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**Press Release**

**Nishagandhi music fest right step to music tourism: Governor**



*Five-day Nishagandhi Monsoon Ragas commences*

**Thiruvananthapuram, July 20:** Nishagandhi Monsoon Ragas organized by Kerala Tourism marked the state's successful entry into music tourism, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala Rtd Justice Shri P. Sathasivam said while inaugurating the second edition of the five-day music festival at the Nishagandhi Auditorium at Kanakakunnu Palace here on Saturday.

Noting that the festival would be able to attract more tourists to Kerala, the Governor said harmony of ragas would enrich our minds with lights of optimism. He also suggested conduct of music festivals on similar lines in other cities of Kerala as well.



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Lauding the pivotal role of tourism in the state, Shri Sathasivam said “Our unity in diversity helped us make a strong comeback from the devastating floods and other natural disasters. Tourism has proved its unique character in the adverse situations.”



Shri Kadakampally Surendran, Minister for Tourism, Cooperation and Devaswom, who presided over the function, elaborated on the tourism projects being planned across Kerala. “The Travancore Heritage Project is about to kick start this year. The Vellar Craft Village will be dedicated to the public soon.”



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“The Chala Heritage Street project, which costs around Rs 10 crore, will spruce up the city. Raja Kesavadasan statue will be erected at Aryasala junction in the city,” the Minister said.

Smt Rani George IAS, Tourism Secretary, welcomed the gathering.

The function was attended by Shri Palayam Rajan, Councillor, Thiruvananthapuram Corporation, Shri V.K. Madhu, President, District Panchayat; and Shri V.S. Anil Kumar, Deputy Director, Marketing, Tourism.

Shri P. Bala Kiran IAS, Tourism Director, proposed a vote of thanks.

The festival promises a rare treat of classical and ethnic musical traditions of the sub- continent, featuring both vocalists and instrumentalists of various streams.

The festival commenced on nature-friendly note with Bamboo Symphony by Unnikrishna Pakkanar followed by a concert by Chitravina N Ravikiran. The venue will reverberate in the following days with performances of leading singers like Ghazal Maestro Jaswinder Singh.

The artists to feature in the coming days include violinist Krishnaa Ajith and the Carnatic Vocalist Vidushi S. Sowmya on July 22; Carnatic Vocalist Anantha Sai A.S and Grammy Award Winner Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt (Mohana veena) and Samrat Pandit Salil Bhatt (Satwik Veena) in a duet on July 23. Contemporary Flute Fusion by Rajesh Cherthala and a Classical Fusion Band performance by “Shiva-The Musical Thunder”, lead by Usthad Rafiq Khan (Sitar)on July 24 will mark the end of this year’s Nishagandhi Monsoon Ragaas Music Festival.

**Ends**