

AHK SRI LANKA

Monthly Newsletter

MAY 2024
VOLUME 55

**KOELNMESSE
REPRESENTATIVES
EXPLORE
OPPORTUNITIES IN
THE FOOD &
BEVERAGE INDUSTRY
IN SRI LANKA**

**WHY ARE TRADE
FAIRS IMPORTANT
FOR BUSINESS
GROWTH?**

**GERMAN PORTS TO
RECEIVE SECURITY AND
COMPETITIVENESS
BOOST**



Delegation der Deutschen
Wirtschaft in Sri Lanka
Delegation of German Industry
and Commerce in Sri Lanka

 **Partner In Sri Lanka**



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ECONOMIC DATA OF SRI LANKA & GERMANY

Inflation in Sri Lanka

On-year-on-year basis, National Consumer Price Index (NCPI) (2021=100) based headline inflation accelerated to 2.7% in April 2024 from 2.5% in March 2024. Food inflation recorded 3.3%, while Non-Food inflation recorded 2.3%. Further, the NCPI based core inflation decelerated to 3.0% in April 2024 from 3.4% in March 2024.



Inflation in Germany

The inflation rate in Germany is expected to be +2.4% in May 2024. The inflation rate is measured as the change in the consumer price index (CPI) compared with the same month a year earlier. Based on the results available so far, the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) also reports that consumer prices are expected to increase by 0.1% on April 2024. The inflation rate excluding food and energy, often referred to as core inflation, is expected to be +3.0%.

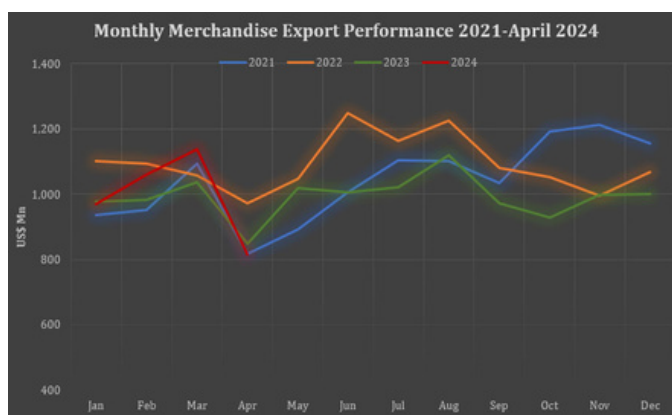
Sri Lanka Trade Statistics

The total exports (Merchandise & Service) for the month of April 2024 was recorded as US\$ 1,114.22 Million increasing 1.25 % over the corresponding period of 2023.

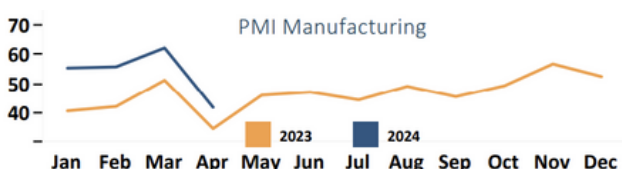
As per the provisional data released by the Sri Lanka Customs, the merchandise export performance in April 2024 amounted to US\$ 813.81 million, recorded decrease of 4.1 % compared to April 2023. Figure 1 shows Monthly Merchandise export performance from the year 2021 to April 2024.

The estimated value of services exports for the month of April 2024 was US\$ 300.41 Million, increasing 19.28 % over the corresponding period of 2023.

Comparison of Monthly Merchandise Export Performance 2021 – April 2024



Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index



Services Purchasing Managers' Index



Germany Trade Statistics

On a calendar and seasonally adjusted basis, German exports to countries outside the European Union (third countries) increased by 3.7% in April 2024 compared with March 2024. According to provisional data of the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis), Germany exported goods to the value of 62.1 billion euros to these countries in April 2024, after seasonal and calendar adjustment.

EU Trade Statistics

Exports to the European Union (EU) which accounts for 24% of Sri Lanka's exports during both April 2024 and the cumulative period of January to April 2024 increased respectively by 7.36 % and 3.58 %.

Exports to the top five EU markets were recorded as; Germany US\$ 205.01 Mn (increased by 5.83 %), Italy US\$ 198.59 Mn (increased by 0.63 %), Netherlands US\$ 114.08 Mn (increased by 7.32 %), France US\$ 84.94 Mn. (increased 6.41 %) and Belgium US\$ 72.06 Mn (decreased by 0.81%) during the cumulative period of January to April 2024 in comparison to the corresponding period in 2023.



