



Department of Tourism

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Press Release

Onam Celebrations to get off on Sept. 10



- **State to host State Tourism Ministers' Conclave on Sept 16**

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 06: Kerala Tourism's week-long cultural extravaganza to mark this year's Onam celebrations will kick off on September 10, showcasing the state's vibrant classical and folk dances, modern art and performing traditions at multiple venues in the state capital and various District Centres.

As part of the Onam celebrations, the capital city will also host the State Tourism Ministers' Conclave, to be inaugurated by Chief Minister Shri Pinarayi Vijayan on September 16, the concluding day of the festival. Union Minister of State for Tourism and Culture Shri Prahlad Singh Patel will be the chief guest at the meet at Leela Raviz, Kovalam.

Besides deliberating on key topics like sustainable tourism, challenges faced by the industry, and branding and promotion of State Tourism Boards, the amazing story of Kerala's post-flood resurgence will be presented before the entire country at the conclave, Tourism Minister Shri Kadakampally Surendran told a press conference here on Friday.

Last year, Onam Week Celebrations were dropped as the state was overwhelmed by the devastating floods.



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“No calamity is going to dampen our spirit to survive and forge ahead. This year also, there had been heavy downpours, spawning devastation and loss of lives. That was very unfortunate. But we are not going to be halted in our track. We will survive adversities and move forward. This is the message of the Onam celebrations,” the minister added.

The Chief Mminister will inaugurate the celebrations at Nishagandhi Auditorium on September 10 at 6 pm. Kerala Assembly Speaker Shri P Sreeramakrishnan will give the Onam message. Leader of the Opposition Shri Ramesh Chennithala will deliver the keynote address.

Shri Surendran said an amount of Rs 6 crore has been earmarked for the conduct of the festival. Of this, Rs 4 crore would be for events in and around the state capital and Rs 2 crore for the districts.

Heralding the festivities, the Tourism Minister will unfurl the ‘Onam flag’ on September 8 at 6 pm in Kanakakunnu. Shri C K Hareendran, MLA will switch on the illuminations in the city on September 9 at 6pm. Shri K Sabarinathan, MLA will inaugurate the food festival.

National award winning actor Keerthy Suresh and popular star Tovino Thomas will be the Chief Guests on the inaugural evening, whose highlight will be a musical performance by singer K S Chitra and team.

The festival will feature over 5,000 artists of different genres. There will be performances of dance, music, percussion ensembles, plays, yoga display, literary competitions and recitals besides staging of diverse folk, martial and contemporary arts.

The state capital will have programmes in as many as 29 venues. While Nishagandhi Auditorium and Central Stadium are the principal venues, programmes will also be staged at Vyloppilli Samskrithi Bhavan, Gandhi Park, Kanakakunnu Palace Auditorium and other cultural venues.

A long list of popular singers, including by MG Sreekumar, Karthik, Sreenivas, Madhu Balakrishnan, Unni Menon, Kavalam Sreekumar, Vidhu Prathap, Sudeep Kumar, Rimi Tomy, Jyotsna, Ramesh Narayan, KG Marcos, Jassie Gift, Manu Thampi, Mrudula Warriar and a musical ensemble by Thaikkudam Bridge, will enthrall audiences at various venues on different days.

The Central Stadium will host mega shows by various media houses like Jaihind, ACV, Mangalam, Deshabhimani, Kerala Kaumudi and Metro Vartha. There will be stage presentations of popular TV show D for Dance by Malayala Manorama and Johnson Night



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by Mathrubhumi at Nishagandhi , where Rathrimazha, a tribute to film director Late Lenin Rajendran will also be featured.

Kazhakoottam Greenfield stadium will host performance of danseuse and cine artist Asha Sarath and team. Musical shows will be held at Poojapura Maidan, Kanakakunnu Palace Auditorium, Sooryakanthi Stage and Public Office vicinity. Classical performing traditions will be showcased at Theerdhapaada Mandapam (Kathakali, koothu, Kudiyattom), Bharat Bhavan (Classical Dance), and Vylopalli Samskriti Bhavan (Classical Dance). Stages like Thiruvarangu and Sopanam at Kanakakunnu are dedicated for folk art performances, while Shankhumugham will host the performances of women and children.

Theerdhapaada Mandapam will also host Aksharaslokam and VJT Hall, Museum Compound and Gandhi Park will have other recitals and theatre performances. Museum Compound will stage Yoga and kalaripayattu also.

For the first time, the festival has been extended to Vellayani, on the outskirts. Other venues include Kanakakunnu Gate, Veli Tourist Village, Akkulam, Sree Chitra Thirunal Park Kottakkakam, Neyyatinkara, Kazhakootam, Attingal, Nedumangad, Sreevaraham, Peroorkada Bappuji Library and Mudavoorpara boat club yard.

Athapookkalam competitions for the public will be held at St. Joseph's School, Palayam. The Onam Trade Fair will be inaugurated at Sooryakanthi grounds by Shri C Divakaran, MLA on September 8. The district-level Onam Week Celebrations will be organised by district administrations and District Tourism Promotion Councils in all other districts.

The fesitval will conclude with a colourful cultural pageantry depicting the history and culture of Kerala, to be flagged off from Keltron Junction, Vellayambalam on September 16 at 5 PM.

The minister also launched a promotional video of the ongoing Champions Boat League (CBL) at the press meet. Top-notch composer A R Rahman has done the background score for the video, made by Bharat Bala.

Shri Surendran also released the logo of Chaliyar River Paddle 2019, an expedition of 68 km along the Chaliyar river from Nilambur to Bepore, organized by Jellyfish Association with the support of Kerala Adventure Tourism Promotion Society from September 20-22.

Shri C Divakaran, MLA, working chairman Onam celebrations committee, Tourism Director Shri P Bala Kiran IAS and KTDC MD Shri Rahul R IRS were also present at the press meet.

ENDS



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