



## Department of Tourism

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### Press Release



### Tropical Titans win NTBR in photo-finish; qualify with 8 others for CBL-2

- *Mighty Oars, Backwater Ninjas, Raging Rowers make it to first four*

**Alappuzha, Sep. 4:** Rowing with vigour that served anxious moments to the cheering crowds, local favourite Pallathuruthi Boat Club emerged the winners of the 68th Nehru Trophy Boat Race (NTBR) in a photo-finish today, thereby topping the first round of the Champions Boat League (CBL-2) at the scenic Punnamada Lake.

Today's winner, whose CBL name is Tropical Titans, clocked an impressive 4.30.77 minutes to cover the distance of 1,050 metres. The runner-up was Mighty Oars (NCD, Nadubhagam: - 4.31.57). Finishing third and fourth were Backwater Ninjas (Punnamada Boat Club, Veeyapuram) and Raging Rowers (Police Boat Club, Champakulam).

Being organised by Kerala Tourism, the CBL, with nine snake boat teams, features 12 rounds of races slated across consecutive Saturdays till November 26. Next weekend will see an Onam-time break, following which the rounds from the second will resume on September 17.

The boat race was inaugurated by Kerala Finance Minister Shri K.N. Balagopal in the presence of his Cabinet colleagues Shri P.A. Mohammed Riyas (Tourism) and Shri P. Prasad (Agriculture). Together, the three ministers lit the lamp, after Shri Balagopal hoisted the flag and Andaman and Nicobar Islands Lt. Governor Retd Admiral Shri D.K. Joshi flagged off a mass drill of all the 20 teams NTBR.



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Shri A.M. Ariff, MP, released an NTBR souvenir, in the presence of legislators Shri P.P. Chitharanjan, Shri Saji Cheriyan, Shri Thomas K. Thomas, Shri H. Salam, Shri M.S. Arun Kumar, civic body functionaries and senior bureaucrats.

Shri Balagopal, addressing the festive gathering in the afternoon, said the government was planning to host a new boat race for upstate Malabar, with Chaliyar as the focal river running along Kozhikode and Malappuram districts.

Shri Riyas, noting that the government tried its best to retain the continuity of the boat races amid two years of Covid-19 spells, said the comeback of NTBR and CBL will boost tourism.

Shri Prasad said boat races are integral to Kerala's farming culture, adding that NTBR at Onam time boosts the state's spirit of equality in society.

Department of Tourism Principal Secretary Shri K.S. Srinivas presented a report of CBL at the function. NTBR Society Chairman Shri V.R. Krishna Teja, who is also Alappuzha District Collector, welcomed the gathering, while Kerala Tourism Director Shri P.B. Nooh proposed thanks.

NTBR 2019 Captain Shri Narayanan Kutty administered oath to oarsmen after Master of Ceremony Shri R.K. Kurup introduced the boat captains. Others present included Alappuzha Sub-Collector Shri Suraj Shaji (also NTBR Society Secretary), District Panchayat President Smt K.G. Rajeswari and Alappuzha Municipal Council Chairperson Smt Soumya Raj.

The next leg is the Karuvatta Boat Race at Karuvatta in Alappuzha district on September 17.

Today's start of the ticketed CBL overlapped with the 68th edition of Kerala's most illustrious boat race named after the country's first Prime Minister Pt Jawaharlal Nehru. An annual feature here since 1954, the event was christened Nehru Trophy in 1969, five years after his death.

**ENDS**