



**Department of Tourism**

Park View Thiruvananthapuram 695 033

Kerala India Fax: +91-471-2322279

Tel: +91-471-2326579 2321132

Email: [info@keralatourism.org](mailto:info@keralatourism.org)

[marketing@keralatourism.org](mailto:marketing@keralatourism.org)

[www.keralatourism.org](http://www.keralatourism.org)

**Press Release**

**Malayalis' unity and hospitality make the real Kerala story:**

**Tourism Minister Shri PA Mohamed Riyas**

- **Governor Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar flags off procession marking finale of Onam celebrations**

**Thiruvananthapuram, Sep. 09:** As a festival that celebrates Malayalis' unity, communal harmony and hospitality, Onam narrates the real Kerala story, Tourism Minister Shri Mohamed Riyas said as the week-long Onam celebrations organised by the State Government drew to a close with a colourful pageantry here this evening.

The minister was addressing the valedictory of the celebrations, helmed by the Tourism Department, at Nishagandhi Auditorium. "Onam Orumayude Eenam, The Real Kerala Story" was the theme of this year's Onam celebrations.

"The way we celebrate Onam shows that our unity cannot be disrupted by divisive forces", said Shri Riyas.

"This year we made sure that our Onam celebrations receive international attention, as we brought tourists from ten countries to experience how Malayalis celebrate Onam," the Minister said.

Minister for General Education and Labour Shri V Sivankutty presided over the valedictory function.

Shri Mohamed Riyas and Shri Sivankutty distributed the prizes for winners of various competitions held as part of Onam celebrations.

Mr. Lukas Marthinus Meyer, Minister for Public Works & Infrastructure, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa, also attended the closing ceremony.

Members of Legislative Assembly Shri Antony Raju, Shri V Joy, Shri DK Murali, Shri I B Satheesh, Shri V K Prashanth, District Panchayat President Shri D Suresh Kumar, Mayor Smt Arya Rajendran and Tourism Director Smt Sikha Surendran, attended the function.

The closing ceremony was followed by Shri Vineeth Sreenivasan's musical concert.

Earlier Governor Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar flagged off the cultural procession at Manaveeyam Veedhi, in the presence of Chief Minister Shri Pinarayi Vijayan.

People in large numbers turned up to watch as the spectacle of around 150 floats that moved through the thoroughfares of the city, showcasing the best of Kerala's classical, folk and ethnic cultural expressions along with major strides made by the state in socio-economic domains.



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The procession strictly followed the green protocol, and arrangements were made for people to view the show from different points

Kerala Responsible Tourism Mission Society's float which encourages women friendly tourism and village tourism was highlight of the procession.

This year, Onam celebrations were organised on a larger scale, featuring thousands of artists.

A special drone show was another the highlight of the celebrations

Around 10,000 artists, including those from other states, showcased their artistic talents in the colourful Onam programmes.

**ENDS**