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Press Release

Travel Lit Fest ‘Yaanam’ to be annual event of Kerala Tourism: Minister

- **Shri Riyas opens India’s first travel literary fest in Varkala**

Varkala (Kerala), Oct. 17: Opening India’s first tourism literature festival Yaanam 2025 at this panoramic coastal town today, Kerala Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas said the event will be made an annual feature of Kerala Tourism to bring together writers, artists and travel enthusiasts from around the world to share their experiences through engaging conversations.

Delivering the inaugural address at the three-day festival at Ranga Kala Kendram at the Cliff here, Shri Riyas said the three-day event would also showcase diverse offerings of Kerala before a global audience.

Organised by Kerala Tourism, the October 17-19 festival brings together leading travel writers, vloggers and social media influencers from around the world, setting the stage for them to share their insights and perspectives on sustainable and inclusive tourism to meet the demands of the present day travelers.

‘Celebrating Words and Wanderlust’ is the theme of the festival.

Shri Riyas noted that the event was being held at a time when travel literature and visual travelogues across globe undergo significant and impactful changes.

Terming it as a path-breaking initiative of Kerala Tourism, Shri Riyas said ‘Yaanam’ is a confluence of globally-renowned travel enthusiasts who have explored fresh trails in travel literature and their visual journeys.

“This country first festival will propel the tourism prospects of Varkala specifically, by introducing the tourism potential of this picturesque coastal town before the world. It will also add impetus to the arrival of tourists to this scenic destination,” Shri Riyas opined.

“It is an attempt to introduce the state’s tourism aspects before the passionate travellers, besides depicting Kerala through their writings and captivating visuals,” he said.

Shri Riyas added that ‘Yaanam’ will offer comprehensive and interactive workshops on topics like writing and photography during all the three days.



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Striking a personal note, Shri Riyas said he has been keen follower of travel writings since his student days and a great fan of Malayalam author and Jnanpith laureate S K Pottekkatt who brought the world to Malayalis through his gripping travelogues.

Shri V Joy MLA, who presided over the function, said as a popular tourism destination, Varkala is an ideal choice for Kerala Tourism to host India's maiden Travel Literary Festival.

Travel vlogger and actor Anumol, who was the chief guest at the function, said that it is a great initiative of Kerala Tourism to set a unique platform for interacting with like-minded people, sharing ideas and suggestions and support each other to build a community together.

"Reading books has helped me to shape myself and given me a lot of life perspectives. It has helped me understand people and emotions. Later, travel has helped me to be more compassionate and empathetic, besides patient and better human being," she added.

In his welcome address, Kerala Tourism Secretary Shri Biju K said Kerala Tourism is setting the standard by turning destination management into cultural stewardship, showing that Kerala leads the country in imaginative, innovative and responsible tourism.

On the occasion, Festival Director Shri Sabin Iqbal gave an introduction to 'Yaanam 2025'.

Varkala Municipal Chairperson, Shri KM Laji; Ward Councillor Shri Ajaya Kumar; and Kerala Tourism Additional Director (General) Smt Sreedhanya Suresh were also present.

The festival is conceived as an interactive platform for a diverse array of voices, including writers, artists, documentary filmmakers, vloggers, travel enthusiasts, and master chefs, both from India and abroad. The festival's sessions are designed to facilitate engaging discussions, enabling eminent personalities from diverse fields to share their creative journeys, experiences, and insights on literature and travel.

The event also opens a window to the multiple experiences that Kerala offers to travelers, writers and artists as a destination that transcends the conventional definition of a tourist haven.

'Yaanam' has an impressive line-up of around 50 renowned speakers from India and abroad, who will narrate their perspectives and experiences.

In addition to insightful discussions, 'Yaanam' will host educational workshops on writing, photography, and wellness, catering to both amateurs and professionals looking to enhance their skills.

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