

Today's survivors in hospitality will sustain in long run : Omni Residency GM

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The premier business boutique hotel Omni Residency located at Banani in the capital opened its door to the guests on March 8 last year, right after the coronavirus pandemic started taking over the world and right before the government of Bangladesh imposed lockdown to curb the virus spread in the country.

At the beginning, the hotel had 60-70 per cent occupancy which, however, fell down to only one per cent in the coming days amid the pandemic, said Md Jahangir Hossain Sohag, who joined Omni Residency as the General Manager on February 1, 2020, and played the lead role in the hotel launching.

"The lion share of the guests at Omni as well as other city (Dhaka) hotels are occupied by foreign visitors, specially business travellers. So, without them, we are close to zero in occupancy."

"We are focusing on domestic guests now," explained the General Manager. Local business travellers from MNCs, NGOs, banks and others, from Chattogram, Barisal, Saidpur, and many other cities of the country are visiting Dhaka, expressed Sohag, adding, such clientele occupies 15-20 per cent of Omi's occupancy.

Also, to attract walk-in guests, Omni is currently offering F&B promotions. The hotel features a beautiful all-day dining multi-cuisine restaurant that offers a la carte

menu as well as buffet for breakfast and lunch or dinner. On weekends, different BOGO offers are available to guests and for any kind of social or corporate event, guests can have a customised buffet menu too.

And to ensure utmost security in this distressful time, the hotel has doctors at the hotel and regularly disinfect the entire property and everything coming and going with ultramodern fog machines.

"The plan now is to survive this crisis. If we can survive now, we can sustain later," stressed the General Manager.

When asked about his foresights, Sohag claimed travel and hospitality recovery will gradually start this year as vaccines are being rolled out across the globe. But it will take no sooner than 2022 for the industry to fully recover from the hit caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

He shared, in the first month of launching, March, 2020, Omni earned a revenue of BDT 65-70 lac. If not for Covid-19, the hotel was eyeing to earn over BDT 1 crore a month by now. But, in reality, due to the unprecedented travel slump following the coronavirus pandemic, the hotel is now earning only BDT 22 lac a month.

Sohag foresees the hotel's revenue earnings to rise up to BDT 50 lac this year as gradually travel restrictions are getting lifted and vaccines are being rolled out. But he expects to fully meet their previous target of earning over BDT 1 crore a month from next year.

Also, Sohag does not think it will take more than 3-6 months to fully rebound from the worst year in hospitality history, once the recover starts next year, as event schedules and travel plans that are halted right now due to Covid-19 will take place then after it is finally over.

Till then, Sohag called upon the government to support the struggling hospitality industry by at least waiving the utility bills for the hotels because otherwise it is somewhat impossible for them to cut down on the operational cost, because hotels, like Omni, are already operating 50 per cent of their capacity, to cut down on cost amid this crisis and to maintain social distancing at the property.

Hotel Omni Residency is an upscale business boutique hotel with 42 rooms across four categories. Among these, 212 sqft Deluxe at USD 140++ and 228 sqft Premium Deluxe at USD 160++ are crowd-favourites. Besides an all-day dining multi-cuisine restaurant, the hotel also features one coffee shop, one rooftop BBQ area and one gym.

The General Manager mentioned soon they will be introducing steam bath and spa services for the guests. They will also open another restaurant on the rooftop beside the open-air BBQ area.