

Nepal Tourism Board

Press Release

May 01, 2005

Direct bus to Lhasa begins from today

Nepal has launched its first direct bus service from Kathmandu to Tibet today so as to promote bilateral ties, including trade and tourism.

The bus service was inaugurated by Hon'ble Minister of Labour and Transport Management Mr. Ram Narayan Singh amidst the function. The bus left for its 966 km long journey from the headquarters of Sajha Yatayat, Nepal's state-run transport company at 8:40 am. His Excellency Sun Heping and high officials of His Majesty's Government were also present on the occasion.

A total of 39 passengers, including nine Nepali government officials, two reporters from Xinhua and 28 others, are enjoying the first operation of the straight bus service.

The bus will meet with another straight bus plying from the opposite direction with 23 passengers from Lhasa at the Nepal-China Friendship Bridge between Tatobani and Zhangmu ports on the border, where the two sides will hold a brief celebration.

"The straight bus service is a historic event and is opening a new avenue between the two neighboring countries," Ram Narayan Singh, Minister for Labor and Transport Management, told Xinhua, Chinese news agency.

Similarly, Chinese Ambassador to Nepal Sun Heping said that the initiation of bilateral bus service would further consolidate and develop the Nepali-China cooperation in the fields of economy, tourism and culture, and strengthen traditional friendship between the peoples of two countries.

"We will try our best at any cost to make the first operation successful," said Mukunda Raj Satyal, executive chief of Sajha Yatayat.

According to the Sino-Nepal agreement, the bus will be allowed to complete eight trips every month.

A single trip will take two days, including stay at Lazi County for one night. Passengers can carry five kilograms of personal luggage and check fifteen kilograms for free.

The one-way fare for the two-day trans-Himalayan journey is 70 US dollars.

Sajha Yatayat is the sole operator of this service from Nepal side where as the Himalaya Passenger Transport Co., Ltd., is the exclusive Chinese operator of the bus line.

Each bus will be staffed with two drivers and one conductor. The latter can speak Mandarin, Tibetan, Nepalese and English.

In addition, the buses are also equipped with first-aid kits and drinking fountains and provide souvenirs to passengers.

Currently, Lhasa is linked by direct flights from Kathmandu. However, due to inclement weather in winter, the flights remain suspended during the period.

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