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Press Release

Kerala Tourism to give greater thrust to quality infra: Tourism Secy

- **Shri Biju K interacts with scribes from Maharashtra, Goa**

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept. 23: Developing quality infrastructure and ensuring barrier-free access to destinations will receive a major thrust in the master plan for the next phase of tourism in the state, according to Shri Biju K, Secretary, Tourism, Government of Kerala.

Shri Biju was interacting with a group of journalists from Maharashtra and Goa, who met him as part of a visit to the state, organized by Press Information Bureau (PIB).

Emphasizing that it is vital to upgrade tourism destinations on par with global standards, Shri Biju said barrier-free access to tourism, embracing effective marketing strategies and improved upkeep of assets by leveraging the service of curators and professionals are also important.

Shri Biju made a presentation on the state's unique tourism products and the scenic and iconic locales.

Underscoring the state's commitment to sustainable and eco-friendly tourism, Shri Biju said the government's Tourism Policy, to be brought out next month, will give prominence to ecologically sustainable and cultural tourism initiatives.

"We would also like to promote our culture along with events like Kochi-Muziris Biennale (KMB), which is held every two years. An international art festival, KMB brings in people from all over the world. Over the years, KMB has become a major cultural event that showcases contemporary art, literature and dialogues with the world. It also contributes to cultural tourism," he said.

On the traditional boat races of Kerala that has received global attention, Shri Biju said apart from Nehru Trophy Boat Race, the Champions Boat League is spread across three months in the backwaters of Kerala and special arrangements have been made for tourists to enjoy the water sport.

Referring to Kerala Travel Mart (KTM 2026), to be held from September 24-17 in Kochi, as a PPP venture between Kerala Tourism and the travel and hospitality industry, he said the stakeholders work in collaboration with the government in major marketing venues around the world and within the country, which is a unique aspect of Kerala's tourism outreach.



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Elaborating on Keralam's globally-acclaimed Responsible Tourism initiative, Shri Biju said around 50,000 families are connected to this tourism supply chain. "Women entrepreneurship and women empowerment are the important aspects of our tourism. Our best practices have bagged global recognitions like UNWTO award and Ulysses Award," he said.

Responding to questions on how Keralam viewed competitions from states like Goa, Shri Biju said each state has its own unique way of promoting tourism and the USP of Keralam is its culture, way of life, picturesque and serene destinations, which together make it an experiential destination.

Noting that Keralam has also become sought-after wedding destination, he said tourists from Maharashtra prefer quiet wedding destinations like Bekal in north Keralam where sites has been given on PPP basis to different Groups like Taj and Lalit. "The wedding parties come either in helicopter or flight to Mangalore and reach Bekal by road. They also come to the southern part of Kerala for weddings and for pilgrimage," Shri Biju said.

As per the statistics in 2025, Maharashtra stands third in the number of domestic tourists arrivals to Keralam while Tamil Nadu and Karnataka hold the first two positions respectively.

"The government is also aware of the need decongest prime destinations like Munnar, Kovalam and Varkala by developing other locations. In Munnar, you have different locales like Vattavada to be developed so that we see people moving away from the core destinations," he pointed out.

The proposed master plan will also look into the need for expanding parking facilities and enhancing the availability of public transport services to reach destinations. "Parking facilities need to be moved away from the core destination. Issues like waste management can be solved through a regulatory-cum-infrastructure-led growth," he said.

As part of 'One State, One Destination' project, destinations in Kollam district will be developed, he said, adding promotion of new destinations will increase private investments and government will act as a catalyst by bringing in good infrastructure and new products.

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