

Sri Lanka to welcome Bangladeshi tourists: Envoy

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Dhaka: Sri Lankan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Sudharshan Seneviratne said his country is ready to welcome tourists from Bangladesh and other parts of the world.

The government has taken necessary measures to bring confidence back among the people, he added.

"What we are projecting now is about confidence. This is a very important thing. We are also looking at enhancing our economic status by proper management," he said at a media briefing at the high commission on September 1.

Seneviratne said their stock market and exports are doing far better and there is progress in other areas that give a picture of confidence to people to come and visit Sri Lanka.

The Covid-19 pandemic and recent political situation battered Sri Lanka's tourism, one of its biggest foreign currency earners.

Everything has now returned to normal and conducive conditions have been created for visiting the country, said Seneviratne, urging the Bangladeshis to consider Sri Lanka as their tourist destination.

The high commissioner highlighted the emergence of Bangladesh as a key target market in South Asia with its palpable presence.

Bangladesh has proven its self-determination, economic development and resilience within a very limited time while broadening their horizon, especially in trade, investment and tourism, added Seneviratne.

The country now has enough fuel for essential services like buses, trains and medical vehicles, and steps have been taken to give special importance to tourists for their pleasant stay and travel, said Sri Lanka Convention Bureau Chair Thisum Jayasuriya.

"Tourists from various countries have already started visiting Sri Lanka. We are expecting that more than 100,000 tourists from different parts of the world will visit Sri Lanka by December 2022," he said.

Manager of SriLankan Airlines in Bangladesh Sharuka Wickrama Adittiya said that SriLankan Airlines will endeavour to provide its best services from departure to the inflight experience and return journey to all its passengers.

SriLankan Airlines presently operates daily flights on the Colombo-Dhaka sector being an added advantage for all travellers, he said.

In 2022, the two countries are celebrating the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations and "together will forge ahead in friendship and solidarity", said the high commission.

Meanwhile, SLCB in collaboration with the High Commission of Sri Lanka in Bangladesh and Sri Lankan Airlines hosted a business match making programme between the Sri Lankan delegation and the invited Bangladesh MICE buyers, followed by a business forum and dinner reception held at the High Commission premises.

The objective of the event was the positioning of Sri Lanka as a preferred destination and showcasing the opportunities to Bangladesh travel trade, professional conference organisers (PCO).

More than 80 participants from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka engaged in exploring the industry potential of the two countries.

The Association of Travel Agents Bangladesh (ATAB), Bangladesh Outbound Tour Operators Association (BOTOA), Tour Operators Association in

Bangladesh (TOAB) and the Bangladesh Travel Writers Association (BDTWA) were also partnered with the High Commission of Sri Lanka in organising the event.

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