Sri Lankan Global Exports (Source: EDB)

Apparel and Textile Exports



Earnings from export of Apparel & Textile have decreased by 2.84 % to US\$ 1,566.39 Mn during the period of January to April 2024 compared to the same period in 2023. Further, earnings from export of Apparel declined by 2.11 % and export of Textiles declined by 10.38 % in January to April 2024.

Coconut-based Exports



Export earnings of Coconut & Coconut based products increased by 23.44 % to US\$ 264.4 Mn during January – April 2024 compared to the last year. Earnings from all the major categories of Coconut based products increased in the period of January – April 2024 compared with the corresponding period of 2023 due to the strong performance in export of Coconut Oil (21.94 %), Desiccated Coconut (37.48 %), Coconut Milk Powder (36.2 %), Coconut Cream (44.15 %), Liquid Coconut Milk (30.91 %), Cocopeat (27.15 %) and Activated Carbon (20.35 %).

Rubber-based Exports



Export earnings from Rubber and Rubber Finished products have increased by 20.18 % y-o-y to US\$ 66.58 Mn in April 2024, with the strong performance in exports of Pneumatic & Retreated Rubber Tyres & Tubes (36.09 %).

Tea Exports



Earnings from export of Tea increased y-o-y by 10.44 % to US\$ 450.23 Mn in the period of January to April 2024. This increase was mainly due to the strong performance in export of Bulk Tea (24.07 %).

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

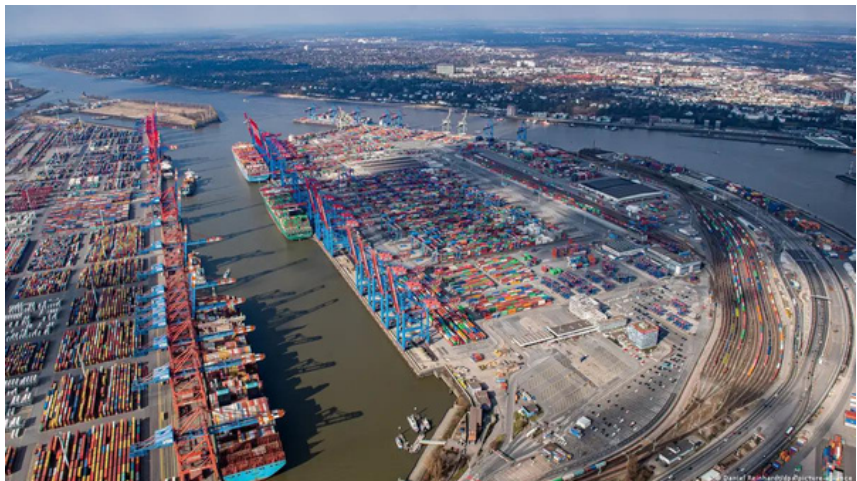
German Ports to Receive Security and Competitiveness Boost

Growing threats and the need to bolster competitiveness have prompted the German government to start work on a national port strategy.

The port of Hamburg used to be a vibrant part of the northern German city and a magnet for tourism. Everyone could visit the port to watch the ships roll in and dockers at work.

Germany's largest port is known as the country's "gateway to the world." However, this has fundamentally changed. Entire areas are now cordoned off, with visitors facing fences or closed gates.

Since September 11, 2001, when terrorists attacked the US claiming thousands of lives, shipping infrastructure has been considered security-sensitive because it too is vulnerable to terrorism.



Moreover, illicit activities such as drug smuggling, illegal import and export of weapons, and human trafficking now pose challenges not only to customs officials but to all state security actors.

Internationally, this was addressed with the introduction of the ISPS Code (International Ship and Port Facility Security Code) negotiated in 2002 under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The code came into effect in Europe in 2004.

The German government has now launched an initiative to replace its existing National Port Concept, valid until 2025, with a new security protocol called National Port Strategy. German Transport Minister Volker Wissing says it is meant to be a "guidebook comprising about 140 concrete measures to address the ports' most pressing challenges."

