



Department of Tourism

Park View Thiruvananthapuram 695 033

Kerala India Fax: +91-471-2322279

Tel: +91-471-2326579 2321132

Email: info@keralatourism.org

marketing@keralatourism.org

www.keralatourism.org

PRESS RELEASE

Kerala Tourism to host three-day travel lit fest at Varkala

- **Oct. 17-19 event 'Yaanam' to bring together travel writers, vloggers**

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept. 24: In a country first initiative, Kerala Tourism has planned a travel literary festival that celebrates the excitement of journeys by bringing together travelers, writers, artists and documentary filmmakers for sharing their experiences through riveting documentations and vibrant interactions at Varkala from October 17 to 19, Tourism Minister Shri PA Mohamed Riyas told a press conference here today.

Titled 'Yaanam,' the first edition of the festival, will be held at Ranga Kala Kendram at the Cliff, Varkala.

Shri Riyas said 'Yaanam' is conceived not just as a travel literary festival but as a platform for passionate travel lovers that include writers, artists, photographers, adventure travelers and travel documentary filmmakers.

'Yaanam 2025' has been envisioned and conceptualized by author and curator Sabin Iqbal. It is programmed by author Nirmala Govindarajan, whose works have been noted for their intense travel experiences.

"The event is also aimed at showcasing the immense tourism possibilities of Varkala before the world. It is also being planned to promote Varkala and nearby places as potential tourism destinations by roping in noted personalities from various domains," he said.

Noting that post-Covid, there is a significant rise in the domestic-foreign tourists' arrival in Varkala, the Minister added that a project worth Rs 25 crore has been prepared for the tourism activities in Varkala.

Shri V Joy, MLA and Smt Sikha Surendran, Director, Kerala Tourism, were also present at the press meet.

'Yaanam 2025' will feature an impressive lineup of speakers, including Booker Prize winner Shehan Karunatilaka, Grammy Award-winning musician Prakash Sontakke, noted journalist and author Pallavi Aiyar, Gratiaen Award-winning Sri Lankan author Andrew Fidel Fernando, and poet, playwright, nonfiction and literary travel writer Prof. Nathalie Handal, who is called "Contemporary Orpheus."

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Other prominent figures include Tibetan poet Tenzin Tsundue, journalist and author Sudeep Chakravarti, and photographer Asha Thadani. Bringing in a strong spirit of adventure, Piya Bahadur will join the event to recount stories about her all-woman biking expedition across six countries and more.

Famous travel documentarian and writer duo Priya Ganapathy and Anurag Mallick, food guru Karen Anand, and trend-setting travel vlogger Kritika Goel, are also part of the October 17-19 event.

Apart from discussions and interactions, the festival will host curated trails that highlight the attractions of Varkala and engaging workshops on writing, photography and wellness.

This event is being planned close on the heels of various initiatives of Kerala Tourism such as Destination and MICE Tourism Conclave, and Responsible Tourism (RT) Conclave.

Ends