Sri Lanka pledges cooperation in implementing Saudi Vision 2030


RIYADH: Sri Lanka pledged its cooperation for the successful implementation of Saudi Vision 2030 during a meeting between Jeddah Gov. Prince Mishal bin Majid and the island’s Consul General in Jeddah Faizer Mackeen recently.

Commending on the progressive measures spelled out in Vision 2030 during his meeting with the prince, the diplomat said that his country would lend full cooperation to Saudi Arabia, which hosts millions of expatriates. He said Vision 2030 is a comprehensive program that aims to turn the Kingdom into a knowledge-based country, which would eventually diversify its economic programs without solely depending on oil.

Following the end of the ethnic problems on the island, the envoy said a large number of tourists from Saudi Arabia have been traveling to Sri Lanka as tourists.

He added that Saudi families who had visited Sri Lanka had always opted to repeat the visit because of the island’s scenic beauty and the hospitality of its people. "Muslim visitors will feel at home in the city of Colombo since they could see mosques in the vicinity of every shopping center," he said. In fact, he said, women in hijab are a common sight in the city. "A good number of Saudis currently visiting Sri Lanka for leisure and honeymoon."

The island has more than 18,000 quality rooms and it is studded with quality hotels such as Shangriila, Movenpick, Cinnamon Grand, Cinnamon Lake, Taj Exotica, Light House, and Heritance Hotels, Kingsbury and Galadari for the comfort of luxury tourists.

Sri Lanka is home to eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites, several Buddhist and Hindu temples, and other ancient monuments that serve as attractions for travelers. Adam’s Peak, a mountain in the Central Province with the shape of a footprint on its peak, is considered sacred to a number of religions. The eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Sri Lanka include the central highlands area comprising Hortons Plains National Park and Knuckles Conservation Forest, the Sinharaja Forest Reserve, the Dutch Fort in Galle, the Golden Temple of Dambulla, the Temple of Tooth in Kandy and the ancient cities of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura, and Sigiriya.

"Ever since we established diplomatic relations with the Kingdom in July 1974, the two countries have been maintaining excellent relations in social, cultural, political and economic fields," Mackeen said. He added that the relationship with Saudi Arabia is significant not only because it is home to nearly 250,000 Sri Lankans but also is...
holy land for Muslims who form 7 percent of the country’s 24 million population. A large number of Sri Lankan Muslims regularly come for the annual Haj, and Umrah throughout the year.

“We are thankful to the leadership of King Salman for the special care given to the Muslims from all parts of the world including Sri Lanka.”