

Traditional TAs, OTAs must be under same policy : ATAB, HAAB Presidents

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Dhaka : The government must bring both traditional and online travel agencies under the same policy to ensure fair competition in the market and growth in the industry.

This was expressed by Shahadat Hossain, President of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh in his speech at the seminar organised on OTAs' emergence in the country by The Bangladesh Monitor on March 9 at a city hotel.

Monsur Ahmed Kalam, President of Association of Travel Agents Bangladesh also attended the seminar and said,

Oline platforms providing travellers with total travel solutions is a need of today's time but it is of absolute necessity to ensure discipline in the market, since there had been instances where ill-intended businessmen tried to abuse the system for personal agendas.

Monsur Ahmed Kalam, President of ATAB called for unity among traditional and online travel agencies to work together for the betterment of the industry. He requested OTAs to stay true to the seven per cent commission practice to keep the market healthy and the industry prosperous.

On the other hand, HAAB President urged OTAs to refrain from cross-border trade as it will deeply harm the country and market alike.

HAAB is also in line with adapting technology into its services to offer better solutions to its customers, mentioned the president. The association has introduced HMIS - Hajj Management Information System - for its hajj pilgrims (96 per cent of the total market) and umrah pilgrims (100 per cent of the total market), generating

a total transaction of BDT 12 thousand crore a year.

Hossain further urged banks to waive the two per cent fee they charge on cards to OTAs as well as traditional travel agents referring how it is putting us behind than the rest of the world.