



Department of Tourism

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Press Release

Government will implement integrated tourism project: Chief Minister Shri VD Satheesan

CM inaugurates state-level Onam Tourism Week Celebrations at Nishagandhi

Thiruvananthapuram, Aug 24: The Kerala government will implement an integrated tourism project leveraging the tourism potential of the state's coastal region, rivers, lakes, and mountains, said Chief Minister Shri VD Satheesan.

The Chief Minister was inaugurating the state-level Onam celebrations organised by the State Tourism Department at Nishagandhi here on Monday.

The week-long celebrations will showcase the rhythm and elegance of Kerala's classical, folk, and ethnic art traditions before a larger audience, including tourists, till August 30.

"Kerala has its unique qualities; we have a beautiful history, a coastline stretching for 600 kms, 44 rivers and the majestic Western Ghats. Even though a small state in terms of area, Kerala has a wide range of naturally diverse terrains to attract tourists from any part of the world, said Shri VD Satheesan.

The government wants to make Kerala a global tourist destination which the whole world wants to visit, he said.

"We will have facilities for cruise terminals and cruise ships and will develop our water, road and rail connectivity in the coming years for providing better tourism experiences," said the CM.

An international maritime museum to showcase Kerala's rich maritime history is in the pipeline under the tourism sector, Shri Satheesan added.

"If a tourist visits Kerala, we should provide them a tourism experience that will make them stay for at least 3-7 days here and spend more, which will boost our tourism sector and the state's financial situation in general," he noted.

The inaugural ceremony began with a video stream of the Onam theme song 'Poovalae Thumba Poovale' sung by Tourism Minister Shri PC Vishnunadh, who presided over the function.

"Tourism Department has made efforts to present this Onam celebration to the world as Kerala's diverse cultural expressions," said Shri PC Vishnunadh said in his presidential address.



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More than a celebration, Onam offers a look into the life and culture of Malayalis, he added.

“This year’s Onam celebration is attracting lots of tourists into the capital city. The capital city is already in a joyous mood even before Onam, and let’s all celebrate this iconic festival together,” said Minister for Health and Devaswoms Shri K Muraleedharan in his welcome address.

“Onam, a festival celebrated by all Malayalis irrespective of religion, caste, creed or any other differences, aligns perfectly with India’s soul concept of Unity in Diversity,” said film star Kunchacko Boban, the chief guest.

Shri Shashi Tharoor MP, Mayor Shri VV Rajesh, MLAs Shri M Vincent, Shri G Steepphen, Smt Remya Haridas, Shri GR Anil, Shri Sudheersha Palode, District Panchayath President Smt V Priyadarshini, Councillor Shri KR Cleetus, Chief Secretary Shri Bishwanath Sinha, Tourism Secretary Shri K Biju, Tourism Director Smt Anjana M and Additional Director (General), Department of Tourism, Smt Sreedhanya Suresh also attended the function.

Actor Shobhana’s dance performance and KS Hari Sankar’s band performance followed the inaugural ceremony.

More than 3,000 artists will be part of the event, to be held across 35 venues in the Thiruvananthapuram district, including the prime venues Kanakakkunnu and the Central Stadium in the city.

The Tourism Department will illuminate areas from Kowdiar to Attakulangara and from Sasthamangalam to Vellayambalam during the festive week.

The festival is packed with riveting programmes, providing opportunities to hundreds of artists representing an amazing range of genres. Around 14 major media organisations are associating with the government in conducting programmes at Nishagandhi, Central Stadium and Poojappura from August 24-30.

As part of the celebrations, Nishagandhi will host performances of Kerala’s traditional ritual art forms, including Padayani, Theyyam, Mudi yettu, shadow puppetry, Arjuna Nritham, Thira, and a folklore fusion, from 6pm to 7pm (August 25-30). Sopanam and Nattarangu venues of Kanakakkunnu will also host traditional art forms and various programmes.

Besides, an array of unique products bearing the imprint of Kerala’s tradition and culture is on display at the Onam trade fair and exhibition, opened at the Kanakakkunnu Palace grounds as part of the festival.



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A food festival offering a wide selection of traditional Kerala dishes and delicacies is also organised at the Sooryakanthi Exhibition Ground.

Food stalls have also been set up at festival venues across the state, bringing the flavours of different regions to tourists and the home crowd alike.

The event will also serve as a platform to raise awareness of the government's flagship schemes and campaigns, including 'Operation Toofan' to crack down on the drug menace.

The event will conclude with a grand pageantry on August 30, which will be flagged off by the Vice President of India, Shri CP Radhakrishnan.

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