

Luxury cruise to start on Ctg-St Martin route from Jan 14

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: A 2,000-seat luxury cruise named MV Bay One is to travel the Chattogram-Saint Martin route from January 14. This is the first time such kind of a cruise has been introduced on this route.

The cruise is scheduled to leave Patenga Water Bus Terminal for St Martin at 11:00 pm, to reach the island at 7:00 am every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Conversely, the cruise will leave St Martin for Patenga Terminal at 1:00 pm every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, to reach at 8:00 pm.

"The cruise was launched to promote the country's tourism industry on the occasion of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's 100th birth anniversary," said MA Rashid, Managing Director of Karnaphuli Ship Builders Limited that brought the cruise from Japan.

He also said the cruise would enable tourists to visit Chattogram and the coral island, Saint Martin safely and quickly, and he hoped it would play a significant role in expanding Bangladesh's tourism industry.

Capable of running at 24 nautical miles (44 kilometres) per hour, 17 mariners will

operate the ship, while around 150 crewmen will serve passengers in the 450-foot long and 55-foot wide ship.

The cruise liner has Presidential Suites, Royal Suites, VVIP Cabins, Family Cabins, Bunker Beds and Chairs; an economy class return ticket costs Tk3,000, while a return on Royal Suites costs Tk50,000.

The Patenga Water Bus Terminal is within walking distance from Shah Amanat International Airport, enabling tourists from elsewhere in the country to visit Saint Martin Island without having to endure the inconvenience of road travel, said MA Rashid.

He also said, "We will increase trip frequency after monitoring passengers' response."