

## Bangladeshi tourists can visit Sri Lanka with on-arrival visa again

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Dhaka: Visa on arrival facility for international tourists in Sri Lanka is available currently for Bangladeshis. The facility was halted for international travellers since the coronavirus outbreak in 2020. However, from February 8, 2022, issuance of on arrival electronic travel authorisation (ETA) for tourists at the port of entry to Sri Lanka has been effective again.

“This is to facilitate the tourists who experience difficulties when obtaining the online ETA due to the time constraints of arranging their journeys to Sri Lanka,” said the Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka in a notice.

The move is expected to give a much awaited boost to the island nation’s tourism sector which used to be a major foreign exchange earner for the country now badly hit by the pandemic induced travel slump.

As per the health guidelines issued on January 27, 2022 by the Director General of Health Services, all arriving passengers to Sri Lanka must perform a Covid-19 PCR test within 72 hours prior to departure or Rapid Antigen Test obtained within 48 hours prior to departure.

All tourist visa and foreign passport holders (excluding diplomatic passport holders and families) require mandatory Sri Lanka Covid-19 insurance coverage at a cost of USD 12

which has a cover of USD 75,000 for one month.

The Covid-19 insurance coverage is not required to board an aircraft but upon landing in Sri Lanka, he/she must purchase the policy prior to leaving the respective airport in Sri Lanka.

It is not mandatory to submit Health Declaration Forms online and passengers who are unable to submit their online health declaration forms are permitted to submit the printed HDF at the airport on arrival.

However, it may be mentioned here, the on-arrival visa facility would not be available for passport holders of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Myanmar, Nepal and North Korea. Sri Lanka recorded over 82,000 tourist arrivals in January 2022, up from just 1,600 in January 2021.

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