



ARANMULA BOAT RACE

RIVER PAMPA



LOCATION

Panchayat/
Municipality/
Corporation

Aranmula Grama Panchayat

District

Pathanamthitta



ACCESSIBILITY

Nearest Town/
Landmark/ Junction

Kozhenchery Town -10 Km

Nearest Bus Station

Pardhasarathy Temple Bus Stop – 130 m

Nearest Railway
Station

Chengannur Railway Station -10 Km

Nearest Airport

Trivandrum International Airport- 117 Km



CONTACT

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TIME

DATES

August-September on the 4th day after Onam Festival

FREQUENCY

Yearly

DURATION

1 Day

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL (Legend/History/Myth)

Legend has it that a devout Brahmin vowed to offer all the requirements for the *Thiruvona Sadya* (the grand traditional feast on the day of *Thiruvonam*) at the Aranmula Parthasarathy Temple. Once, the boat known as Thiruvona Thoni carrying these offerings was attacked by enemies. In order to protect the Thiruvona Thoni, people from neighbouring areas sent their snake boats. Later on, this practice evolved into an offering to Lord Parthasarathy in the form of a snake boat race, held on the Uthrittathi day which eventually became popular as the Aranmula Boat Race. It is considered that "Uthrittathi" day is the anniversary of the installation of the idol consecrated in the south, by Pandavas. So on that day, there is a snake boat regatta in front of the Aranmula temple. The famous temple at Aranmula is dedicated to Sree Parthasarathy, the divine charioteer of Arjuna (the Pandava prince) during the Mahabharata war.



RELEVANCE-
(Local / National /
International)

International



NO. OF PEOPLE
PARTICIPATED

Over 1 Lakh

EVENTS/PROGRAMS

Chundanvallam race
Snake Boat Race
Vallasadya
Thiruvonathoni
Vanchipattu

DESCRIPTION *(How festival is celebrated)*

This Boat Race is also known as “Aranmula Uthrattadi Vallamkali”. Aranmula Boat Race is held during August-September on the 4th day after Onam. More than 30 snake boats called *chundan vallams* take part in the race. On this occasion, all the boats are adorned with silk and golden glittery umbrellas and a crew of more than 100 men row the boats. The stately snake boats of Aranmula called ‘*Palliyodams*’ form part of an age-old temple ritual. Aranmula celebrations begin with the arrival of *Thiruvonathoni* (special boats) from Kattoor. The boats set off with necessary provisions, and an ever-burning lamp so as to reach Aranmula temple by 4 am the next day. The boat is expected to float according to the speed of the current. People from all walks of life, age and religion assemble on the river bank and float lighted lamps on the river welcoming the *Thiruvonathoni*. It is believed that the *palliyodams* were built to protect this *Thiruvonathoni*. So early morning on Thiruvonam day all these *palliyodams* accompany the *Thiruvonathoni*. The snake boats move in pairs to the rhythm of full-throated singing and shouting watched by an exciting crowd. Thousands of people gather on the banks of river Pamba to watch the Snake Boat Races. The oarsmen sing *Vanchipattu* or traditional boat songs and wear white mundu and turbans. Over 40 snake boats take part in the race. They have four helmsmen, 100 rowers and 25 singers.

