

tourism destinations, hotels, and other tourism-related information on Chinese e-tourism sites such as *Tuniu*, *Baidu* and *Sina*, and also on Chinese social media, especially *Weibo*.

In terms of air connectivity, it is strongly recommended to improve air-connectivity between the two countries. Sri Lankan Airlines currently flies fifteen times a week to different destinations (Beijing, Shanghai, Kunming and Guangzhou) in China, and three Chinese airlines (Air China, China Eastern and China Airlines) also fly to Sri Lanka. By contrast, Thai Airways operates fourteen flights per week between Bangkok and Shanghai. Shopping has been recognized as one of the key drivers for Chinese tourists when selecting travel destinations. In 2015, Chinese tourists spent US\$200 billion (which is estimated to increase up to US\$ 450 billion by 2025) on shopping, accounting for 30% of total overseas spending in 2015. (Kawano *et al.*, 2015). Thus, world-class shopping complexes should be established in tourism destinations in order to satisfy the growing demand for shopping. Finally, it is recommended to cultivate tourism-friendly 'soft power' by recognising and celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year, which are increasingly global. In a similar vein, organising creative, crowd-friendly events such as a Chinese 'street food' fair and a Dragon Boat Festival, which, signal Sri Lanka's receptiveness to Chinese culture.

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