

## Visa-free entry for Indian tourists in Sri Lanka, soon



Indian tourists visiting the neighbouring island nation of Sri Lanka are likely to be exempted from visa requirements as the Sri Lankan government is mulling to push visa-free entry for some tourist-friendly nations, including India and China to boost tourism in the country.

Sri Lanka will soon open up its doors for Indian tourists without the need of flashing a visa, as the country is mulling towards possibility of granting visa-free entry to visitors from friendly nations like India and China. The plans of opening up visa-free travel were revealed by Sri Lankan tourism minister John Amaratunga as he talked about the Government's plans to boost tourism in Sri Lanka. Amaratunga also said that Sri Lankan PM Ranil Wickremesinghe has already set up a body that will study into possibility of exempting tourist visa for travellers from friendly nations, including India as well as China.

The proposal will be submitted by the task force body appointed by the Sri Lankan Prime Minister and if all goes well, India and China can get visa-free entry into the island nation along with other European and western European nations. It has been reported that the proposal recommends implementation of visa-less travel in off months of October to November and March to April. The exemptions will be made at the soonest to enliven the dead-drop on the number of tourists visiting the nation since a decade, especially after Sri Lanka faced a civil war with LTTE.

India is likely to receive the Lankan privilege considering the fact that India topped the number of tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka at 206,337 followed by the Chinese tourists which numbered up to 136,294. Although Sri Lanka has witnessed a growth of 15.3% tourists during the first half of 2018 compared with the same period last year, the exemption of visa will give a mega-booster to the number of tourists in coming days.