

Eid season travel booming with change in trends currently

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Dhaka : The holy Eid al-Fitr is on its way and with it comes the biggest holiday season of the year for the country's people. As always, people utilise the holidays to travel both domestically and internationally for leisure and VFR purposes. This year's Eid holidays are no exception. While some industry stakeholders claim they are receiving more customers than last year, the number is yet to surpass pre-pandemic levels but will soon do so as indicators show the gradual rise in travel numbers. However, in the current economy, with everything else, travel expenditure is increasing too and this is resulting in a change in travel trends.

Domestic travel

Domestically, Cox's Bazar welcomes the highest number of leisure travellers followed by Chattogram and Sylhet. Country's airlines are

gearing up to carry travellers to these popular destinations while hotels are preparing to welcome the surge.

On the other hand, Saidpur, Jashore, Rajshahi and Barishal witness plenty of VFR traffic from Dhaka as many people return to their hometowns during the Eid holidays to spend the occasion with their families, relatives and friends.

Kamrul Islam, General Manager-PR of US-Bangla Airlines talking to The Bangladesh Monitor said the flight bookings for Eid season travel on these routes are mostly starting from the 25th Ramadan which is April 17 and are lasting till the end of Eid holidays, that is April 24.

Load factor on flights to these destinations will be almost full during this period, expects Kamrul Islam, as per the bookings they are receiving currently.

NOVOAIR's Head of Sales and Marketing Mesbahul Islam also mentioned talking to The Bangladesh Monitor that the airline is receiving flight bookings for dates even after April 24-25 as many take additional leaves after Eid holidays too.

He also expects 90 per cent load factor on flights on these popular routes from April 17 to April 22 and 80 per cent from April 24 onwards.

The airlines may also add additional one or two frequencies on the routes if the demand rises, they mentioned.

Sabbir Ahmed, Managing Director of Cosmos Holidays, talking to The Bangladesh Monitor, said, they are selling tour packages for Saint Martin, Sundarban and Sajek as well, apart from Cox's bazar.

Cosmos already sold over 150 tour packages for Cox's Bazar, Saint Martin, and Sundarbans, he mentioned.

Hotels in the most popular tourist spot-Cox's Bazar-are ready to embrace the rush of guests.

Md Imran Humayun Khan, Head of Sales and Marketing, Ocean Paradise Hotel and Resort in Cox's Bazar, talking to The Bangladesh Monitor, claimed they will be welcoming guests in two slots-one after

Eid from April 24 to April 26 and another during the following weekend from April 27 to April 29.



Saint Martin, another popular destination which welcomes plenty of tourists on Eid holidays

During these two time periods, the occupancy at their hotel will be full, as per the bookings they are receiving currently.

Also, on the occasion of Eid, hotels make exclusive entertainment arrangements for the plentiful room guests. For instance, Ocean Paradise is holding a concert on April 27 where the popular music band Aurthohin will be performing, mentioned Humayun Khan.

It may be mentioned here, all the hotels countrywide bring out attractive offers, discounts and staycation packages for the guests on Eid.

Ocean Paradise is offering 20-30 per cent discount on room rates from April 24 to April 26 and special staycation package at BDT 15499 from April 27 to April 28.

Mohiuddin Khan Khokon, Director of Sales and Marketing of Hotel The Cox Today, another five-star property in Cox's Bazar, expressed they will be fully booked during the Eid holidays till the following weekend.

Khokon also looks after two other properties, D'more Bandarban and D'more Sajek, which are also getting good amount of bookings on Eid holidays. However, he mentioned, no other destination tops Cox's Bazar in terms of welcoming the highest number of tourists.

On the other hand, many from the capital do not wish to go on a long tour. Instead, they set out on a day long trip to Gazipur or nearby other destinations, said Joynab Akter, Cluster Human Resources Manager of Sarah Resort in Gazipur.

Joynab added, their resort will also be having a full occupancy during the Eid holidays. Plenty of couples and friend groups set out to go on a day long trip to Sarah Resort while families mostly opt for their

exclusive staycation packages on the occasion of Eid, Joynab further mentioned.

International travel

Besides domestic travel, plenty of international travel is also taking place during this year's Eid holidays, just like any other year. The pandemic put a halt to it for a few years but since the world started recovering and the countries reopened their borders, it is full-fledged up and running again.

Ajit Kumar Saha, CEO of Lexus Holidays, said they have sold double amount of travel packages for this year's Eid holidays compared to last year. Already, Lexus sold over 370-400 international travel packages, he added.

According to Ajit Kumar Saha, the travellers are purchasing international travel packages to Singapore, Maldives, Thailand, Dubai, Malaysia, Turkey, Jordan, Nepal, Vietnam, India and even Europe.

Packages for these destinations range from BDT 65,000 to BDT 4 lac.

Sabbir Ahmed, Managing Director of Cosmos Holidays also shared similar numbers. So far, Cosmos too sold 350 travel packages for Dubai, India, Thailand and other destinations.

Zahirul Romman, CEO of Discovery Tours and Logistics, mentioned that they too sold over 100 packages by now to Thailand, and Singapore each, costing around BDT 70,000 to BDT 80,000.

Discovery also sold plenty of packages for Europe even, noted Romman.

NOVOAIR's Mesbahul Islam also shared their international flight to Calcutta is always full and so it will be during the Eid holidays too.

Kamrul Islam from US-Bangla Airlines reiterated that they will be having a good load factor on their international flights to Maldives, Bangkok, and Dubai, among others, during the upcoming Eid holidays.

Also, the traffic on returning flights of US-Bangla from such and other destinations in their network will also be full as many living abroad return to their home country during Eid holidays, mentioned Kamrul.

US-Bangla also offers holiday packages to Cox's Bazar, Maldives, Kolkata, Dubai and Bangkok, among others, which are getting good amount of sales too, according to Kamrul Islam.

Travel trend changes

Due to the price hike of every product and service amid the current global economic crisis, travel expenditure has increased. However, that is not stopping people from travelling. Instead, it is resulting in a change of travel trends, shared Kamrul.

People are shortening their trips to accommodate it to their budget. Earlier, travellers used to go for weeklong trips but now they are shortening it to 3-4 days. Nevertheless, they are not refraining from travel and that is a good sign, concluded Kamrul Islam.