

Tourism promotion between PATA Nepal, BD concludes in Kathmandu

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Dhaka: PATA Nepal Chapter, in collaboration with PATA Bangladesh Chapter, successfully concluded the "Nepal-Bangladesh Tourism Promotion and B2B Exchange" programme on November 21.

The joint collaboration, from November 16-21, between PATA Chapters of Nepal and Bangladesh was organised as a post-pandemic tourism recovery initiative to help in promoting each other's destinations through mutual tie-ups and collaboration for both inbound and outbound tourism between the two neighbouring nations.

PATA Nepal Chapter, with the support of its member and partner organisations, hosted the PATA Bangladesh Delegation of 17 members; including Md Saiful Hassan, Deputy Director of Bangladesh Tourism Board, Shahid Hamid, Chairman and Taufiq Rahman, Secretary-General of PATA Bangladesh, 10 tour operators, two media representatives and two students from PATA Bangladesh Dhaka University Student Chapter.

On the first day of the exchange programme, on November 16, PATA Bangladesh Delegation was welcomed at The Everest Hotel with a gala dinner.

The exchange programme also included the familiarisation visit to Pokhara for Bangladeshi

delegates from November 17-19 wherein a "Tourism Networking and Interaction Session" was organised in collaboration with Pokhara Tourism Council and NTB Pokhara on November 18 at Hotel Barahi in Pokhara, Nepal. The Tourism Networking programme in Pokhara witnessed the enthusiastic participation of 70 plus tour operators and service providers from the tourism fraternity.

The formal function and B2B Session held on November 20 at Park Village Resort included a presentation on Bangladesh's tourism products and services by Taufiq Rahman, Secretary General of PATA Bangladesh Chapter.

Later, business meetings between 12 Bangladeshi tour operators and 14 Nepali tour operators or tourism service providers took place.



PATA Bangladesh Chapter delegates seen networking with PATA Nepal counterparts at the B2B exchange session in Kathmandu

Then, the formal function kicked off with the welcome remarks from PATA Nepal Chairman, Bibhuti Chand Thakur, who emphasised the immediate focus to embrace the promotion of "regional travel", as an action plan, for reviving tourism which would be the most appropriate and convenient for travellers and destination management organisations or service providers.

Since the long haul travel might take a little longer to recover, he said that the nearby destinations, preferably accessible by road or short-haul flights, have more opportunities to build back their tourism.

He added, "Nepal-Bangladesh being so close to each other with less than one-hour flight, we through this collaboration expect unveiling a new way forward to strengthening our mutual inbound and outbound tourism business potentials."

Dr Dhananjay Regmi, CEO, Nepal Tourism Board and Mohammad Saiful Hasan, Deputy Director and Secretary of Bangladesh Tourism Board, shared their destination insights and thoughts on the prospects of tourism exchange between Nepal and Bangladesh.

Ujjwala Dali, the Head of Department (Brand and Service Improvement)-Himalaya Airlines, also presented the operational plans of Himalaya Airlines to Bangladesh as well as other sectors in the region and beyond.

Addressing the formal function, Shahi Hamid, Chairman of PATA Bangladesh, said that he got fascinated with the warm hospitality of Nepal, and there are many alluring tourism products and services in Nepal to attract many Bangladeshi travellers.

He said that Nepal used to welcome about 26 thousand Bangladeshis yearly before the pandemic and this can be easily penetrated double with effective promotion and marketing initiatives.

The Chief Guest, Secretary of Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation, Yadav Koirala, expressed his thanks to PATA Chapters of Nepal and Bangladesh for undertaking the needful and timely initiative to promote regional tourism.

He recommended that Nepal needs to enhance its collaborative marketing and promotional events, organise FAM Trips, improve infrastructures (especially road connectivity), and develop extended tour packages for the tourists to Bangladesh and Nepal to flourish tourism in both countries.

He further assured that the Ministry of Tourism shall facilitate the necessary cooperation and support at the government level to increase the tourism engagements between Nepal and Bangladesh.

The event was promoted by Nepal Tourism Board and Bangladesh Tourism Board; and supported by Himalaya Airlines and Buddha Air (Airlines Partners), Pokhara Tourism Council (Organising partner), The Royal Mountain Travel (Transportation partner), and Hospitality Partners including The Everest Hotel, KGH Group of Hotels, Aloft, Radisson, Siddhartha Hotel, and The Old Inn.

Bangladesh Tourism Board, along with PATA Bangladesh Chapter, has extended an invitation and will be hosting Nepali counterparts in Bangladesh on November 23 to further explore exchange and expand the mutual prospects of tourism development between both countries.