

Coordinated development of all transport sectors crucial to make sustainable transportation network for BD

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Dhaka : While railways connect people and regions across the heartland, aviation opens the door to the world. These two sectors are the lifelines of mobility and economic integration. Therefore, it is only through the coordinated development of air, rail, road, and water transport, a truly integrated, inclusive, and sustainable transportation network can be built for Bangladesh.

Md Fahimul Islam, Secretary of the Ministry of Railways, Government of Bangladesh, said this as the Chief Guest while addressing the "ShareTrip-Monitor Airline of the Year 2024" awards held at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka on July 5.

More specifically, joint tourism campaigns by the aviation and rail sectors can market Bangladesh as a diverse, accessible, and well-

connected destination to the world, claimed the Railways Secretary.

He further suggested, aviation and railway operators can partner with tour operators to offer integrated travel packages combining flight, train journeys, accommodation, and sightseeing.

In fact, by developing a well-synchronized air and rail ecosystem, Bangladesh can multiply the value of each tourist visit, extend tourist footprint across the country, and create an experience that is efficient, enjoyable, and memorable, claimed Md Fahimul Islam.

Based on the opinions of over 3,000 frequent flyers, this year, the 11th edition of the awards recognized international and local airlines operating in Bangladesh with Gold, Silver, and Bronze trophies in a record number of 23 categories.



The selection of winners was overseen by an 11-member jury panel comprising distinguished individuals from various sectors. The panel thoroughly reviewed and validated the survey results before declaring the winners.

Dr M Sadiqul Islam, Chairman of the Jury Committee, Professor of Department of Finance at University of Dhaka, and Chairman of Social Islami Bank PLC (SIBL) also addressed the award ceremony.

The aviation market of the country is expected to grow by 9.2 percent annually between 2024 and 2029, reaching a volume of USD 2.3 billion in value, while the air traveler number in Bangladesh is projected to double by 2031, driven by economic growth and rising disposable income, said Sadiqul Islam.

Air travel is not just a mode of transport, it is a key enabler of trade, tourism, and people to people connection. In Bangladesh, aviation enhances foreign investment, tourism and labor mobility, and supports the country's export driven economy, especially in sectors like garments and pharmaceuticals, claimed the Jury Board Chairman.

Kazi Wahidul Alam, Editor, The Bangladesh Monitor, delivered the welcome speech at the ceremony. "In a world where aviation plays an ever-increasing role in connecting economies and cultures, recognizing outstanding service, safety, and innovation is not only necessary-it is vital. Through this initiative, we aim to encourage airlines to constantly raise the bar and deliver exceptional value to their passengers," he said.

Sadia Haque, Co-Founder and CEO of ShareTrip; Mohammad Saiful Hoque, Country General Manager and CEO of Sabre Bangladesh; and Asif Ahmed, Acting General Manager of Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka, also spoke on the occasion.



Chief guest, jury board members, partners, and organizer seen at the awards ceremony-Photo: Monitor

In her speech, Sadia Haque, Co-Founder and CEO of ShareTrip, mentioned, ShareTrip works to bring advancements, new trendsetting innovations, and elevated standards for the aviation and travel industry as a whole. That is why, in the coming days too, the leading online travel agency of the country aims to be associated with this noteworthy initiative that acknowledges and recognizes airlines to set new benchmarks in the sector.

Speaking on the occasion, Mohammad Saiful Hoque, Country General Manager and CEO of Sabre Bangladesh, lauded how the awards honor the contribution of the airlines and, that way, brings service excellence in the aviation industry of the country. He wished the industry to grow further and the stakeholders to play enhanced roles to take the sector forward in the future.

While addressing the ceremony, Asif Ahmed, Acting General Manager of Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka, expressed how the hospitality and aviation industries are related to each other. Airlines transport passengers, while hotels welcome them, along with airline crews. Therefore, Asif Ahmed hoped, Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka would be a part of this awards for years to come.

First launched in 2007 by the travel trade publication The Bangladesh Monitor, the Airline of the Year Awards aims to honor excellence in aviation.

This year, ShareTrip served as the title sponsor, while supporting partners included Eastern Bank, Sabre Bangladesh, Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka, and online travel agency BuyTickets.