

## Draft of National Tourism Development and Management Law complete: BTB

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: The national tourism organisation Bangladesh Tourism Board had sent a draft of the country's first National Tourism Development and Management Law to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism in June 2024.

Abu Taher Md Jaber, CEO of Bangladesh Tourism Board, informed this during a focused group discussion on developing Bangladesh's branding strategy for tourism purposes held at Bangladesh Tourism Board's head office in the capital on July 16.

BTB had also sent a draft of Wayside Amenities Policy as well as an updated draft of Tourism Policy to the ministry last month, further said the CEO at the meeting.

The event was organised by Support to Sustainable Graduation Project,

Economic Relations Division in association with Bangladesh Investment Development Authority, hosted by Bangladesh Tourism Board and implemented by Spellbound Communications Ltd and Policy Exchange of Bangladesh Ltd.

Representatives from the country's tourism and hotel industries as well as the aforementioned organisations participated in the focused group discussion.

It may be mentioned here that a tourism law and necessary tourism policies are longstanding demands of the private tourism stakeholders of the country.

At the group discussion, representatives of the tourism sector also emphasised on increasing cooperation among all the ministries and departments which have essential roles to play in the development of different tourism products in Bangladesh.

This includes the Ministries of Home Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Religious Affairs, Road Transport and Bridges, Shipping, Railways, Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, Agriculture, Textiles and Jute, Planning, Cultural Affairs and Liberation War Affairs.

Once a strong foundation of tourism builds through such laws, policies and cooperation, the country can then look towards branding strategies to place itself in the world map as a tourist destination, stressed the participants.

Also, the participants prioritised nature and culture as the most potential tourism products in the context of Bangladesh which should be focused the most while preparing branding strategies.

However, the current high tax regime is a hindrance to the growth of the country's nascent tourism and hospitality sectors, further added the participants, claiming that it is not in favour of the said industries.

According to the participants, without tax waivers, the tourism and hospitality sectors will not be able to grow. Hence, tax rebates will be key to encourage these budding industries that hold plenty of potential, concluded the private sector representatives.