

Aviation and tourism needs two secretariats, not one

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Dhaka : Rizwan Rahman, President of DCCI has proposed two separate secretariats for civil aviation and tourism, instead of just one. This, he said, is for the good of country's tourism industry, which this far remained under the shadow of civil aviation.

Rizwan was participating in the seminar on Online Travel Agencies, organised by The Bangladesh Monitor.

To provide tourism industry the needed policy support, Rizwan urged Bangladesh Bank to lift its travel expense quota of USD 12,000 so that travellers can enjoy their travels without any worry while paying taxes to the government as concerned citizens.

And to generate more inbound tourism, he asked the authorities to make bar licenses for hotels easy.

About OTAs, Rizwan said the coronavirus pandemic has taught us how important they are. This industry can seek help from the ICT Ministry as well. Since OTA is an IT enabled service, it falls under the ICT category. Thus, it has a scope to avail the facilities the government is offering to the IT sector such as tax redemption as well as other infrastructure and policy support.

And to further bolster OTAs' services, banks must facilitate hassle free online payment methods to the customers. He also called for unity among the 22 trade body associations the travel industry has, to address their issues to the government in one voice.

Moreover, "I call on BIDA and urge them to promote local investors including OTA entrepreneurs as 85 per cent of the country's economy is home-grown. The National Board of Revenue also has a key role here to promote tourism industry as a whole. "For it, we must show them the avenues of income they could get by facilitating the industry," Rizwan concluded.