



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



Kerala launches 'Destination Challenge' to stretch tourism across state

- **Minister Shri M V Govindan inaugurates joint initiative of Tourism and Local Self-Govt departments**
- **Govt plans to develop at least 500 tourism destinations in four years: Tourism Minister**

Thiruvananthapuram, June 08: In an ambitious initiative to identify at least one tourism destination within every local self-government institution across the state, Kerala Tourism Department today launched the 'Destination Challenge' project in collaboration with the Local Self-Government Department (LSGD).

Minister for Local Self-Government Shri M V Govindan rolled out the project, at a function presided over by Tourism Minister Shri PA Mohamed Riyas here today.



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The project aims at developing tourism by ensuring the participation of the Local Self Government Institutions (LSGIs) right from village panchayats. The state government has given the administrative sanction for Rs 50 crore for the implementation of the project.

Shri Govindan, who switched on the 'Destination Challenge' web portal, said the initiative will help LSGIs find financial resources, besides explore a lot of unexplored destinations to bring them on the tourism map.

"Apart from providing civic services, LSGIs have to grow to new levels to become self-reliant. We need to plan projects that enable comprehensive growth. Tourism is an ideal sector for panchayats, municipalities and corporations to become job providers and also attain financial stability," he added.

Noting that 'Destination Challenge' is a new step forward by Kerala Tourism, Shri Riyas said through the project, the government is planning to develop at least 500 tourism destinations in four years.

Shri Riyas said the project comes as part of the efforts by the Department of Tourism to develop a new tourism culture in the state, and bring about a significant change in four years. Marketing campaigns will also be stepped up as part of the initiative.

"In the first phase of 2022, the state registered a sharp increase in arrival of domestic tourists, touching around 38 lakhs. 'Destination Challenge' will help develop tourism circuits in LSGIs and thereby attract more domestic tourists," he added.

Thiruvananthapuram Corporation Mayor Kumari Arya Rajendran was the chief guest at the function.

Panchayat Director Shri H Dinesan and Kerala Travel Mart Society President Shri Baby Mathew were also present.

Tourism Director Shri V R Krishna Teja welcomed the gathering.

LSGIs can submit the details about the potential areas that can be developed and promoted as tourism destinations to the online portal www.keralatourism.org/destination-challenge.

The Department of Tourism will bear the 60 percent (maximum Rs 50 lakh) of the total project cost. LSGIs can find the rest of the amount either from their own fund or through sponsorship.

Besides identifying at least one destination under each LSGI, the initiative envisions linking tourism activities with various projects of LSGIs and thereby giving an impetus to domestic tourism, which has gained popularity post the pandemic.



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