

Nepal eyes 100,000 Bangladeshi tourists in 2026

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Date: 16 May, 2026



Dhaka : Nepal is emerging as an increasingly sought-after destination for Bangladeshi travelers. Around 48,000 Bangladeshis visited the Himalayan nation in 2024, a figure that climbed to nearly 70,000 in 2025. The country now expects the numbers to hit between 90,000 and 100,000 in 2026.

Bishnu Pandey, Managing Director of Himalayan Club Tours and Travel Pvt Ltd and Secretary of the Nepal Association of Tour and Travel Agents (NATA), said this while talking to The Bangladesh Monitor on the sidelines of Dhaka Travel Mart this year.

Himalayan Club Tours and Travel has been operating in the Bangladesh market since 2016. The agency operates exclusively in the B2B segment, working directly with travel agencies rather than individual clients. Pandey said the primary goal at Dhaka Travel Mart 2026 was to strengthen existing partnerships and establish new ones.

He attributed Nepal's growing appeal among Bangladeshi travelers to several factors - most notably the free-of-cost on-arrival visa facility available once a year, short one-hour flight duration, and cultural and culinary similarities between the two nations.

Besides the traditional circuit of Kathmandu, Pokhara, and Nagarkot, adventure and offbeat destinations are rapidly gaining traction among Bangladeshi travelers. Mustang and Manang bike tours, Ghandruk village stays, Everest base camps, Annapurna and Manaslu treks, paragliding, bungee jumping, hot air ballooning, and white-water rafting are increasingly attracting visitors.



Bishnu Pandey

Pandey emphasized that food is rarely a concern for Bangladeshi tourists in Nepal. Halal food is widely available across major

destinations such as Kathmandu, Pokhara, and Nagarkot. Several restaurants cater specifically to Bengali taste preferences, offering dishes like aloo bharta, dal, chicken bhuna, mutton curry, and other rice-based meals prepared with more spice than most Nepalis prefer.

Despite the allure, some obstacles still persist, and Pandey cited the lack of adequate air connectivity as the most crucial one. Currently, only two operators, Himalaya Airlines and Biman Bangladesh Airlines, serve regular flights between the two nations. With no real competition, airfares have remained high, while the absence of a land route further limits options.

Pandey expressed hope that new airlines would enter the route, noting that Bangladeshi private carrier Air Astra and Nepal's Shree Airlines are both planning to introduce flights on the Dhaka-Kathmandu route. He regularly raises the issue of additional air connectivity at forums and conferences, arguing that sufficient passenger demand already exists to make new services viable.

On the topic of bilateral tourism, Pandey sees untapped potential in both directions. While Bangladesh still has room for developing tourism destinations like Cox's Bazar, shopping options hold genuine appeal for Nepali visitors. Himalayan Club Tours and Travel actively promotes Bangladesh in Nepal, though interest among Nepalis remains modest for now.

Pandey called for stronger institutional engagement between the two countries, urging Bangladesh's tourism board to participate in travel exhibitions in Nepal, just as Nepali operators attend events like Dhaka Travel Mart.