



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
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# Sri Lanka to Launch 6-Month Free Tourist Visa Programme for 39 Countries

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Sri Lanka has announced a six-month pilot programme to grant free tourist visas to passport holders from 39 countries, including India, to boost tourism and economic recovery.

## Key Highlights

The scheme will provide free tourist visas (no visa fee) to travellers from 39 countries.

It will be implemented as a 6-month pilot project.

The initiative aims to increase international tourist arrivals and revive the tourism sector.

Countries included cover major global tourism markets such as India, USA, UK, and others.

Tourists will generally be allowed short-term stays (around 30 days) under this scheme.

## Objective of the Initiative

To revive the tourism industry affected by economic crisis and pandemic

To attract higher foreign tourist inflow

To boost foreign exchange earnings and economic recovery

To position Sri Lanka as a tourist-friendly destination

## Kamaraj IAS Academy

Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040  
Phone: 044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477 / Whatsapp : 09710729833

## **Background**

Earlier, Sri Lanka had launched a pilot visa-free scheme for 7 countries (including India, China, Japan).

Due to positive results, the scheme has been expanded to 39–40 countries.

The country is targeting millions of tourist arrivals annually to strengthen its economy.

## **Tourism in Sri Lanka**

Major contributor to GDP and foreign exchange earnings

Key attractions: beaches, tea plantations, heritage sites

## **Visa System**

Sri Lanka uses Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) for short visits

Even under free visa schemes, ETA approval may still be required

## **Economic Context**

Sri Lanka faced a severe economic crisis in 2022, impacting tourism

Tourism revival is a key part of economic recovery strategy