TOURISM NEWS IN SRI LANKA

Tourist Arrivals in Sri Lanka

April 2024 saw a decline in tourist arrivals, with 148,867 visitors, marking it as the month with the lowest arrivals so far this year, experiencing a 28.8% decrease compared to March. However, these figures still fall short when compared to April 2018's 180,429 arrivals and the conservative forecast of 168,539. The total arrivals until April reached 784,651.



German Tourist Arrivals in Sri Lanka

In April 2024, Sri Lanka welcomed a total of 9,843 German tourists, with 9,479 arriving by air and 364 by sea, solidifying its status as the 4th most frequented destination among the top 20. This marks a significant increase compared to the 7,404 German tourists who visited during the corresponding period in 2023.



NEWS FROM AHK SRI LANKA

Koelnmesse Representatives Explore Opportunities in the Food & Beverage Industry in Sri Lanka

High ranking representatives from Koelnmesse India, a leading international trade fair and exhibition center based in Cologne, Germany, visited Sri Lanka from 8th May to 10th May 2024, led by Mr. Milind Dixit, Managing Director of Koelnmesse India, the delegation met with representatives of the Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Sri Lanka (AHK Sri Lanka) to explore potential opportunities across various sectors in the country.

The purpose of their visit was to delve into potential partnerships and collaborations in key sectors of Sri Lanka's economy, including food & beverage, agriculture, horticulture, rubber industry, and bakery industry.

During their visit, AHK Sri Lanka facilitated several meetings with Sri Lankan agencies, associations and stakeholders, including Export Development Board, Industrial Development Board, Coconut Development Authority, Food Processors Association to discuss potential synergies and opportunities. Additionally, AHK Sri Lanka engaged with exhibition venue operators to explore the feasibility of organising Koelnmesse trade fairs in Sri Lanka.

Moreover, an exclusive cocktail event was organised on the 9th of May 2024, which brought together key players from the industries in Sri Lanka, providing a platform for networking and idea exchange.



NEWS FROM AHK SRI LANKA

German Delegation Meets with Sri Lanka's Central Bank Governor Dr. Nandalal Weerasinghe

Ms. Marie Antonia von Schönburg, the Chief Delegate of the Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Sri Lanka (AHK Sri Lanka), and Mr. Malintha Gajanayake, Head of Corporate Affairs and Export Promotions of AHK Sri Lanka, recently had the privilege of meeting with Dr. Nandalal Weerasinghe, Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.

The discussions provided an insightful update on the current business landscape for German businesses and outlined AHK Sri Lanka's upcoming initiatives to enhance bilateral trade relations between Sri Lanka and Germany. Additionally, the forthcoming German foreign direct investments (FDIs) in the pipeline were a key highlight.

Moreover, Dr. Weerasinghe graciously shared his strategic vision for fostering economic transformation in Sri Lanka. His insights were immensely valuable and inspiring for both existing and prospective German businesses and FDIs.



Why are Trade Fairs Important for Business Growth?

**An Exclusive Interview with Mr. Malintha Gajanayake -
Head of Corporate Affairs and Export Promotions at the Delegation of German
Industry and Commerce in Sri Lanka (AHK Sri Lanka)**

1. What role do trade fairs play in promoting bilateral trade relations between Sri Lanka and Germany and how does AHK Sri Lanka support the companies?

Trade fairs enable direct interactions between businesses, buyers, distributors, and investors, fostering networking and collaboration that support trade relations between Sri Lanka and Germany. As the official representative of bilateral economic relations, we represent major German trade fairs like Messe Berlin, Messe Düsseldorf, Messe Munich, and Koelnmesse. We organise exhibitor and visitor delegations to these fairs covering diverse sectors such as agriculture, logistics, health, printing, renewable energy, horticulture, and tourism. These programmes include B2B meetings with potential partners in Germany and the EU, proving highly successful. Additionally, we have facilitated virtual and physical inbound delegations from Germany to Sri Lanka, focusing on agriculture and renewable energy. We are confident that these activities would not only improve but also strengthen bilateral economic relationships between Sri Lanka and Germany.

2. Can you share some insights into the importance of trade fairs for businesses in Sri Lanka?

Participating in trade fairs is highly beneficial for Sri Lankan businesses. These events offer an excellent platform to showcase products and services, connect with potential customers and partners, and stay informed about the latest industry trends and developments. Moreover, active engagement in trade fairs signals a commitment to the market, enhancing trust and credibility among current and prospective business partners.

