

CHINESE VISITORS TO BOOST NEPAL TOURISM ONCE AGAIN



neighbors.

Nepal tourism sector all near collapsed after the catastrophic earthquake and the trade embargo from India. Both events took place in 2015 and led to a drastic and sudden drop in tourist arrivals. Most of these arrivals had been Chinese. Because of political tensions and economic uncertainty, Europeans began to avoid Nepal and the small country relied heavily on its northern

In 2015, Nepal tourism saw only 66,984 visitors arriving from China, a decrease of 45.89 percent from 2014 and a record low for the past four years. However, Natta CEO, Hari Sarmah declared **that the wheel has turned and tourists from China are making a comeback.**

While Nepal's bad luck caused neighboring travelers to choose Sri Lanka last year, data from March show a tide change, mostly due to both Chinese and Nepalese efforts. In April of this year, Natta will help promote Nepal tourism in Chengdu, Shanghai, Beijing and Hangzhou. On the same note, Chinese travelers can obtain a visa for Nepal for free since December of last year.

It is estimated that the number of Chinese arrivals will continue to grow in coming years, as long as Nepali infrastructure allows for it. In another cooperation effort, China agreed to teach the Chinese language to 200 tourism professionals from Nepal for the following five years but also to host the Kathmandu Cultural Forum in 2015.

Since the year 2012, China is the source of the most international tourists on the planet. Their Tourism Data Institute places that number to no less than 120 million for 2015, with a 12 percent growth from the year prior. **These outbound tourists spent roughly 104 billion US dollars, registering a 16.7 percent increase.**

Chinese tourists have been visiting Nepal since the year 2002. Before the early 2000s, they could only come for official business. From the summer of 2009, the number of visitors coming from Nepal's northern neighbor was constantly growing.

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