

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism



MEDIA RELEASE

Sri Lanka's Participation at the Let's Travel International Tourism Forum 2026, Moscow, Russian Federation

Sri Lanka at the Let's Travel International Tourism Forum 2026, Moscow

The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) successfully participated in the 6th Let's Travel International Tourism Forum (ITF) 2026, held from 10–14 June at the VDNH Exhibition Complex in Moscow, the largest outdoor exhibition venue in the city. Hon. Deputy Minister of Tourism Prof. Ruwan Ranasinghe, SLTPB Deputy Managing Director Mr. Chamila Jayarathna, and Assistant Director Marketing Ms. Sasika Jayaweera represented Sri Lanka, joined by H.E. Ambassador Ms. Shobini Gunasekera and First Secretary Commercial Mr. Sanjeewa Bandara. The Embassy of the Russian Federation in Sri Lanka and the Roscongress Foundation extended strong support to ensure the delegation's successful participation.

Recognized as one of Russia's premier tourism events, ITF 2026 attracted over 511,000 visitors, 180 country and regional stands, and 574 organizations. Sri Lanka was honoured with the *Let's Travel First-Degree Laureate Award* among 12 international participants, a recognition that underscores the country's rising profile in the global tourism arena.

Strengthening Bilateral Relations

The Forum provided a vital platform to deepen tourism and economic cooperation between Sri Lanka and Russia. Prof. Ranasinghe met Hon. Deputy Minister of Economic Development Mr. Dmitry Vakhrukov and senior officials from St. Petersburg and Sverdlovsk Region, initiating discussions on destination promotion, familiarization tours, regional outreach, and enhanced air connectivity. These engagements laid the groundwork for stronger collaboration and highlighted Sri Lanka's readiness to expand its presence in the Russian market.

The Deputy Minister also contributed to two high-level panel discussions on "Direct flights, simplified visas and what this means for the industry" and "Tourism of national importance: The strategic potential of international cooperation." His interventions emphasized Sri Lanka's commitment to facilitating travel and building long-term partnerships.

Media & Promotion

Exclusive interviews with TASS and Sputnik News Agencies — two of Russia's most influential media outlets — provided valuable exposure for Sri Lanka's tourism offerings. These engagements allowed Sri Lanka to communicate its diverse attractions directly to Russian audiences, enhancing destination visibility and brand awareness.

Destination Pavilion Highlights

Sri Lanka's pavilion emerged as one of the most attractive international exhibits, featuring elephant structures, traditional cultural performances, authentic Ceylon tea experiences, and promotional materials showcasing beaches, wildlife, wellness, and adventure tourism. The stand drew significant visitor traffic, with many repeat travelers sharing positive experiences, reinforcing strong destination recall and loyalty among Russian consumers.

Consumer & Business Engagements

Thousands of visitors engaged directly with Sri Lanka's pavilion, seeking information on future travel opportunities. B2B sessions connected Sri Lankan travel partners with outbound tour operators across eight Russian regions, expanding opportunities beyond Moscow and St. Petersburg. These interactions supported diversification, product development, and collaborative marketing initiatives aimed at increasing arrivals from Russia.

Conclusion

Sri Lanka's participation at ITF 2026 strengthened bilateral tourism ties, enhanced destination visibility, and reinforced its position as a year-round holiday destination. Against a competitive backdrop with countries such as Myanmar and Thailand also promoting their products, Sri Lanka's pavilion stood out for its cultural vibrancy and authentic branding, underscoring the importance of sustained promotional efforts in the Russian market.

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