

Continuous Effort to Preserve Falconry- The Eagle Festival

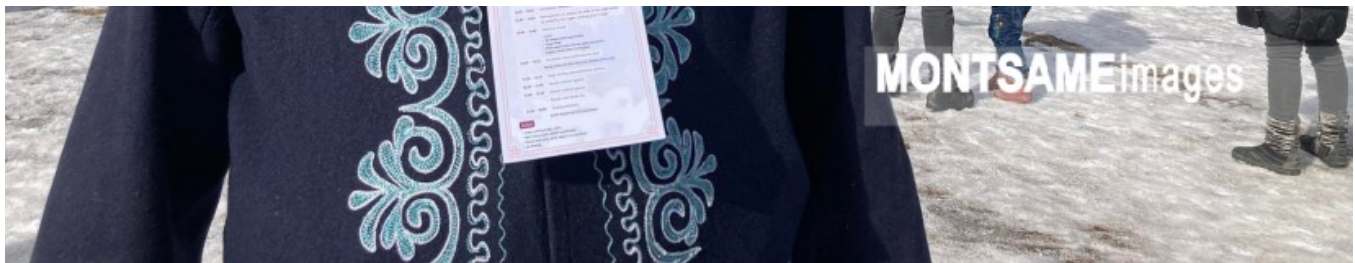
ABOUT MONGOLIA



Ulaanbaatar, March 9, 2023 /MONTSAME/. Mongolia is one of the few remaining countries that keep the 6000-year-old tradition of eagle hunting. The annual Eagle Festival in our country demonstrates the efforts of Mongolians to preserve this tradition perpetually. During the Eagle Festival, organized near the capital city on March 4-5, the Head of the Department of Culture and Arts of Bayan-Ulgii aimag K. Bekjan, one of the organizers of the Eagle Festival, reaffirmed this continuous effort.

He pointed out that the "Eagle Festival," first organized in Bayan-Ulgii aimag, has now become the main winter tourism activity, attracting tourists to Mongolia.





The Ulaanbaatar City Tourism Department, the Mongolian Eagle Falconers' Association, and the "Chinggis Khaan Palace" tourist camp jointly organized the Eagle Festival at "Chinggis Khaan Palace" tourist camp located in Bogd Khan Mountain, Ulaanbaatar.

"Our country is aiming to develop winter tourism within the framework of the "Years to Visit Mongolia" national campaign. The capital city Ulaanbaatar supports the "Years to Visit Mongolia" campaign by organizing two main events, which are the Eagle Festival in Ulaanbaatar and the Winter of Ulaanbaatar," emphasized **the Head of Ulaanbaatar City Tourism Department D. Batsukh** in his opening remarks.

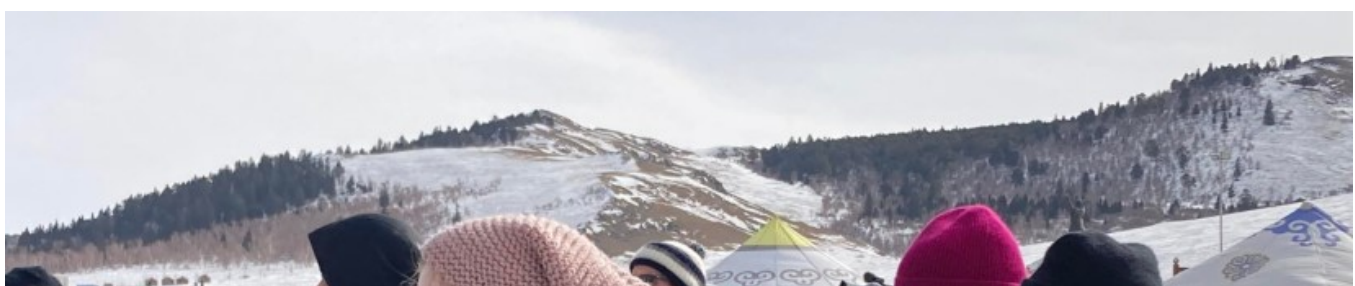
According to Mr. Batsukh, the number of participants in the "Eagle Festival" has been increasing annually, attracting the interest of more and more foreign and domestic tourists and citizens of the capital city. Moreover, the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises and heritage carriers has been increasing, and to that extent, the scope of the festival has been expanding each year as well.



The festival is organized twice a year, first in Ulaanbaatar in spring and then, in Bugat soum, Bayan-Ulgii aimag in fall, with aims to revive eagle hunting tradition and customs of Kazakh people, to pass the culture to the younger generation and to promote it the world.

Within the framework of developing the tourism sector, other tourism and travel events were planned, such as "Ulaanbaatar Travel" international tourism exhibition, the "Steppe Wind" moto festival, the "International Horse Archery Festival," "Falcon Day" and "Food Festival."

Foreign tourists at the Eagle Festival have shared their impressions with us.





"I am delighted to be able to come on time for the Eagle Festival. I have an excellent impression of Mongolia. My trip has just begun. I will go to Gobi tomorrow to see Camel Festival. I wanted to participate in Ice Festival in Khuvsgul, but I could not make it. The traditional holidays take place at the same time. Yet, I will go to Khuvsgul aimag after I return to Ulaanbaatar from Gobi. I want to ride a horse-drawn sleigh, visit a tsaatan (Mongolian reindeer people) family, and feel the Mongolian winter. I found the information about Mongolia, the "Eagle Festival" happening right now, and Kazakh traditions on the Internet," Katya Katherine, a British tourist, said.



"It is our second visit to Mongolia. This time, we have come during winter to see the "Eagle Festival" which is an ancient traditional holiday of the Kazakh nation. I once visited Bayan-Ulgii aimag, the land of eagles." Ernie Hasball and Horst Hofmann, Swiss tourists, said.





"I received information about Mongolia and Eagle Festival from our embassy. This time, I am traveling with my daughter and enjoying the winter in Mongolia. It is similar to our Siberia, Irkutsk region, and Baikal Lake," said S. Vladimir, a tourist from Russia.

About 20 eagle hunters from Bayan-Ulgii, Tuv, and Selenge aimags participated in the "Eagle Festival-2023". They showed off their skills by catching shirga (artificial bait) and grabbing kokpar or tulam (leather bag). Most activities were organized as competitions which are the inherited traditions of the "Eagle Festival."



“ In 2010, UNESCO inscribed the practice of eagle hunting, also known as Falconry, to its Representative List of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

The ambassadors of India, Turkey, Canada, Poland, and the Czech Republic and the Russian Embassy staff attended the festival's opening ceremony. The “Eagle Festival” was supported by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, the Kazakhstan Falconry Association, the local council of Bayan-Ulgii aimag, the Department of Culture and Arts of Bayan-Ulgii aimag, the Mongolian Falconry Association, and the Eagle Protection Service.



