



Department of Tourism

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Press Release

Hotel projects up to Rs 50 cr to get startup model financial assistance: K N Balagopal

- **Tourism Minister PA Mohamed Riyas presents Vision 2031 for tourism sector**

Idukki, Oct 25: Finance Minister KN Balagopal has announced that the process of providing startup model financial assistance for hotel projects with investments of up to Rs 50 crore has reached its final stage.

He made this statement while inaugurating the 'Lokom Kothikkum Keralam' Vision 2031 state-level tourism seminar, organised by the Kerala Tourism Department at Marian College, Kuttikkanam, today.

During the event, which was presided over by Water Resources Minister Roshy Augustine, Tourism and Public Works Minister PA Mohamed Riyas presented the Vision 2031 policy document.

The Finance Minister emphasised that the tourism sector in Kerala must adapt positively to the rapid changes brought about by artificial intelligence.

He stated, "Whether society likes it or not, AI is significantly influencing our daily lives and jobs."

He added, "At this stage, soft skills like art and cooking—areas not impacted by AI—hold great potential. Tourism is the best sector to acquire and enhance these skills."

Shri Balagopal said the budget for the tourism department has increased by 20 per cent and emphasised the importance of attracting domestic tourists with financial means within Kerala.

Furthermore, he noted that many seats in higher educational institutions in the state remain vacant. He indicated that if current rules were amended, students from other states could come to study in Kerala, and this proposal is under active consideration by the government.

On health tourism, he stated that steps would be taken to establish Kerala as a hub. He also highlighted the state government's commitment to pilgrimage tourism, noting that Rs 250 crore has been allocated to maintain the roads leading to Sabarimala each season.

Additionally, he pointed out the prospects for cruise tourism, international convention centres in major destinations, and other opportunities on the horizon.

Water Resources Minister Roshy Augustine remarked that the government has successfully implemented a creative action plan in the tourism sector, which has contributed to the growth of the state's GDP.



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He noted that the Vision 2031 seminar is being held in Idukki to enhance the district's tourism potential.

Tourism Department Secretary K Biju presented the achievements in the tourism sector over the past nine years.

Tourism Director Sikha Surendran welcomed the gathering, which included notable attendees such as Devikulam MLA A Raja, Idukki District Panchayat President Rarichan Neeranakunnel, Vice President Ushakumari, DTPC Executive Member CV Varghese, KTIL Chairman Sajeesh SK, Kerala Tourism Additional Director (General) Sreedhanya Suresh, representatives from local self-government bodies, office bearers of the Kerala Travel Mart, and prominent figures in the tourism sector.

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