

Spanish envoy urges to strengthen tourism, trade with Bangladesh

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Dhaka: We must break the knowledge barrier and stereotypes Spain and Bangladesh have in between to better facilitate bilateral relations through tourism and trade, said Francisco Benitez, Ambassador of Spain in Dhaka.

The Spanish envoy said this while talking to selective travel agents of the country and travel media representatives at the embassy in the capital on September 27.

Benitez stressed that Spain is one of the most important tourist destinations in the world. Tourism aside, the country is also renowned for its leadership in many sectors including business, construction, medical, engineering, science and research.

Likewise, the impressive record Bangladesh has achieved in 50 years in the aforementioned sectors is incomparable to any other country, claimed Benitez.

Hence, there are great opportunities for Spain and Bangladesh to create an efficient partnership in the respective fields and more, which could take the bilateral relation between the two to new heights bilateral.



Francisco Benitez, Ambassador of Spain in Dhaka is seen speaking on the occasion

Speaking on the occasion, the Spanish Ambassador informed that tourism in Spain is the third major contributor to its national economy after the industrial and the business/banking sectors, contributing about 10-11 per cent of Spain's GDP.

The country has been a popular destination for summer holidays, especially with large numbers of tourists from the United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Germany, Italy, the Benelux, and the United States, among others.

Accordingly, Spain's foreign tourist industry has grown into the second-biggest in the world.

In 2019, Spain was the second most visited country worldwide, recording 83.7 million tourists which marked the seventh consecutive year of record-beating numbers.

However, due to the coronavirus pandemic, in the first eleven months of 2020, only 18.3 million tourists visited Spain.

On the other hand, the Spanish envoy expressed his grief about UNWTO's plans to relocate its headquarters away from Madrid to Riyadh.

He sighed, Spain has been the member of the UNWTO since the very beginning of the organisation. The country has been hosting the headquarters of UNWTO from 1976 in Madrid. This reflects the commitment towards tourism of the Spanish Government.

Therefore, the latest initiatives to relocate the UNWTO HQ are not acceptable for Spain, claimed Benitez.

Hence, the ambassador urged Bangladeshi travel trade partners and media to support Spain's efforts to keep the UNWTO HQ in Madrid.