

Simplify visa system for foreign tourists in Bangladesh: Mahbub Ali

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Dhaka: The visa system should be simplified for foreign tourists in Bangladesh, claimed State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Md Mahbub Ali while addressing a seminar organised by Aviation and Tourism Journalists Forum of Bangladesh at BICC in the capital on September 30.

"Today, Saudi Arabia is issuing visas easily. They are also discussing how to entertain tourists without a visa," mentioned the State Minister in his address.

"They [Saudi Arabia] are much more conservative than us," he said, adding, "We have come a long way since independence. So we have to come forward in this regard."

"We have enthusiasm. Now, we need to attract tourists from abroad. We have new hotels. For this, tax exemption facility is needed for investment. We need to be generous when it comes to visas," further claimed the State Minister.

He also said, "There is no shortage of tourists in the country, the number is even exceeding our capacity. Now we need to attract foreign tourists."

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Citing the example of different countries of the world, the State Minister stressed, "We also feel that we need foreign tourists. The motels of our tourism corporation that were built 50 years ago, you think about how tasteful they are in this time. But we have also managed and paid crores of taka in taxes to the government."

Speakers at the programme suggested an action plan considering the media as a stakeholder in the promotion and development of tourism in Bangladesh.

The media workers have also been advised to make a specific action plan for policy makers and businessmen in this sector to establish proper partnership in tourism development.

On the other hand, the State Minister urged the media workers to play a positive role.

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MoCAT Secretary Md Mokammel Hossain, CAAB Chairman M Mafidur Rahman, PATA BD Secretary General Taufiq Rahman, TOAB President Shiblul Azam Koreshi, ATAB Secretary General Abdus Salam Aref, The Bangladesh Monitor Editor Kazi Wahidul Alam and ATJFB President Tanzim Anwar also spoke on the occasion while ATJFB General Secretary Ziaul Haque Green moderated the programme.

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