

Country's stellar performers in travel, tourism, hospitality sectors honoured

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Dhaka : Pioneering recognition programme in Bangladesh's travel, tourism and hospitality sectors honoured 31 top performing organisations and individuals in 25 categories through a grand ceremony held at an elite hotel in the capital on October 5. The programme titled Bangladesh Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Awards 2024 was organised by the travel trade publication The Bangladesh Monitor. The programme was supported by Prime Bank PLC while BuyTickets, Sabre and Halda Valley were the partners.

Peter A Semone, Chairman of Pacific Asia Travel Association, was present at the programme as the chief guest and handed over trophies to the winners.



While addressing the event, Peter A Semone, Chairman, Pacific Asia

Travel Association, said, "With the right balance of economic, social and environmental factors Bangladesh tourism will flourish, enriching communities across the country in positive ways."

"PATA is committed to joining Bangladesh in this journey. However, Bangladesh has to ensure that it adopts sustainable practices to mitigate the threats of climate change and overtourism," he further stressed.



Kazi Wahidul Alam, Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, Abu Taher Md Jaber, Abu Kalam Siddique, Nazeem A Chowdhury, Akhtaruzzaman Khan Kabir and Peter A Semone seen at the award ceremony _Photo : Monitor

"Without sustainable initiatives, there will be no tourism in Asia in the next few decades," he claimed.

Kazi Wahidul Alam, Editor of The Bangladesh Monitor, Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, Chairman of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, Abu Taher Md Jaber, CEO of Bangladesh Tourism Board, Abu Kalam Siddique, DIG of Bangladesh Tourist Police, Nazeem A Chowdhury, Deputy Managing Director of Prime Bank PLC and Akhtaruzzaman Khan Kabir, Chairman of the jury board also spoke on the occasion.



Peter A Semone addressing the ceremony _Photo : Monitor

Explaining the purpose of the first of its kind award programme, Kazi Wahidul Alam, Editor, The Bangladesh Monitor, expressed, "The initiative to establish the award programme is a testament to our commitment to fostering growth and excellence within the travel, tourism and hospitality sectors of the country."

"By recognising the outstanding contributions of individuals, we aim to inspire a new generation of industry professionals, who will be able to elevate Bangladesh's position as a premier travel destination," he also claimed.



Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury delivering his address _Photo : Monitor

While addressing the ceremony, Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury, Chairman, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, said, "Bangladesh has plenty of tourism potential. Its domestic market is growing exponentially, owing to the vigorous youth backpacking through several rural areas of the

country.”

“That is what Bangladesh has to offer at the moment. However, with time, I believe, other tourism products will also develop in the nation,” he noted.



Abu Taher Md Jaber speaking at the recognition programme _Photo : Monitor

"Also, Biman extends its full support to Pacific Asia Travel Association in its tourism endeavours in Bangladesh," he also shared.

Speaking on the occasion, Abu Taher Md Jaber, CEO, Bangladesh Tourism Board, informed, "Bangladesh Tourism Board has discussed with Pacific Asia Travel Association to cooperate and support tourism development in Bangladesh, especially for the implementation of tourism master plan."



Abu Kalam Siddique seen during his speech _Photo : Monitor

"We hope to work together with PATA in an effort to improve the country's tourism industry," noted the tourism board's CEO.

In his speech, Abu Kalam Siddique, DIG, Bangladesh Tourist Police, claimed, "Tourism plays a key role in promoting peace, empathy and cross-cultural understanding. There can be no discrimination or harassment of tourists on the basis of race, colour, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, freedom of expression, etc." "Tourist police's job is to ensure such incidents do not take place. We are working diligently to ensure tourists' security and safety across the country," stressed the chief of tourist police.



Nazeem A Chowdhury addressing the occasion _Photo : Monitor

In his address, Nazeem A Chowdhury, Deputy Managing Director, Prime Bank PLC, said, "We have a strong reputation of being a safe and sustainable bank. Now, we wish to be recognised as a solid partner in the travel sector's development. This is our unwavering commitment to our industry partners."

