

Aviation trade body calls for import duty reduction on accessories

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Dhaka : Transport sector representatives including airways on March 23 called on the government to lower import duties on the equipment and accessories used for carriers in the upcoming budget for the fiscal year 2021-2022, referring to the troubles they had been facing following the coronavirus pandemic.

The officials of nine trade bodies representing airways, roadways, and waterways, also urged NBR to exempt them from advanced taxes while reviewing some of the taxation measures that the trade bodies call irrational.

The request was made during a pre-budget discussion with the top officials of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) at its headquarters in the city on March 23. NBR Chairman Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem joined the meeting virtually, while other NBR officials attended the pre-budget discussion in person.

Officials of nine trade bodies - including Aviation Operators Association of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Inland Waterways (passenger carriers) Association, Cargo Vessel Owners' Association, Bangladesh Cargo Vessel Owners' Association, Four Stroke CNG Auto Rickshaw and Three Wheelers Motorbike Owners Association of Bangladesh, and Bangladesh Automobile Assemblers and Manufacturers Association of Bangladesh- joined the meeting.

Aviation Operators Association of Bangladesh (AOAB) Secretary General Mofizur

Rahman said the aviation industry of Bangladesh had been severely hit by the coronavirus pandemic. Many aviation operators had to shut their businesses as they went bankrupt.

Now, for the existing operators to sustain, there is a dire need for strong policy support from the government, Mofizur Rahman said who is also the Managing Director of NOVOAIR.

The industry needs strong policy support to become a regional hub in aviation which the government envisions, he added.

Rahman requested the revenue board to assign a separate HS (Harmonised System) code for the import of aircraft equipment to avoid complexities in the taxation system.

He also urged the NBR to exempt five per cent advanced tax on the sector, which has already been suffering from cash crunch.

Rahman also identified the VAT on chartered helicopter service as excessive and requested the authorities to decrease it.