Success at trade fairs requires consistent participation and strategic planning. It's essential to carefully select trade fairs that are relevant to your industry and target audience, and to prepare thoroughly. This includes ensuring your booth, marketing materials, and staff effectively represent your brand and offerings. By attending trade fairs, you can gain valuable leads, form new partnerships, and gather critical market insights, all of which contribute to the growth and success of your business. Conversely, not participating can result in missed opportunities and a competitive disadvantage.

3. Could you highlight some successful outcomes or experiences of Sri Lankan companies at trade fairs facilitated by AHK Sri Lanka?

Since our first delegation to Germany in 2018, there have been several notable successes. A standout achievement is our participation in the International Green Week (IGW), the world's largest B2C agriculture, food, and beverage exhibition.

Sri Lanka debuted at IGW in 2018 with a modest pavilion of six exhibitors occupying 40 square meters. By 2024, we expanded to 12 exhibitors and 100 square meters, reflecting the growing confidence and trust Sri Lankan companies place in this platform. Our pavilion



featured a wide array of Sri Lankan products, from tea and spices to ready-to-eat items, attracting significant attention and demand, underscoring the effectiveness of our participation. The expansion of our presence at IGW stands as a testament to our resilience and the value we see in showcasing our products on the global stage.

Another success story is our participation at Medica 2023. A thirteen-member Sri Lankan delegation engaged with officials at the German Health Alliance, leading to a mutually beneficial programme. This collaboration resulted in a successful virtual fact-finding visit by German companies to Sri Lanka in March 2024, strengthening ties and sharing expertise to benefit our medical and health sector.

4. What role do trade fairs play in promoting bilateral trade relations between Sri Lanka and Germany and how does AHK Sri Lanka support the companies?

Preparation is key for first-time trade fair participants. Decide to participate at least six months in advance, and seek advice from past participants to anticipate challenges and opportunities. This will help you tailor your strategies effectively.

Thoroughly research the expected audience to plan your marketing strategy. Be transparent and honest in all interactions, clearly communicating your capabilities to build trust and credibility. During interactions at the trade fair, take detailed notes of discussions and follow-up commitments. Having a structured feedback sheet can help you stay organised and ensure timely responses to inquiries or follow-ups from clients. Patience is another vital factor in trade fair participation. Success may not come immediately, but persistent participation and diligent follow-up can yield significant results over time.

5. What role do trade fairs play in promoting bilateral trade relations between Sri Lanka and Germany and how does AHK Sri Lanka support the companies?

We encourage stakeholders in the Sri Lankan solar industry to participate in Intersolar from June 19-22 in Munich, a key platform for the latest advancements and strategic partnerships in solar energy.

Anuga Select, from August 28-30 in Mumbai, offers a unique opportunity for Sri Lankan food and beverage industry stakeholders to gain insights and connections for growth in the Indian and Asian markets.

Medica 2024, the world's largest B2B exhibition for the medical and health industries, will be held in November in Düsseldorf, providing access to cutting-edge technologies, trends, and partnerships with German and EU stakeholders.

Looking ahead to February 2025, Fruit Logistica in Berlin is an ideal platform for Sri Lankan stakeholders in the fruit, vegetable, and spice industries to explore opportunities in the German and EU markets. We are planning a Sri Lankan national pavilion at this trade fair.



Medica 2024 -
Trade fair for medical technology & healthcare

6. How do you envision the future of trade fairs and their impact on Sri Lankan businesses in the coming years?

In recent times, there has been a notable increase in Sri Lankan participation at trade fairs in Germany, indicating a growing interest and recognition of the opportunities they offer.

Sri Lankan companies and exporters aiming for sustainable enhancement of their export capacities, strategic participation in sector-specific trade fairs is paramount. This proactive approach not only facilitates standing out from competitors but also ensures targeted exposure to key stakeholders and potential partners.

Simultaneously, it's vital for the Sri Lankan government and related agencies to view trade fairs as strategic instruments to gain foreign exchange to the country. By supporting and promoting participation in these events, the government can effectively leverage trade fairs to bolster the nation's economic growth and international trade relations.



