Bengal. This auxiliary position that Sonargaon had now taken, endured until the entry of the Mughals. The Mughal Empire began in India and was first established in 1526 by Babur, a Turco-Persian pioneer. The supreme Mughal emissaries ruled Bengal, and along these lines Sonargaon, for almost a century prior to Bangladesh was established in 1608. Today, numerous individuals still visit the notable city of Sonargaon. They are pulled in by its huge excellence and by the remnants of structures and relics that go back to the time of Bengal. The Galdia Mosque is arranged in the Galdia town and is an awesome case of an old Sonargaon building. The Folklore Museum is another fascination, which is visited by many. The Folklore Museum of Sonargaon houses an assortment of antiques from all over Bangladesh, speaking to the numerous social gatherings that exist in this nation. For those intrigued by chronicled and archaeological relics, which have been uncovered from Sonargaon, the Jainal Abedin Museum is a decent place to visit. You can even now observe the unblemished holy places of Shah Abdul Alia and Panjirs, and the Tomb of Sultan Ghas ud Din. In the event that you travel simply out of Sonargaon, into the field, you will see a case of a Moghul Palace and an old exhibition hall. These two structures

are situated on excellent grounds with bunches of feathered creatures, trees and plants, a lake and various shielded strolls. Old Sonargaon is a brilliant city to visit, with such a great amount to offer guests if history and culture is the thing that they appreciate.

4.2: Major tourist attractions of Sonargaon:

- Sonargaon folk art and craft museum:** The fundamental gallery building is put at the "Sardar Bari". "Sardar Bari" was worked by a Hindu Zamindar of Sonargaon in 1901. Alike the other Zamindar place of that period, this one additionally looks like Indian houses. The rococo embellishment and the expounded painting on the mortar of the building are truly attractive. Lok Shilpa Jadughar (Folk Art and Craft Museum) of Sonargaon was set up by Bangladeshi painter Joynul Abedin on March 12, 1975. It's a tremendous region and will set aside you bunches of opportunity to round the region. You'll discover a workmanship display of "Zainul Abedin" inside the gallery zone. There are two Exhibition Galleries inside the historical centre. The two comprise of some status appearing neighbourhood life of Bangladeshi individuals, for instance, cultivating, women working and so forth.
- Panam Nagar or Panam City:** It is an ancient historical city is situated at Sonargaon in Narayanganj district, not very far from the Dhaka city. There are three cities in the area named Boro nogor (Big City), Khas Nogor and Panam Nogor. Panam is the most charming city among the three. Many historical buildings are located there, which covered a huge area and those were built centuries ago. It's very near to the Folk Art & craft Foundation at Sonargaon. The shortest path of Panam nagor to see the old buildings is to start walking from the western part of the panam and then move forward to the end of the city at the eastern side. It's a nice place to roaming around for the locals and tourists to observe and feel the centuries-old city and the excellent ancient culture & heritage of the people living in that area during that time.
- Banglar Taj Mahal:** Taj Mahal of Bangladesh is a scaled duplicate of the first Taj Mahal (a Mughal mausoleum situated in Agra, India) situated in Sonargaon. In contrast to the first, chip away at the building took just five years. Development started in 2003, however the planners Mr. Moni says that he concocted the thought in 1980 when he previously visited the genuine Taj in Agra. It's the place to see the most delightful engineering structure made by Bangladesh and the historical backdrop of Asian culture.
- Neel Kuthi:** During the British period, a building was developed by the East Indian Company at Dalalpur which is in the region of Panam. It is situated in the North of the Dalalpur Bridge on the eastern side of the street. It was assembled at first for the buying and

exchanging of Muslin. It is a quadrangular tow story block working with a yard. The building began directly from the edge of the street and is isolated by a plinth. The back of the building is made out of clear dividers. The primary passage is situated out and about and the other passageway is amidst the North divider. Throughout the years, the first structure of the building has disappeared. Subsequently, just records inform us concerning the engineering configuration just as the character of the first building and how the designs communicated the transportation from European design with the mixing of Mughal design.

