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Press Release

Chelsea FC on virtual tour of Kerala, Minister Riyas invites Blues for a 'real' tour

Thiruvananthapuram, April 19: As soccer powerhouse Chelsea FC made a virtual tour of Kerala's backwater paradise Alappuzha on Tuesday praising the beauty of the land, the state's Tourism Minister Shri PA Mohamed Riyas threw up a friendly challenge inviting the Blues for a 'real' tour of God's own Country where football is loved as much as life.

"The beauty of Kerala! The Blues visit the scenic backwater of Alleppey as part of the virtual tour", ran the legend of a virtual image posted by Chelsea FC on Instagram showing its two players (Reece James and Enzo Fernandez) standing on the bow of a houseboat in Alappuzha with another (Kai Havertz) looking on to his team mates.

"Don't just make it virtual tour. Make it real. A Hearty welcome to God's Own Country, where football is loved as much as life. Enjoy Alleppey, Venice of the East", Shri Riyas said on Instagram, extending an invitation to the Premier League Club.

Later he said it was great to see that one of world's most-followed football clubs making a virtual tour of Kerala and acknowledging its unparalleled beauty. Kerala Tourism will host the visitors as its most valued guests and take them around the state which has many joys in store including die-hard football fans.

Just as its scenic charm, Kerala is also known for its deep interest in football. Chelsea commands a good fan following in the state, where football is the most watched and played sport, blurring social and rural-urban divides, the Minister said.

Chelsea's choosing Kerala as a place of remarkable beauty will further strengthen the state's global connect, especially with the soccer-lovers from all continents. The UK is already a big market for Kerala Tourism, Shri Riyas added.

The image, which went viral, also elicited a lot of appreciative comments with fans urging the Blues to make a real tour of the state.

Interestingly, former Chelsea striker Didier Drogba, accompanied by his wife Lalla, had joined the world premiere of a three-minute film on Kerala, 'Your Moment is waiting,' at the Saatchi Gallery in Chelsea in September 2010. "Kerala is a dream place" said Drogba then, after the screening.



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Former England striker and Golden Boot winner Gary Linekar, who also watched the film then, had said, "Kerala is a place you want to go."

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