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Press Release

Kerala inks pact with UN body to empower women in tourism



- **State Responsible Tourism Mission to implement the MoU**

Kottayam, Feb. 26: Kerala entered into an agreement today with UN Women, boosting women-friendly activities in the state's tourism sector by training stakeholders who include young representatives and civil organisations.

A memorandum of understanding signed by Kerala Tourism Director Mr P.B. Nooh and UN Women India Representative Ms Susan Ferguson agreed to work towards promoting gender-inclusive tourism sites in the state. The Responsible Tourism Mission will be the implementing agency for the MoU.

As per the pact inked at the first-ever Global Responsible Tourism Summit in Kumarakom near this city, both parties will promote women-friendly tourism in Kerala. This will be done by creating modules and capacity-building of relevant stakeholders, besides providing advisory support for baseline research, implementing women-friendly tourist destinations and supporting interventions to change prevalent discriminatory social norms.



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The world body will help Kerala Tourism in developing reports and material related to women-friendly tourism and their publication. The MoU will strive to build synergies with other flagship programmes of the state and help in rectifying social attitudes that are checking gender-inclusive public spaces in tourism.

Tourism Minister Shri P.A. Mohamed Riyas, while inaugurating the four-day summit at Lakesong resort, said the MoU was in continuation of the state government's renewed efforts towards women-friendly tourism since October last year. "We will ensure good female participation in tourism initiatives and allied services besides RT (Responsible Tourism) projects. The idea is to promote tourism with focus on women empowerment," he added.

Ms Ferguson, speaking at the opening ceremony, said women merited encouragement to work in tourism so as to instill a sense of security among the travellers to the state. "More jobs to women in key slots will not only generate employment but curtail the prevailing gender inequality," she noted.

The pioneering conclave, which is slated to conclude on Tuesday, features 280 delegates and 70 speakers.

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