

Sri Lanka introduces visa-free entry for tourists from seven countries

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 25 October, 2023



Dhaka: Sri Lanka introduces visa-free entry for travellers from seven countries including India, China and Russia, as part of a pilot project. The move, announced by the country's Foreign Affairs Minister Ali Sabry, has received approval from the Sri Lanka Cabinet. The pilot project, effective immediately, will be in effect until March 31, 2024.

As per reports, Minister Sabry said, "Cabinet approves issuing of free visas to India, China, Russia, Malaysia, Japan, Indonesia and Thailand with immediate effect as a pilot project till March 31."

Recently, the Ministry of Tourism revealed that a Cabinet Paper was presented during a previous Cabinet meeting, suggesting the issuance of free tourist visas to foreigners.

Sri Lanka's tourism industry is eyeing for a higher target in 2023, with the aim of attracting two million visitors, up from the previous goal of 1.5 million.

Tourism, a significant contributor to Sri Lanka's foreign exchange earnings, struggled through the Covid-19 pandemic, economic and political crises in recent times. The visa move reflects the country's determination to recover and overcome from these challenges.

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