

TOAB opposes tourist limits at St. Martin's

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 20 October, 2024



Dhaka: Mohammed Rafiuzzaman, President of the Tour Operators Association of Bangladesh (TOAB), has warned of a larger movement against any unfavorable decisions regarding Saint Martin's Island as the tourism season approaches.

He emphasized the need for the government to collaborate with tourism stakeholders to balance environmental protection with the economic contributions of the tourism sector.

The TOAB president said this while speaking at a press conference as the chief guest held at Economic Reporters' Forum auditorium on Saturday, (Oct 19).

Saint Martin Poribesh and Parjatan Oikya Unnayan Jote organised the press conference in protest of the government's recent move to limit tourists and overnight stay on the island.

'Tourists can travel to Saint Martin's island from November to February in a year. The livelihood of thousands of people involved in the tourism sector in Cox's Bazar and Saint Martin would be hampered,' said Rafiuzzaman.

He said comprehensive policy should be formulated for the island, allowing tourism activities in accordance with the policy.

Saint Martin Poribesh and Parjatan Oikya Unnayan Jote placed a 19-point demand to protect the tourism industry and the livelihood of the residents of the island.

There are 100 hotels and resorts in Saint Martin and around Tk 1000 crore has been invested taking all types of permission from the government entities of Cox's Bazar, they said adding that the sudden decision of discouraging tourism and night stay in Saint Martin will destroy the investment.

Leaders of TOAB, Tour Operators Association of Cox's Bazar, Saint Martin Poribesh and Parjatan Oikya Unnayan Jote E-Tourism Association of Bangladesh, St Martin Shop Owners Association, St Martin Hotel Owners Association, among others, were present at the press conference.

-B