He also informed, "Going forward, we will be there to support them financially, while they shape the industry and build the ecosystem that will eventually help the inbound travel industry of the country," claimed

the bank's DMD.



Akhtaruzzaman Khan Kabir delivering his speech _Photo : Monitor

Addressing the programme, Akhtaruzzaman Khan Kabir, Chairman, Jury Board, explained, "A competent jury board comprising representatives from diverse professions and social groups selected the winners out of 184 entries."

"The selection was made based on the quality of presentations, online public voting, expert opinions and other considerations. A staggering one hundred and eight thousand online votes were cast in different categories," he announced.

Among the winners in different hospitality categories, there were The Westin Dhaka and The Peninsula Chittagong. They won as Leading Business Hotels.

HANSA Premium Residence and The Way Dhaka won in the Leading Boutique Hotel category.

Sea Pearl Beach Resort and Spa were dubbed as Leading Beach Hotel and Spa.

InterContinental Dhaka grabbed the Leading Luxury Hotel and Leading Eco-friendly Hotel awards, marking two wins at same night.

Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka did not go home without an award.

It won in the Leading MICE Hotel category.

Radisson Blu Dhaka Water Garden was crowned the Leading Eco-friendly Hotel, while Radisson Blu Chattogram Bay View was dubbed the Leading Hotel in Chattogram.



Kazi Wahidul Alam speaking on the occasion _Photo : Monitor

Sikder Resort and Villas and Hotel Grand Park Barishal were both winners in the Leading Hotel in South Bengal category.

Momo Inn Park and Resort snatched the Leading Hotel in North Bengal accolade.

The Palace Luxury Resort was announced the Leading Resort.

Prego of The Westin Dhaka came out as the winner in the Leading Fine Dining Restaurant category.

Star Kebab was named the winner in the category Leading Subcontinental Restaurant.

Hotel Kasturi did not disappoint. It won the Leading Authentic Bangladeshi Restaurant award.

The popular North End Coffee Roasters was dubbed the Leading Café.

The signature dining outlet Garden Kitchen of Sheraton Dhaka reigned as the Leading Multicuisine Restaurant.

Afterwards, winners were announced in several tourism categories.

The Bengal Tours won the Most Innovative Tourism Product award.

Journey Plus was named the Leading Inbound Tour Operator.

Discovery Tours and Logistics came out as the Leading Outbound Tour Operator.

National Hotel and Tourism Training Institute and HB Aviation and Tourism Institute both walked out with the Best Educational Institution for Tourism and Hospitality accolade.

ShareTrip topped the Leading Online Travel Agency category.

InnoGlobe Technologies was declared the Leading Travel Technology Provider.

Lastly, in individual categories, top performers were announced.

Md Shafiqul Islam, Head of Marketing and Sales, US-Bangla Airlines, was named the Airline Executive of the Year.

Shakawath Hossain, CEO of Unique Hotel and Resorts and Ashwani Nayar, General Manager of InterContinental Dhaka, both left with the Hotelier of the Year award.

Vloggers working diligently in the sectors were also honoured.

Travel vlogger Salahuddin Sumon won the Best Travel Vlog trophy.

Food vlogger Petuk Couple received the Best Food Vlog award.

The award ceremony was attended by representatives from corporate houses, travel and hospitality sectors, and media, among others.

After months long reviewing process, an expert jury board hailing from professionals from the sector as well as social communities selected the winners of the awards.

A total of one hundred and eight thousand online public votes cast in different categories played a crucial role in determining the deserving candidates.

Apart from that, the quality of presentations, expert opinions and other considerations were also accounted to select the winners.

It may be mentioned here that Bangladesh Travel, Tourism and Hospitality Awards 2024 was the first of its kind recognition programme announced in the aforementioned sectors of the country.