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BUSINESS

DHAKA TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 26, 2017, ASHWIN 11, 1424 BS

Cox's Bazar hotels, airlines get a boost

Govt and aid officials, rights activists flock to the beach town amid Rohingya crisis

SOHEL PARVEZ

Domestic airlines and hotels in Cox's Bazar are seeing a spike in occupancy as government officials, human rights activists and development workers travel to the beach town in the wake of influx of Rohingya refugees.

"We are witnessing a higher number of foreign guests nowadays because of the Rohingya crisis," said Aminul Haque Shamim, managing director of Royal Tulip Sea Pearl Beach Resort.

Between the last week of August and September 24, about 436,000 Rohingyas have entered the Bangladesh territory from Myanmar's Rakhine state in the face of persecution, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

While the influx of Rohingyas had slowed somewhat in the last few days, thousands have started pouring into Bangladesh again.

For hotel operators in Cox's Bazar, September typically is the last month of

the lean season for them. But because of the unfortunate event in Myanmar they were seeing good occupancy during this off-season.

"The overall occupancy has increased in our resort," said Rezaul Karim, general manager of Albatross Resort at Cox's Bazar, citing that the average daily occupancy rate shot to 70 percent from 40 percent a month ago.

"We have been registering increased number of guests for the last ten days. People come to distribute relief and return after staying a night," he added.

Sarowar Hasan, sales manager of Long Beach Hotel, said the daily average occupancy in the high-end hotel rose to 75 percent from nearly 50 percent the previous month.

"We see that officials of UN agencies and NGOs are coming in throngs. Booking for October is also high as those who are coming have been staying a bit longer to take part in relief operations," he said.

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BKMEA POLLS Salim Osman elected president for fourth time

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

AKM Salim Osman has been re-elected as the president of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) for the fourth consecutive time for 2017-19.

The election of Osman was criticised by the knitwear manufacturers as he has been holding the top post of the BKMEA for many years without creating any opportunity for others.

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Akhaura port to be shut for 11 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Export-import activities at the Akhaura land port in Brahmanbaria will remain closed for 11 days from September 26 due to Durga Puja and Laxmi Puja.

However, immigration activities will remain open under special arrangement.

The businessmen of the two countries have jointly decided to observe the 11-day holiday for Durga Puja and Laxmi Puja, Furkan Ahmed Khalifa, general secretary of the Clearing and Forwarding Agents' Association, told The Daily Star.

Export and import activities will resume on October 7, said Shafiqul Islam, general secretary of the Export Association of Akhaura land port.

Sub-Inspector Piar Ahmed, in-charge of Akhaura land port immigration, said they will keep immigration open under special arrangement during the vacation.

Ctg customs dumps 528 tonnes of imported orange, apple, onion

Importers did not take delivery as they rot

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Chittagong

Chittagong Customs authorities yesterday started to dispose of 528 tonnes of imported oranges, apples and onions worth Tk 2.50 crore as the items were found to be rotten and unfit for human consumption.

Fruits in 10 containers were dumped at Chittagong City Corporation's dumping yard at Halishahar.

Seven Chittagong-based firms and two firms from Dhaka brought the items in 21 containers in a period of four months till April this year.

The importers are Chittagong-based Chittagong Faul Banijjo Ltd, FK Trading, S&F Trade Corporation, F Rahaman Enterprise, Marium Enterprise, MKB Corporation and Poly Enterprise, and Dhaka-based Sohran Enterprise and Ramisha Enterprise.

Eighteen containers contain 4.67 lakh kg of oranges, two containers hold

47,887 kg of apples and one container 12,650 kg of onions.

Sources said as the importers did not take the delivery of the cargoes on time, the customs authorities decided to auction those off last month.

But during physical examination of the containers, customs officials found the items a bit discoloured and smelling bad, said Md Ahsan Ullah, assistant commissioner for auction at Chittagong Customs House.

Samples were sent to the laboratories of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission and the quarantine department. The reports from the laboratories also confirmed that the items were rotten and smelling bad, according to sources.

Sources in the customs house said the importers might have intentionally not received the delivery after finding that the prices of the items unattractive in the local market at the time of arrival.

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LNG import deal signed with Qatar

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh's maiden liquefied natural gas import was tied up yesterday after Petrobangla and Qatar's RasGas signed a 15-year agreement.

RasGas will supply 2.5 million tonnes of LNG every year. The LNG would be supplied at: 12.65 percent of the three-month average price of Brent oil plus \$0.50 constant per MMBTU (1 million British thermal units).

"It is essential to ensure uninterrupted supply of energy," said Nasrul Hamid, state minister for power,

energy and mineral resources, at the agreement signing event yesterday in Doha.

About 2,500 industrial units are awaiting gas connections, he said.

Abul Mansur Md Faizullah, chairman of state-run Petrobangla, and Hamad Mubarak Al Muhannadi, chief executive officer of RasGas, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective sides.

Hamid and Qatar's Energy and Industries Minister Mohammad Bin Salah Al-Sada were present at the signing ceremony.

"The two countries can work together to develop human resources along with training," Al-Sada said adding that the energy cooperation with Bangladesh would continue.

Bangladesh is planning to invest more for ensuring uninterrupted energy supply as the energy demand is on a constant rise, Hamid said.

The construction works for the two floating LNG terminals and the land-based LNG terminals are progressing well, he said.

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