

Tourism needs proper planning: FBCCI

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At least 6 goals of the SDGs are directly and the rest are indirectly related to tourism. Therefore, if tourism is not flourished, the achievement of sustainable development goals by 2030 will be hampered. Hence, it's a must to develop tourism for Bangladesh.

Speakers made this remark at the first meeting of the FBCCI Standing Committee on Tourism Development (Inbound, Outbound, Domestic and Civil Aviation) at FBCCI.

"109 sectors directly and 1100 sub-sectors indirectly linked with the tourism industry. Every single tourist creates 10 direct and 35 indirect employment opportunities. Therefore, tourism should be treated as a priority sector" they demanded.

Tour operators urged the government to officially announce the country is open for foreign tourists as the government declared for overseas businessmen, which will encourage global tourists to visit Bangladesh. At the same time, they demanded for the resume of the "on-arrival visa" facilities.

During the meeting, businessmen called for issuing licenses to tour operators, recognizing them as exporters, easing the process of remitting money overseas, bringing tourist destinations under the tourism ministry and ensuring security. While speaking as chief guest, FBCCI Senior Vice President Mostofa Azad

Chowdhury Babu said, the Tourism Industry lacks skill manpower. The industry may hire experienced managers and other staff from Sri Lanka to deal with the problem.

Recognizing the government interest in the tourism sector Vice President M A Momen emphasized on securing tourist spots. The coordination between public and private efforts has to be further enhanced, he added.

Vice President Md. Amin Helaly called for developing the standard of the hospitality services by undertaking skill development programs.

Earlier, FBCCI director Syed Moazzem Hossain said, the sector must work on compliance, identifying tourism products and country branding as well as rationalizing hotel, motel and resort fare.

The Director Amzad Hussain informed the meeting that, currently, the Tourism sector contributes 3.5 to 4pc to the GDP. This contribution has to be raised to 10 per cent. Therefore, a coordinated course of action has to be formulated and implemented accordingly.

The former CEO of Bangladesh Tourism Board Akhtaruz Zaman Khan feels that the BTB should incorporate FBCCI representation to bring the private sector demand into consideration.

The Director in-Charge of the standing committee M.G.R. Nasir Majumder assured that the FBCCI would continue to provide maximum assistance for the development of the tourism industry.

The meeting was presided over by the chairman of the standing committee Taufiq Uddin Ahmed.

Amongst others, The Co-Chairman and the members of the committee, FBCCI Director Harun Or Rashid and Secretary General Mohammad Mahfuzul Hoque were also present at the meeting.

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