

# **Magnificent Cox's Bazar: Tourist Destination**

**By Prof. Dr. Akbaruddin Ahmad**

My connection with Cox's Bazar dates back to 1953 when as a child of class 3 in St. Gregory's High School, Dhaka, I accompanied my elder brother Qutub who later became a renowned banker was studying in class 6 at the same school. My father Jalaluddin Ahmad who was the Income Tax Commissioner then decided to send us to our uncle's place in Cox's Bazar. My uncle Monaimuddin Ahmad was the SDO based in Cox's Bazar and retired as the Dep. Governor, State Bank of Pakistan. We reached Chittagong by train and stayed at my father's colleague's house for a couple of days before leaving for Cox's Bazar by a launch and then a Sampan (boat). There was no launch ghat at Cox's Bazar. It was scary when I was lowered from the launch to the boat. I was screaming with fear.

My uncle (Khalu) was a kind-hearted man with a relatively large family. His office jeep was probably amongst the very few motorized transport seen those days at this remote location. He took us to Ramu to see the beautiful temple with Lord Buddha's statue and the priests who were present to receive the SDO and his family. I realized that the SDO was a big shot and greatly respected by all. His son Mansur who later became Major General Mansur Ahmad and his younger brother Masrur Ahmad who later retired as a Member, National Board of Revenue, were my two cousins with whom I would go out to swim at the magnificent, clean and the longest sea beach, Cox's Bazar. For our safety, the SDO's orderly was always present and alert. He taught us to swim and tackle the huge waves. The air was clean, the sea water was fresh and the food we ate was healthy and nutritious. I gained weight during my 3 weeks stay. Early morning we went out collecting sea shells. What beautiful pieces we collected and played with the sand. My mind flashes over 5 decades back when as children we ran to the sea at around 10 in the morning for 3 hours. After a refreshing bath we over lunch. This routine we followed that helped build my appetite.

During the end of December 2011, I decided to take my family on a short visit to see the over 3,00,000 tourists' new year celebration at Cox's Bazar. This visit was after 5 years after and that was after a gap of 10 years. During the last 5 years the development in Cox's Bazar has been noteworthy. Through private initiatives mostly, a large number of hotels and restaurants have been established. We stayed in a new 5 star hotel, the Ocean Paradise that has all the luxury needed to entertain the most demanding tourists from home and abroad. The government needs to develop the roads and beautify the place to attract more tourists. Cox's Bazar is a great gift of nature bestowed on Bangladesh. We can mint money if an international airport and a special zone for foreigners with all facilities including visa on arrival, the government patronizes and helps private sector develop the tourism industry.