



Department of Tourism

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PRESS RELEASE

CBL to mark monsoon season on world tourism, sporting calendar



- **Kerala CM to inaugurate Champions Boat League on Aug 10**
- **Team auctions to be held in Kochi on Aug 1**

Thiruvananthapuram, July 27: Having all the trappings of a global spectacle, Kerala Tourism's Champions Boat League (CBL), India's first-ever water-based boat racing patterned on the IPL format of cricket, will make its debut next month.

Hon. Chief Minister Shri Pinarayi Vijayan will flag off the event on August 10, on the sidelines of the famed Nehru Trophy Boat Race at Alappuzha, in the presence of Cricket legend Shri Sachin Tendulkar.

"Every detail has been worked out meticulously for the hassle-free conduct of the event. The preparations are moving to the final stages," Hon. Minister for Tourism, Co-operation



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and Devaswom Shri Kadakampally Surendran told a press conference here on Saturday, disclosing the structure, schedule and other details of the three-month-long event.



“CBL will bring benefit to all stake-holders. In normal situation, the rowers used to benefit just from a single day’s work in a year. However, through CBL they will be able to make handsome gains,” he said.

Shri Surendran also launched the website (www.championsboatleague.in) and jerseys for the oarsmen of the nine teams, besides unveiling the trophy of CBL and releasing a promo video of the event. State Tourism Secretary Smt Rani George IAS and Tourism Director Shri P Bala Kiran IAS were also present.

The nine teams for the first edition of the boat race will be put up for bidding for franchisee acquisition at Grand Hyatt Kochi Bolgatty on August 1 (Thursday). Originally, the auction was scheduled to be held on July 29. Several Indian corporates with interest in national sports leagues have evinced keen interest in acquisition of the teams .Celebrities have also shown interest in associating with the event. Bidders can share their Expression of Interest on franchisee@championsboatleague.in.

A game-changing initiative, CBL will give a fillip to Kerala’s famous but largely scattered snake boat races by professionalizing and commercializing the event on the lines of IPL.

Significantly, it will add a fascinating tourism product with an enormous potential to attract visitors from far and wide during Kerala’s prolonged monsoon (June to late October), considered as lean tourist period. Once the event is firmly entrenched, it will make the state a truly 365-day destination of irresistible charm.



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There is a total of Rs 5.9 crore prize money for CBL which makes it the fourth highest in all sports in India. The first three winners of each match will get Rs 5 lakh, Rs 3 lakh, and Rs 1 lakh respectively. Moreover, all participants will get a bonus cash prize of Rs 4 lakh for each match.

For the glitch-free conduct of the sporting extravaganza, Kerala Tourism has formed a government-owned private limited company. An agency consortium, led by E factor Entertainment and The Social Street, has been selected as consultants.

In order to attract high-profile bidders, Kerala Tourism has dangled an array of benefits through sponsorships and TV and digital rights. All the benefits from the sponsorship, venue, ticket collection, TV and digital rights and merchandising will be shared with them.

It will be a win-win situation for entire the stakeholders, including franchisee owners, boat owners/clubs and the oarsmen. Tourists will also be treated to a rare experience as they will be enjoying one of world's unique sporting traditions played out against the vast, panoramic settings of Kerala's backwaters.

Staggered over nearly three months, the high-stakes popular event will witness nine teams participating in 12 races across 12 locations on 12 weekends, from August 10 until November 01. There will be live broadcast of the races.

Apart from creating a new visual experience for the visitors, CBL will also benefit local communities in various ways. The league has been structured without compromising on the social aspects and local involvement in the boat races.



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Seeking to enhance tourist footfalls during the monsoon season, Kerala Tourism has tried with events like 'Splash' to promote 'Mud Football', romanticised the houseboat during monsoon and launched events like Nishagandhi Monsoon Raga Festival.

CBL, however, can dramatically change this scenario. Every weekend any tourist, who comes to Kerala, will be able to witness one 'Champions Boat Race' in any location of the backwaters.

Significantly, CBL will usher in standardization, commercialization, professionalism and fan loyalty in Kerala's scattered snake boat races. The expected participation of corporates in order to become franchisee owners will help set up global standards in the conduct of boat races, team management, professionalism and quality production values. What is going to launch the CBL too into the ranks of the big leagues will be its huge televised audience.

The nine teams or Boat Clubs for which bids have to be made are Pallathuruthi Boat Club; Police Boat Club; United Boat Club, Kuttamangalam, Kainakary; NCDC/Kumarakam; Village Boat Club, Edathua; KBC/SFBC, Kumarakam; Vembanad Boat Club, Kumarakam; Town Boat Club, Kumarakam; and Brothers Boat Club, Edathua.

The boat league will begin on August 10 with Nehru Trophy Boat Race on Punnamada Lake (Alappuzha) and end with the President's Trophy Boat Race in Kollam on the state's Formation Day (November 1). The other races during the intervening weekends are: Pulinkunnu, Alappuzha (Aug 17), Thazhathangadi, Kottayam (Aug 24), Piravam, Ernakulam (Aug 31), Marine Drive, Ernakulam (Sept 7), Kottappuram, Thrissur (Sept 21), Ponnani, Malappuram (Sept 28), Kainakari, Alappuzha (Oct 5), Karuvatta, Alappuzha (Oct 12), Kayamkulam, Alappuzha (Oct 19), Kallada, Kollam (Oct 26).

All races will be held in the afternoons: between 2.30 pm and 5 pm. The CBL winner will get a cash prize of Rs 25 lakh, while those finishing second and third receive Rs 15 lakh and Rs 10 lakh, respectively. Tickets for the boat races can be booked online through 'Book my Show' platform. Around 20 counters will also be set up in all the venues for spot purchase of tickets, priced between Rs 100 and Rs 3,000.

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