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**Press Release**

**Kerala Tourism grabs global attention at FITUR in Madrid**

***Tourism Minister meets King Felipe VI of Spain***

**Thiruvananthapuram, Jan. 19:** On a global outreach drive with a clutch of new products and initiatives, Kerala Tourism made a big appeal at FITUR, the world's second most important tourism fair now underway in Spain's capital Madrid.

Kerala Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas, heading the Kerala delegation to the five-day fair, had a meeting with King Felipe VI of Spain, who inaugurated the 43<sup>rd</sup> edition of FITUR, a key meeting point of tourism stakeholders and professionals from around the world.

King Felipe and Queen Letizia of Spain visited the Incredible India Pavilion at the fair after the inauguration.

Significantly, Kerala's participation in FITUR comes in the wake of the State Tourism Department kicking off a major campaign to regain international tourist footfalls after the pandemic-induced lull.

Kerala Tourism's pavilion at the fair, featuring stunning images of the state's unique festivals which lured the delegate's attention, was jointly inaugurated by Shri Riyas and Shri Dinesh Patnaik, Indian Ambassador to Spain. Additional Secretary Tourism, Government of India, Shri Rakesh Kumar Verma was present on occasion.

The deliberations at the fair have strengthened Kerala's expectations of a spike in the arrival of tourists from Spain in the upcoming tourism season.

The trade partners of Kerala Tourism in the fair are CGH Earth, Abad Hotels and Resorts, Somatheeram Ayurveda Group, and Travel Corporation (India).

An important European market for Kerala, 18947 tourists from Spain visited the state in the year before the outbreak of COVID 19 pandemic.

Kerala Tourism has come out with a raft of new projects and events to turn the state into an all-season destination.

Introducing new destinations, conceptualizing innovative tourism circuits, investing in infrastructure development, broadening the award-winning Responsible Tourism initiative, which allows tourists to experience village life and local communities to benefit, and ensuring better connectivity are the new focus areas of the state's rejigged tourism initiatives.

