



### **Communiqué from Sri Lanka Tourism**

Sri Lanka Tourism Authority wishes to inform the Tourism Industry and general public that all steps have been taken to coordinate and assist in matters with regard to the unfortunate incident which took place in Tangalle recently causing the death of a tourist and an injury to his partner.

Immediately upon hearing the incident which resulted in the death of British national Mr Kuram Shaikh Zaman and injury to Russian Female Ms Victoria Alexandrovna, two teams were despatched to the area by the authority while the Chairman, the Director General and two other officers led the team that visited Karapitiya hospital where the lady was receiving treatment.

The teams were constantly in touch with External Affairs Ministry, the two Embassies, Defence Ministry as well as the media. In consultation with the Defence Secretary, it was decided to transfer the lady to Lanka Hospital, Colombo and offer her the best of medical attention.

Accordingly, Ms Alexandrovna was brought to Lanka Hospital this morning 27 December 2011 for further treatment. Both Russian Ambassador and Sri Lankan Ambassador in Moscow (who is currently in Sri Lanka) have seen the patient who is recovering fast.

The team sent to Tangalle has cleared all matters with regard to the deceased and has coordinated with Police and the High Commission to attend to procedural steps. Body of the deceased has already been brought to Colombo and the British High Commission is awaiting instructions with regard to transportation of the remains to England.

SLTDA is assured of highest priority by defence authorities to apprehend the suspects, swift and impartial investigation which has already resulted in a few suspects being taken into custody yesterday.

Such incidents, though unfortunate, have happened in other tourist destinations in the past and can happen anywhere in the world. This will by no means overshadow the warmth that is offered to Tourists by our hospitable people and professional and responsible service offered by the Tourism Industry. We strongly condemn what took place in Tangalle and express our condolence to the family of the victim.

Sri Lanka Tourism wishes to convey this message while not only continuing with rest of the work concerning the incident but also looking forward to the series of steps being discussed at present for immediate implementation to prevent occurrence of any undesirable incident involving tourists coming into the country in future. We hope to work closely with the defence authorities to ensure greater protection to tourists in possible vulnerable areas.

At the same time we request media and all concerned to work together to educate the general public the importance of taking care of the tourists who visit Sri Lanka, a country which is internationally recognised for being hospitable to visitors for over two thousand years until now.