



Sri Lanka Tourism

Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, 80, Galle Road, Colombo 03, Sri Lanka.

Hotline: 1912, Tel: 94 11 2426800/900, Fax: +94 11 2437953, E-mail: info@srilanka.travel, Web: www.srilanka.travel / www.sltta.gov.lk

Latest updates from Sri Lanka Tourism on COVID - 19

5 March 2020

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- There have been no deaths resulting from COVID-19 in Sri Lanka.
 - Presently there are no positive cases of the epidemic in Sri Lanka.
 - Sole COVID-19 patient in Sri Lanka was discharged from the hospital after recovery on 19 Feb 2020.
 - 33 Sri Lankan students from Wuhan, China brought to Sri Lanka by the Government, were quarantined for 14 days; were found to be not infected with the virus and left for their homes on 14 Feb 2020.
 - Total number of individuals under observation as of 5 March 2020 in Sri Lanka are 19.
 - Health Ministry as a precautionary measure on 3 March 2020 stated that all passengers arriving from Italy, Iran and South Korea would have to undergo a 14-day quarantine period in a hospital to prevent the COVID-19 from entering the island country. Pending formal communication from the relevant authorities the visitors are currently allowed entry without subject to 14 days quarantine. However, once the Immigration authorities receive the instructions, the visitors would have to undergo the quarantine measures with immediate effect. Considering this scenario and pending official instructions, if you're travelling from Italy, Iran or South Korea; it is recommended to postpone the visit if possible. These tough decisions are taken to ensure safety of our citizens and other tourists.
 - Sri Lanka has also taken steps to immediately stop allowing passengers on cruise ships arriving at the ports of the country to disembark.
 - Sri Lanka continues to welcome guests to Sri Lanka; with arrivals of 228,434 in January and 207,507 in Feb 2020.
 - This month, the largest source market for tourists was India, followed by the United Kingdom and Russian Federation.
 - On 4 Feb 2020 the government suspended the issuance of visa on arrival to Chinese tourists as a preventive measure to control the spread of the virus in the country. Chinese nationals are required to submit their visa application while in China before arriving in Sri Lanka and after carefully scrutinizing the applicant's province and other information visa will then be granted.

- Planning is the most important aspect of the virus response. Twelve hospitals around the country have been identified as treatment centres for those patients who may have been exposed to the coronavirus. They are the NIID/IDH, Teaching Hospital (TH) Ragama, DGH Gampaha, DGH Negombo, National Hospital Kandy, TH Karapitiya, TH Anuradhapura, TH Jaffna, TH Kurunegala, PGH Ratnapura, TH Batticaloa, PGH Badulla; in addition to specialized units to be set up for COVID-19.

- The Government of Sri Lanka is monitoring the situation closely and continue to take all necessary measures to ensure carriers of the Corona Virus cannot enter the country via Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) and 24-hour monitoring is conducted including body temperature screening machines to detect the virus with the assistance of the Health and Indigenous Medicine Services Ministry and Sri Lanka Army medical teams.

- Passengers of all international flights entering into Sri Lanka from any port are required to furnish duly filled self-declaration form (including personal particulars i.e. phone no. and address in Sri Lanka) and travel history, to Health Officials and Immigration officials at all ports.

- Free visa scheme for designated countries. Those who hold passports of listed countries and travel to Sri Lanka from 01.02.2020 to 30.04.2020 for tourist purposes are exempted paying ETA fee (applicable for 30 days). Any foreign national who will be visiting Sri Lanka for a short period is required to apply ETA and ensure pre-approval before the journey to avoid unnecessary delays at the port of entry and adhere with enhanced pre-clearance.

-The list of countries for Free Visa is as follows. Thailand, 28 countries under European Union (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden), United States of America, United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, South Korea, Canada, Singapore, New Zealand, Malaysia, Switzerland, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Israel, Ukraine, Philippines, Russia and Iceland. *Note: current status re visitors from Italy, South Korea and Iran.*

-We kindly request the tourists arriving to monitor their health closely for 2 weeks upon entering Sri Lanka and seek medical attention promptly if they have any symptoms.

- As we understand from specialists in the field; the virus is less potent in hot climates. The bulk of cases have been in winter climates.

- Our Health Professionals are highly skilled and capable to safeguarding all citizens and tourists.

- The government is confident of its capabilities to ensure tourists and citizens are safeguarded.

- Sri Lanka remains a safe destination to visit; we look forward to welcoming you!



Kimarli Fernando
Chairperson
Sri Lanka Tourism