

First-ever luxury cruise ship starts operations on Cox's Bazar-St Martin route

A Monitor Report

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Chattogram : MV Bay One, Bangladesh's first-ever luxury cruise ship, commenced its maiden journey on Cox's Bazar-Saint Martin route from December 21.

Md Mahbub Ali, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism, Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, State Minister for Shipping and Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury, Deputy Minister for Education, jointly inaugurated the cruiser at Patenga's Water Bus Terminal in Chattogram on December 20. Soon after the inaugural ceremony, the ship sailed for Cox's Bazar.

Karnafuly Ship Builders imported the ship from Japan in September. Equipped with all state-of-the-art amenities, the cruise ship is 118m long and 17m wide. It is capable of running at a speed of around 20 nautical miles per hour with a gross tonnage of approximately 6,200 tons.

A jetty has already been constructed at Dariya Nagar area of Cox's Bazar Marine Drive for the smooth operation of the ship which has 50 VVIP cabins.

Speaking on the occasion, Abdur Rashid, Managing Director, Karnafuly Ship Builders Ltd, said the launching of this cruise ship has added a new dimension to the sea tourism industry of the country. "It will also boost the sector," he hoped.

The cruiser will take two and a half hours to reach Saint Martin's Island from Cox's Bazar. The ticket fares range from BDT 2500 to BDT 4000 for seats and BDT 25,000

to BDT 30,000 for cabins.

Furthermore, the Managing Director expressed his plans of procuring more such ships, adding, "If the government approves, we will launch a route directly to Saudi Arabia from Bangladesh through which Hajj pilgrims can reach the Middle Eastern country within a week."