



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

There are tales in every corner of India: Travelogue writers

- **Thematic sessions held at 'Yaanam 2025' in Varkala**

Varkala (Kerala), Oct. 18: There are exciting stories and hidden gems in every corner of India for travel writers to explore and narrate, said panellists at a session at the country's first travel literary festival Yaanam 2025 here.

Citing the example of Kerala with its captivating landscape, they said there are immense depths for travel writers to delve and come out with glittering gems.

In a session on 'Over the Mountain, Under the Sea,' Sri Lankan author and travel writer, Mr Andrew Fidel Fernando said there are stories in every corner of India, which is a brilliant destination.

According to Fernando, who is also a noted cricket writer on *ESPN Cricinfo* website, India is an under-travelled country by other people.

"Once you experience one layer, you can go deeper and find out something even more is happening there," he remarked about the diversity of the country.

Mr Fernando, who is also a diver and surfer, was eloquent about the panoramic beauty and surfing activities on Varkala Beach.

Commenting on the obstacles being faced by travel buffs, he said the general notion is that writers are only expected to write about their journeys and comments on issues and situations of the place are frowned upon.

Writer Mr Anurag Mallick was the moderator of the session.

In another session on 'The Cross-Culturists,' author and journalist Mr Sudeep Chakravarti said movement across cultures is a kind of obsession that makes one penning down the experiences. As a globe-trotter, who has visited 70-plus countries, Mr Chakravarti noted India is too large to explore.

While sharing his explorations, Sri Lankan writer Mr Pramudith Rupasinghe said travels across cultures are to absorb and share experiences. Journalist and author Ms Pallavi Aiyar moderated the session.



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Noting himself as ‘slow writer’ in the session ‘The Time –Traveller,’ Booker Prize Winning Sri Lankan author Mr Shehan Karunathilaka said stories find writers and they never leave authors until being written. The popular writer revealed that he had to write four drafts of ‘The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida’ that fetched him the Booker Prize in 2022.

Journalist and author Mr Sabin Iqbal, also the Festival Director, said as a writer, he depends a lot on emotions while depicting his characters, mostly from his hometown Varkala. According to him, writing is a way of survival. Journo Ms Nirmala Govindarajan was the moderator of the session.

In the session on ‘Adrenaline Travellers,’ expeditionary cyclist and author Mr Dhruv Bogra and Mr Andrew Fidel Fernando were the panellists with writer Mr Depinder Chaudhry being the moderator.

Organised by Kerala Tourism at Ranga Kala Kendram at the Cliff here, the October 17-19 festival has brought 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 three-day festival.

Ends