● Trade fair venues with at least one international or national trade fair (AUMA)

● Further regional trade fair venues: <https://fama.de/>

▶ All trade fair organisers with AUMA membership: <https://www.auma.de/en/auma/membership-spectrum>

UPCOMING TRADE FAIRS



January 19 - 28, 2024



Messe Berlin, Germany

The 8th edition of International Green Week (GW) is a leading B2C food and agriculture exhibition. It anticipates 1,400 exhibitors, 1,900+ journalists, and 400,000+ visitors from 61 countries.



March 19 - 22, 2024



Koeln Messe, Germany

Anuga FoodTec is the only global trade fair encompassing food production's full range: processing, packaging, and storage. It's the top hub for information and procurement in the worldwide food and beverage sector.



May 28 - June 7, 2024



Messe Düsseldorf, Germany

The international print industry will once again meet at Drupa, the world's leading trade fair for print technologies. 1,828 exhibitors from 54 countries, 270,000 trade visitors from 183 countries and 1,824 accredited journalists are expected to participate.



June 19 - 21, 2024

2024



Munich, Germany

Under the Motto 'Connecting Solar Businesses' Inter Solar has been providing a networking opportunity for key players of the industry for the past 30 years. It focuses on the latest trends, developments, and business models of the industry.



September 4 - 6, 2024



Hong Kong

ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA covers the entire fresh produce industry value chain and its service support companies, as well as the latest, innovative products and ideas. It offers a totally unique opportunity to develop new business, make new top-level contacts, and gather essential market information on every aspect of the fresh produce trade.



November 11 - 14, 2024



Düsseldorf, Germany

MEDICA is one of the largest medical B2B trade fairs in the world. A wide range of innovative products and services from the fields of medical imaging, laboratory technology, diagnostics, health IT, mobile health as well as physiotherapy/orthopaedic technology and medical consumables are presented here.

For more information on trade fairs, please contact:

Mr. Malintha Gajanayake, Head of Corporate Affairs & Export Promotions via malintha@srilanka.ahk.de



Delegation der Deutschen
Wirtschaft in Sri Lanka
Delegation of German Industry
and Commerce in Sri Lanka

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4|5|6 Sep 2024
Hong Kong

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ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA covers the entire fresh produce industry value chain and its service support companies, as well as the latest, innovative products and ideas. It offers a totally unique opportunity to develop new business, make new top-level contacts, and gather essential market information on every aspect of the fresh produce trade throughout the entire Asian region.

Who is this Best Suited for?

Exporters of:

Fresh fruits and vegetables	Dehydrated products
Frozen products	Food machinery
Processed food	Value-added food
Spices	Organic produce
	Production, distribution, and packaging of fruits and vegetables

Facts & Figures:

- +700 exhibitors from 43 countries and regions
- +13,000 buyers and trade visitors from all over the world
- +97% visitors were satisfied with their participation
- 24 national and regional pavilions

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Hapag-Lloyd Lanka Continues Triumph in Customer Excellence



Hapag-Lloyd Lanka, a subsidiary of Aitken Spence PLC and the local representation for Hapag-Lloyd-AG- Hamburg won two Customer Service Awards for the Europe Trade and Mediterranean Trade at the recently held awards ceremony by the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers (UK) - Sri Lanka Branch.

The Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers (ICS) (UK) founded in 1911 and received the 'Royal Charter' in the year 1920; is fundamentally dedicated in promoting professionalism in the international maritime industry. Its worldwide acceptance affirms the 'Institute' as the only professional body that sets the highest standards of professional service to the shipping industry world over.

The Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers (ICS) Sri Lanka Branch commenced in awarding 'Customer Service Awards' at their Annual ICS Awards Ceremony in the year 1997 under the leadership of Dr. Parakrama Dissanayake, the former chairman of the ICS Sri Lanka Branch, who later on became the first non-Britisher to be elected as the International President of the Institute, in the year 2017-2019.

Receiving these two awards and also winning the "Market Segment" award at the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Sri Lanka (CILT) awards ceremony for the same year, underscores the success of the visionary strategic initiatives taken by the Management of Hapag-Lloyd Lanka online with the Hapag-Lloyd AG medium term strategy.

In addition to these awards, Mr. Lalith Witanachchi the Vice President of Hapag-Lloyd Lanka was recognised by the ICS (UK) Sri Lanka Branch for his dedicated service as a lecturer for ICS (UK) qualifying examinations throughout the last 20 years. Dr. Geeth Kumarasinghe, General Manager of Hapag-Lloyd Lanka (Pvt) Ltd also received the World Prize with the prestigious ARMAC award presented by the ICS (UK) to commemorate his exceptional performance at the ICS (UK) qualifying examination 2023.

