



PRESS RELEASE

Tourism Minister launches “Clean Kerala Initiative” to keep prime tourist spots garbage, plastic-free



Thiruvananthapuram, July 24: Seeking to keep prime tourism destinations across Kerala plastic and garbage free, Hon. Minister for Tourism, Co-operation and Devaswom Shri Kadakampally Surendran today launched the “Clean Kerala Initiative,” piloted by Responsible Tourism Mission with the co-operation of the stake-holders in the tourism sector.

Flagging off the project and a two-day workshop at Chaithram Hotel here, Shri Surendran lauded the role of Responsible Tourism (RT) Mission in rejuvenating the tourism sector by promoting good practices like the “Green Code of Conduct.”

“Responsible Tourism Mission (RT) is not just a propaganda tool of the government but it is an integral component of the tourism policy, “ said Shri Surendran.

Nine destinations namely Kovalam, Munnar, Alappuzha, Kumarakom, Wayanad, Fort Kochi, Kollam, Thekkady, and Bakel have been identified for the implementation of the new project in the first phase from a list of 21 destinations. The project will take these tourist



Department of Tourism
Park View, Thiruvananthapuram-695 033
Phone: +91 471 2560439, Email: rtmission@rtkerala.com



centres to Green Certification platform by making them the focus of eco-friendly and responsible tourism activities.

“The government’s policy is that the development of tourism will be ensured by giving priority to the interests of people and due consideration to the environment. One can’t ignore the tremendous impact created by RT Mission in achieving this goal,” the Minister pointed out.

The programme was organized by RT Mission in association with Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) and local self government institutions.



“There are around 15,515 units functioning as part of RT Mission. The government targets to create around 50,000 more units in the next phase. From 2008 to next 10 years there were only 198 RT units, and it has increased significantly in less than two years,” the Minister said.

Noting that the attitude of tourists has changed, he urged the industry to show more willingness to join the RT Mission initiative.

“If we want to attract tourists, we have to create beautiful and hygienic destinations. So we have to effectively implement plastic and garbage-free mission. Local bodies, by associating with RT, can play a vital role as we needed a scientific intervention by adopting paper bags, cloth bags, and glass bottles etc.,” he said.



Department of Tourism
Park View, Thiruvananthapuram-695 033
Phone: +91 471 2560439, Email: rtmission@rtkerala.com



With the implementation of the project in places where RT activities in socio-economic sectors have already become successful, the state will have tourism destinations that have adopted cent percent RT initiatives.



Smt Rani George IAS, Tourism Secretary, who presided over the function, said Kumarakom is leading in the implementation of RT initiative, while Alappuzha has fulfilled its vision to an extent. “But a serious thinking is needed on how many restaurants, resorts and hotels are associating with RT Mission initiative.”

She said meetings will be conducted in major destinations by her along with Tourism Director regarding RT implementation. “Some are doing individual activities in places like Kovalam and Fort Kochi, but we have to institutionalize them with the association of government, industry, and local self-governing bodies.”

Smt Rani George said the workshop will form a roadmap on converting the tourist centres plastic and garbage-free. “Space for segregation, collection and disposal will be given by the department. An action plan is on the anvil for launching a cleaning drive in 79 destinations with the involvement of Suchitwa Mission, local bodies and District Tourism Promotion Councils (DTPC). There will be a specific plan for each of the centre,” she said.

Stressing that waste disposal should be a continuous process, she highlighted the need for improving infrastructure in selected places.



Department of Tourism
Park View, Thiruvananthapuram-695 033
Phone: +91 471 2560439, Email: rtmission@rtkerala.com



Shri P Bala Kiran IAS, Director, Kerala Tourism, said strong initiative is needed for waste management system. “Apart from waste management system, world class toilets and drinking water facilities will be set up in 15 destinations. They will be maintained by private firms.”

Disclosing that classification of beaches is another plan in the offing, he said ensuring zero-carbon ambiance is a major marketing mechanism.

Mr Rupeshkumar K, Coordinator, Kerala RT Mission, welcomed the gathering.

At the event, Shri Jobin. J. Akkarakalam, Managing Partner, Spice Routes Luxury Cruises, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the RT unit of Kavalam, Alappuzha, for purchasing eco-friendly products. Shri Kadakampally Surendran received the MoU.

Shri Rahul R IRS, MD, KTDC; Shri Baby Mathew Somatheeram, President, KTM; Members of Advisory Committee, Tourism Shri E.M. Najeeb, Shri Jose Dominic, Shri Ravi Shankar. K.V, and Shri V Sivadattan; Shri Abraham George, Managing Trustee, KTM; and Shri Jose Mathew, Treasurer, KTM also attended.

The second day of the workshop will be attended by tourism entrepreneurs, and employees of Tourism Department. The workshop will come out with an action plan to be implemented in the tourism sector.

Ends



Department of Tourism
Park View, Thiruvananthapuram-695 033
Phone: +91 471 2560439, Email: rtmission@rtkerala.com