



Department of Tourism

Park View Thiruvananthapuram 695 033

Kerala India Fax: +91-471-2322279

Tel: +91-471-2326579 2321132

Email: info@keralatourism.org

marketing@keralatourism.org

www.keralatourism.org

Press Release

Onam celebrations conclude with cultural pageantry



- **State plans Rs 6 cr-project for Kanakakunnu development: Tourism Minister**

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept. 02: As the week-long Onam celebrations organised by the Tourism Department drew to a close this evening with a colourful cultural pageantry in the state capital, Tourism Minister Shri PA Mohamed Riyas said the government has envisaged Rs 6 crore-worth project for the development of historic Kanakakunnu Palace.

In his inaugural address at the closing ceremony of the celebrations at the Nishagandhi auditorium, Shri Riyas said the project includes setting up of a museum and an auditorium at Kanakakunnu.

Kanakakunnu Palace was built during the reign of King Sri Mulam Thirunal (1885-1924).

“Kanakakunnu Palace will be transformed into an active tourism destination and a place for enjoying night life,” he added.

The tremendous success of Onam celebrations underline the harmony and secular attitude of Keralites, the minister stressed.

Shri V K Prasanth, MLA, presided over the function. Minister for Health and Women and Child Development Smt. Veena George; Minister for Food and Civil Supplies Shri G R Anil; Transport Minister Shri Antony Raju; Deputy Mayor Shri PK Raju; MLAs Shri IB Satheesh, Shri G Stephen and Shri D K Murali were also present.



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Actors Shane Nigam, Neeraj Madhav, and Antony Varghese (Pepe) attended the closing ceremony, where the performance of Harisankar's music band was the highlight.

Kerala Tourism Director Shri P B Nooh proposed a vote of thanks.

Prizes to the winners of various competitions held as part of the Onam celebrations were given away at the valedictory function.

Earlier, Governor Shri Arif Mohammed Khan flagged off the cultural pageantry at 5 pm at Manaveeyam Veedhi, marking the finale of the festival that enthralled people across the state since last Sunday. Shri A N Shamseer, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, was the chief guest.

Shri Riyas handed over the traditional wind instrument 'Kombu' to the main artiste, thereby setting the rhythm for the spectacle to wend its way along the thoroughfares of the city.

Kerala Tourism's more than 100 meter-long float 'Garden of Lights,' jointly created by Responsible Tourism (RT) Mission, Eco Tourism and Adventure Tourism, hogged the limelight at the pageantry. The women's bike rally of RT Mission was part of its woman-friendly tourism initiative.

The show offered vivid glimpses into the diverse artistic and cultural heritage of the country and the state, featuring spectacular floats and a variety of classical and folk traditions.

Around 3,000 artistes participated in the pageantry, featuring 60 floats that reflected the rich cultural fabric of the state and the country. As many as 10 art forms from other states and around 80 artistes from other states joined the procession, which concluded at East Fort, after moving through the heart of the city from Vellayambalam.

Chief Minister Shri Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the celebrations on August 27, setting the stage for a variety of classical, folk, ethnic, and popular art forms to come alive in multiple venues in the state capital and districts across the state for a week, based on the core theme 'Onam the symphony of harmony.'

The festival, held in scores of venues in the capital city and district centres, elicited huge public response across the state.

Ends