

'End misleading travel advice' urge campaigners

38 MPs, peers, travel providers, businesses and well-known Sri Lankan personalities have called for more consistent advice for tourists and tourism providers.

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, January 16, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- LEADING tourism providers from the UK and Sri Lanka have called for the government to reform the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) travel advice regarding the safety of UK nationals abroad.



In an [open letter](#) published today, current advice is labelled “overly harsh” by campaigners who condemn the government for “systematically undermining the travel industry” in Sri Lanka and demands for a new approach to achieve “consistency”.

Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene, former Captains of the Sri Lankan Cricket Team, have signed the open letter compiled by leading travel company [Experience Travel Group](#).

The open letter also details the effect on Sri Lanka’s tourism industry, which currently employs over 380,000 people last year. The campaign claims that the advice could damage tourism to Sri Lanka, negatively impacting the one in five people in Sri Lanka who rely on income generated by tourism.

Sam Clark, Co-founder and Managing Director of Experience Travel Group, says: “It is clear that the FCDO travel advice is no longer fit for purpose in relation to Sri Lanka.

“There is really no doubt in the minds of those who back the open letter that Sri Lanka is generally one of the safest places to visit in Asia. It is therefore misguided for the UK government to undermine the travel industry by retaining outdated travel advice which deters British citizens

from visiting and directs income away from those who work within the tourism industry in the country.

“It is now time for the FCDO advice to be looked at and amended to better represent the safe and beautiful island that Sri Lanka is.”

The letter has received support from four members of the Sri Lankan All Party APPG, including current chair Dr Matthew Offord MP; founder and co-chair Rt. Hon. the Lord Naseby PC; Rt Hon. the Lord Dholakia OBE DL, and the vice-chair the Lord Brennan KC.

Throwing his support behind the campaign, founder and co-chair of Sri Lankan APPG, The Rt. Hon, Lord Naseby PC says: “It is of the utmost importance that the advice for the British public is honest and reflects the country in the proper light.

“All in support of the campaign consider Sri Lanka to be a safe place to visit and want to see a continuation of the tourism industry in this beautiful and culturally rich island.”

In addition, Sri Lankans Hon. Harin Fernando, Minister of Tourism, Lands, Sports and Youth Affairs; Mr. Chalaka Gajabahu, Chairman, Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau and Nishad Wijetunga, President, SLAITO (Sri Lankan Association of Inbound Tour Operators) have backed the open letter.

Nishad Wijetunga, President, SLAITO said: “The tourism sector in Sri Lanka is key to economic growth and employment generation, as the industry provided employment to over 380,000 people last year. There are over three million people dependent on tourism, both directly and indirectly.

“It is imperative to keep the industry afloat and continue to support the people whose livelihoods depend on travel to the country. The members of SLAITO back the call for a review of the advice process and welcome updated and truly reflective text regarding Sri Lanka.”

The campaign will continue to press the Foreign Office to reform the travel guidance across the globe, with the intention of seeing reliable and up to date information for all countries reflected across Government channels in order that tourist industries and travellers can place their trust in the advice once again.

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