



Comaniganj, a bordering upazila in Sylhet, is well known for its rivers lined with white stone that travellers from all over Bangladesh flock to see each year. As this is the first winter in two years that people in the country are not tied down by Covid-19 restrictions, tourist spots such as these are seeing a surge in visitors. PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Taxpayers can file return on Jan 1: NBR

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The National Board of Revenue yesterday said it will accept tax returns from individual taxpayers on the first day of January 2023.

The announcement comes as December 30 and December 31 are weekly holidays at government offices.

On November 30, the tax administration extended deadline regarding filing of tax returns by a month following demands from various quarters.

Taxpayers will be able to submit their returns manually during office hours of January 1, said Shaheen Akhter, member

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Tourism takes off with the coming of winter

SUKANTA HALDER

Tourist spots across Bangladesh are abuzz with both domestic and foreign travellers as the coming of winter, the country's main holiday season, has again brought cheers to the tourism sector following the relaxing of enforcement of pandemic restrictions since the middle of last year.

Room bookings have already reached 90 per cent amid the current demand, according to hospitality service providers.

The trend is expected to continue until the end of January next year, they said, adding that December usually sees the highest turnout as many families go on holiday when their children stay at home for the winter break.

Besides, Bangladeshi citizens who live abroad return during the month and visit different tourist spots.

This year, the increased turnout is providing tourism and hospitality service providers good business, which is likely to boost their contribution to the economy.

The tourism sector accounted for 3 per cent of the country's

gross domestic product in fiscal 2018-19, according to the Tourism Satellite Account 2020 of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

In addition, the sector accounted for 8 per cent of the total employment that year.

"The response this season is quite good as there is a lot of enthusiasm among travellers. Our room occupancy is more

than 90 per cent," said Prasenjit Guha Thakurta, group general manager of Seagull Hotel in Cox's Bazar, the main holiday destination in Bangladesh.

After the school and college level exams end in November, many Bangladeshis living abroad, namely the EU and US, return home for vacation.

"As a result, there is too much traffic now," he added.

Abdul Awal, director for sales and marketing at Royal Tulip Sea Pearl Beach Resort in Cox's Bazar, said compared to December 2021, they have a higher number of room bookings this year.

He said the occupancy rate at the 483-room hotel hovers at around half during months outside the tourism season.

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STOCKS	
DSEX ▲	CASPI ▲
0.25%	0.08%
6,195.81	18,294.20

COMMODITIES	
Gold ▼	Oil ▼
\$1,805.1	\$79.20
(per ounce)	(per barrel)

ASIAN MARKETS			
MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI
▼ 0.02%	▼ 0.41%	▲ 0.02%	▼ 0.26%
60,910.28	26,340.50	3,266.97	3,087.40



Bangladesh Road Transport Authority had earlier made it mandatory to have a valid driver's licence for buying two-wheelers in an effort to reduce road accidents. PHOTO: STAR/FILE

Textile millers worried over LC settlement in taka

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Local textile millers yesterday expressed concern that they would lose business if letters of credit (LCs) were settled in taka, the local currency, instead of the US dollar.

Textile millers shared their views after knitwear exporters urged the central bank to allow them to open LCs for local sourcing of raw materials in taka mainly to address the challenges of a dollar crisis in the banking system.

Textile millers said they alongside spinners import cotton and other raw materials spending billions of US dollars.

But if the payment is made in taka, the existing exchange rate may cause them to lose Tk 700 crore on every Tk 1 billion worth of goods.

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Sharing the concerns, Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) submitted a letter to Bangladesh Bank yesterday urging not to decide on allowing opening LCs in taka.

In the letter, the BTMA also said since the local spinners and millers settle import payments with the US dollars, the local sales of yarn should also be settled with the same currency. And this has been the practice for years, they said.

Some 95 per cent of yarn produced from the imported cotton is sold to the local garment exporters who are the members of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA).

More time for buying bike without driver's licence

JAGARAN CHAKMA

The Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) has again extended the deadline for allowing the purchase of motorcycles without a valid driver's licence for the next two months.

The previous deadline had expired on December 14.

In early July, the BRTA made it mandatory to have a valid driver's licence for issuing registration

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মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনার নেতৃত্বে সমন্বিত, টেকসই ও অত্যাধুনিক যোগাযোগ ব্যবস্থা গড়ে তোলার কারণেই অর্থনৈতিক অগ্রগতির পথে এগোচ্ছে দেশ। দূরদর্শী ও বলিষ্ঠ নেতৃত্বে স্বপ্নোন্নত দেশ থেকে বাংলাদেশকে উন্নয়নশীল দেশে পরিণত করেছেন তিনি।

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