



Department of Tourism

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Press Release

**Record spike in domestic tourist arrivals to Kerala in nine months of 2022:
Tourism Minister**

- ***State poised to surpass pre-pandemic level***

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 25: Kerala made a record-setting 196 per cent surge in domestic tourist arrivals in the first three quarters of the current year as compared to the corresponding period a year ago, reflecting a spectacular comeback from the pandemic-triggered downturn, Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas said today.

Sending clear signals that Kerala's crucial travel and hospitality sector is poised to surpass pre-pandemic levels, the state received a total of 1,33,80,000 domestic tourists in nine months till this September, notching a 1.49 per cent increase as compared to the same period before COVID-19 struck the world, the Minister told a press conference here.

What is more, this impressive performance shows a 196 per cent jump against the corresponding period last year, reflecting the success of the efforts made by the state including the marketing campaigns it mounted in India and abroad, Shri Riyas said.

Also, the January-September period this year saw a 600 per cent stride in foreign tourist arrivals to Kerala, and the state is expected to host more overseas travelers as the world is opening up overcoming the pandemic-induced restrictions.

Overall, Kerala Tourism grew by 120 per cent amid a 12.07 per cent surge in state Gross Domestic Product in 2021-22, which is above the national average, as cited by the Department of Economics and Statistics, the Minister said.

"Kerala managed to put tourism sector back on its growth trajectory by adopting timely policies with the flexibility required. The state has succeeded in guaranteeing safe tourism supplementing with new products," Shri Riyas said.

Kerala's caravan tourism, ***Keravan Kerala***, launched during the pandemic period, will be further developed as it has tremendous scope to attract foreign tourists. As part of this, plans are afoot to develop caravan parks in Bolgatty and Kumarakom, the Minister said.

This July, ***Time*** magazine featured Kerala among world's 50 extraordinary destinations to be explored in 2022. The newsmagazine of international repute particularly lauded Kerala's caravan tourism project that promises safe, customized and closest-to-the nature travel experience, Shri Riyas said.



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More recently, Kerala's Responsible Tourism received a global award at World Travel Market (WTM) London. The state won international honour for the water-conservation project the STREET initiative carried out at Maravanthuruthu in Kottayam district.

Also, Kerala pavilion at WTM received great appreciation from global stakeholders, reinforcing the message that the state is all set to receive visitors from all parts of the world, said Shri Riyas, who led the Kerala delegation to the event.

Recently, **Travel+Leisure India & South Asia** declared Kerala as the best wedding destination, based on the readers' choice.

Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) held in May this year gave the industry a fresh confidence as government promoted novel packages like Revenge Tourism and Workation tourism.

The state has succeeded in sending right signals to the world by focusing on domestic tourism without slackening efforts to position Kerala as a global hub that promises diverse experiences to visitors, Shri Riyas said.

Kerala has been able to make such strides by carrying out special drives focusing on those states from where it traditionally attracts greater number of visitors.

The prominent products highlighted by campaigns included Champions Boat League (CBL-2), modelled on IPL cricket. Also, the Government strengthened regional tourism by marking new circuits. The ensuing Beypore International Water Fest in Kozhikode is expected to attract more tourists to north Kerala by the turn of the year.

"These initiatives boost not just travel and hospitality industry but imparts a fresh dynamism to overall economic development with the local community being the prime beneficiary", the Minister said.

The third quarter of 2022 saw Ernakulam district ranking first in domestic tourism with 28,93,961 tourist visits, followed by Thiruvananthapuram (21,46,969), Idukki (17,85,276), Thrissur (15,07,511), and Wayanad (10,93,175).

There has been a notable increase in footfalls in three upland districts of the State- Idukki (47.55%), Wayanad (34.57%), and Pathanamthitta (47.69%).

The Tourism Department is making all efforts to improve domestic tourism. Besides wooing tourists from other states, the department also focuses on giving an added momentum to local tourism within Kerala. Also, travel lovers are encouraged to explore the destinations within their districts.



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In state-wise breakup of visitors in nine months Tamil Nadu topped clocking 11,60,336 tourists followed by Karnataka (7,67,262), Maharashtra (3,82,957), Andhra Pradesh (1,95,594), and Delhi (1,40,471).

More than 100 new tourism destinations will be added to the state's tourism map by 2023 as part of the Destination Challenge Project, being carried out in collaboration with local self-government institutions.

Lauding the role of media and public in reviving the pandemic-hit tourism in the state, Shri Riyas said secularism, unity and harmony of the people have led to the growth of tourism. For further growth of the sector, public participation will be ensured.

“Soon, eight more districts in the State will have Beypore model sea bridges. Similarly, there will be hiking and trekking facilities in hilly districts. Major plans are also on the anvil to step up hospitality facilities and improve the condition of roads to destinations”, he added.

“Excellent marketing strategies, publicity measures and high-quality hospitality besides events and products such as Kerala Travel Mart, Champions Boat League and Caravans, have helped us recover in tourism, said Tourism Director Shri P.B. Nooh.

The implementation of a set of meticulously-crafted steps will help in future trajectory of travel and hospitality industry in the state, he added.

Ends