Hapag-Lloyd-AG operates one of the largest shipping container fleet and recognised as one of the top 05 mainline operators at the recently held Colombo Port Awards Ceremony.

Hapag-Lloyd Lanka is a joint venture between Aitken Spence Maritime and Hapag-Lloyd-AG. Aitken Spence Maritime is a pioneer in the industry and was the first in Sri Lanka to undertake port efficiency enhancement management overseas with its entry into the African continent and subsequently South Pacific Islands. The company handles all areas of maritime services from ship agents and cargo handlers to liner agency, cruise vessels, port management and development, chartering services, bunkering and maritime education.



Hafele's Latest Exclusive Showroom in Rathnapura

Häfele unveiled its latest exclusive partner showroom, Liyo Gallery, in Rathnapura, the capital city of Sabaragamuwa Province, Sri Lanka. The location of the showroom gives easy access to the people of Rathnapura and the adjacent towns.

The event flagged off with the lighting of traditional oil lamp by Mr. Liyanage, MD of Liyo Gallery, who expressed his gratitude towards Häfele for enabling the establishment of the gallery. This was followed by brief remarks from Mr. Supun De-Soyza (AGM – Projects, Hospitality, OEM, Sri Lanka & Maldives) thanking the management team for trusting Häfele as an exclusive partner and propelling a shared journey towards success.

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SRI LANKA INTRODUCES A NEW ONLINE SYSTEM FOR VISA APPLICATIONS

The Sri Lankan Department of Immigration and Emigration has introduced a new visa process and online application portal starting April 17, 2024, indicating a significant step forward in visa services. According to a press release, this initiative, which is specified in the Extraordinary Gazette No. 2360/24 dated November 27, 2023, presents a more efficient approach with updated criteria, fees, and visa durations in Sri Lanka.

In collaboration with IVS Global Institute and GBS Technology Service, the department is launching an e-visa system to replace the current ETA (Electronic Travel Authorization) method. This shift aims to improve efficiency and convenience for travellers.

Individuals can now find more information and apply for a visa online at www.srilankaevisa.lk. Through this platform, the department is committed to providing a quick and efficient visa application process, meeting the needs of tourists and investors alike, and ultimately contributing to Sri Lanka's economic development by boosting foreign exchange revenue and investment.



IS TRAVELLING TO TIBET STILL POSSIBLE IN 2024?

Tibet now welcomes tourists from all around the world! With the resumption of Chinese Tourist Visas, travellers can now obtain a China Visa along with a Tibet Travel Permit to visit Tibet in 2024. From December 1, 2023, to November 30, 2024, passport holders from France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, and Malaysia can enter China without a visa for up to 15 days. Tibet is now safe to visit in 2024, with its breathtaking natural landscapes, distinct culture and spiritual traditions as always. The locals are welcoming and courteous, ensuring a safe trip to Tibet. Although COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, it is still recommended to use masks in outdoor and public settings and maintain good hygiene practices.

The new policy eliminates the need for tourists to present health certificates such as the Green Health Code or proof of a negative nucleic acid test to board a flight or train to Tibet, making travel to Tibet considerably easier in 2024.



To begin, you must obtain a Tibet Travel Permit, which is mandatory for all international travellers entering Tibet, including expatriates in China. The permit cannot be obtained individually and requires assistance to acquire. To apply for the Tibet Permit, you will need your Chinese Visa, a passport valid for at least 6 months, and a working certificate if employed in mainland China or an admission certificate if studying in mainland China. It is recommended to allow at least 20 days to process the Tibet Permit before your scheduled entry into Tibet.



Beyond Borders: Tailored Tours to Explore Destinations



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GOLDEN TRIANGLE
5N/6D
LKR 299,000



CHINA
9N/10D
LKR 675,000



KENYA
6N/7D
LKR 1,379,000



KASHMIR
6N/7D
LKR 250,000



SCANDINAVIA
9N/10D
LKR 1,390,000



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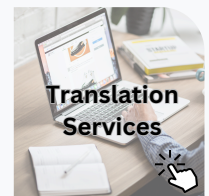
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