

## Tourism to welcome Eid rush after two years

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Dhaka: After two years of travel plunge following the pandemic, the tourism industry of the country is going to embrace Eid rush once again. Thousands of people are expected to travel to different domestic and foreign destinations during this Eid vacation, said representatives of Tour Operators Association of Bangladesh (TOAB), according to reports.

The association mentioned such trips fell short during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

Reports claimed already over 70 per cent air tickets for domestic flights to popular tourist destinations across the country have been sold. The remaining tickets may be sold out in the next few days. Airlines are preparing to increase the number of flights if passenger demand increases.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines, US-Bangla Airlines and NOVOAIR said the demand for tickets to two popular destinations, Cox's Bazar and Sylhet, is high from May 2 since Eid is likely to fall on May 2 or 3, reports added.

Tickets to Saidpur, Jashore, Rajshahi, Chattogram, and Barishal are also in high demand for the upcoming Eid vacation.

US-Bangla Airlines has already sold nearly 80 per cent tickets for flights on Dhaka-Cox's Bazar route in the first week of May, reports claimed, citing the airline's General Manager Public Relations Kamrul Islam.

TOAB President Rafeeuzzaman, "We hope that domestic tourism will rebound centering Eid. We expect over 1.5 million holidaymakers to travel to different domestic and outbound destinations this Eid."

Stressing on outbound travel, Mohammad Iqbal Mahmood, President of Bangladesh Outbound Tour Operators Association, said 6-7 lac people are expected to travel to different foreign destinations during the Eid vacation. He added, India alone might see almost five lac visitors from Bangladesh.

Echoing the same tone, US-Bangla's Kamrul Islam said demand for tickets of Dhaka-Kolkata and Dhaka-Male flights are very high with most of the tickets already sold.

This has made the prices of remaining Dhaka-Kolkata tickets to reach sky high.

Tickets for flights to Nepal, Turkey, Thailand, the Maldives, Bangkok, Malaysia and Dubai are also in high demand, mentioned Kamrul.

Reports cited former TOAB Director Taslim Amin saying, resorts in and around Dhaka are fully booked for three days from Eid while the rooms in hotels, motels and resorts in Cox's Bazar and Sylhet are booked for a week after Eid.

He claimed the situation is similar in Rangamati and Bandarban for around a week from May 5.

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