5. Analysis & Discussion

Table 1: Tourists Satisfaction Level of Sonargaon:

Title	*	**	***	****	*****
Accommodation	12	27	1	0	0
Accessibility	3	17	14	6	0
Safety & Security	2	11	19	8	2
Amenities	1	7	17	13	2
Attractions	0	1	2	16	21
Affordability	0	0	0	18	22

Source: Field Survey

A field survey has been performed based on 6 criteria among the 40 tourists who have visited Sonargaon. On that field survey it has been noticed that Accommodation got 1* from 12 respondents, 2* from 27 respondents and 3* from 1 respondents. Accessibility got 1* from 3 respondents, 2* from 17 respondents, 3* from 14 respondents and 4* from 6 respondents. 2 respondents gave 1*, 11 respondents gave 2*, 19 respondents gave 3*, 8 respondents gave 4* and 2 respondents gave 5* for Safety and Security. In terms of Amenities 1 respondents gave 1*, 7 gave 2*, 17 gave 3*, 13 gave 4* and 2 respondents gave 5*. Attractions got 2* from 1 respondent, 3* from 2 respondents, 4* from 16 respondents and 5* from 21 respondents. For affordability Sonargaon got 4* from 18 respondents and 5* from 22 respondents.

6. Result and Findings

According to the Table 1 it has been seen that most of the tourist are satisfied with the affordability and attractions of Sonargaon but they are very frustrated with the accommodation facilities and the accessibility of Sonargaon is not good enough. Table 1 also shows that the levels of Safety and security as well as amenities are average. The government should be concern enough to develop Sonargaon as a heritage tourist destination.

7. Reason behind Being Underrated

- Lack of Promotion:** Advertisement and promotion is needed for developing a particular tourism destination. For the limitations of promotion Sonargaon is not in the spot light as a heritage tourism destination.
- Lack of Accommodation:** There is no quality full hotel in Sonargaon. For the insufficiency of good and

quality full hotel the tourist do not want to visit this place.

- c) **Lack of Transportation:** As this city is located in the rural area which is outside of Dhaka so the transportation system is not that much developed. For the lack of transport facilities this destination is losing its appeal to the tourist.
- d) **Lack of Awareness:** Many people of Bangladesh are not that much aware about the heritage tourism that's why people do not understand the importance of heritage tourism.
- e) **Lack of Safety and Security:** Safety and security is one of the most important factors for developing a particular destination. Some people claim that there is insufficiency of safety and security in Sonargaon.
- f) **Insufficiency of Tour Guide:** Tour guide must be needed for the tourist for visiting any heritage destination because of there are a hundreds of stories are hidden on every pieces of brick of that places. But there is insufficiency of tour guide on that particular place.
- g) **Communication Problem:** The foreign tourists have to face communication problem because of English language is not practices widely by the local people.

8. Recommendations

- BPC (Bangladesh Porjoton Corporation) should take some necessary steps to promote this destination.

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Promotion and advertisement can be done through the electronic media, print media as well as the social media also.

- BPC (Bangladesh Porjoton Corporation) should start some training institution from where the local will be trained about tour and travel management.
- The local tour operator should give focus on that destination and they should make the travel itinerary for that destination.
- Quality hotels and lodge should be established for the comfort purpose of the tourist.
- The government should take some necessary steps for developing the transportation systems. The government can start tourist bus service for that destination.
- Sufficient number of police should be appointed for the safety and security purpose of the tourist by the government.

9. Conclusion

Heritage tourism is a great source of earning revenue. Sonargaon can be developed as a heritage tourism destination. It is holding the history of past 800 years. If this destination can be developed then for sure the domestic tourist as well as the foreign tourist will come to visit this place as it is very near to the Dhaka.