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Press Release

'Be a Malayali for a Day', Minister's mantra to promote experiential tourism

Thiruvananthapuram, Aug. 25: Kerala Tourism Minister Shri P C Vishnunadh today unveiled an innovative experiential tourism initiative titled 'Be a Malayali for a Day.'

In a message on the eve of 'Thiruvonam,' he said it was designed to offer tourists an immersive introduction to the rich tapestry of Kerala's unique culture, moving away from the traditional approach of simply inviting visitors to witness the state's beauty.

"The visitors will be encouraged to actively engage with local people and culture instead of being mere spectators," the Minister explained, highlighting the transformative vision behind this initiative.

The initiative embodies a shift from the conventional slogan 'Come to see Kerala' to a more engaging 'Come to experience Kerala', allowing visitors to delve into the everyday lives and traditions of the Malayali people.

Under this initiative, tourists will experience a variety of culturally enriching activities. Participants will have the unique opportunity to create an Athapookalam, the floral carpet traditionally laid out during festivals, alongside local communities.

They will also learn to prepare authentic Onam meals, gaining insight into Kerala's culinary heritage. Tourists will be able to explore various traditional art forms and receive hands-on instruction from skilled artists who have spent years honing their craft.

The minister outlined a strategic plan for each district within Kerala to develop its own unique cultural tourism brand.

This branding effort brings local festivals, art forms, and cultural events into the global tourism calendar, increasing their visibility and attracting visitors year-round.

The government is dedicated to scientifically documenting and preserving Kerala's centuries-old heritage art forms.

"This commitment ensures that these traditions are not only protected but also made accessible through modern digital platforms," said Shri Vishnunadh whose passionate Onam song, released last week, has become popular.

"Our heritage is not intended to be preserved within the confines of museums; it should be actively shared and kept vibrant for future generations."

The overarching goal is to engage younger audiences with Kerala's rich arts and culture while simultaneously generating international interest through digital outreach.



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The minister provided insight into this year's Onam Week celebrations, which promise to transcend the typical array of events. Instead, they are set to evolve into a grand cultural gathering that showcases Kerala's artistic heritage on a global scale.

During the festivities, over 340 art programs will occur at around 35 venues in Thiruvananthapuram, featuring about 3,000 local artists and over 8,000 performers from across the state.

The Nishagandhi festival will showcase traditional art forms such as Mudi yettu, Tholpavakoothu, Padayani, Arjuna dance, and Poothanum Thira, featuring 160 artists from 10 states, from Jammu and Kashmir to Tamil Nadu, culminating in a grand closing procession.

The minister reiterated that the government's tourism vision focuses on enhancing artists' quality of life and empowering local businesses.

This initiative prioritises cultural enrichment and community involvement over simply increasing footfalls.

He concluded that the week-long festival is part of a broader strategy to turn Kerala's cultural heritage into a dynamic force for sustainable economic growth.

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