



## Department of Tourism

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### PRESS RELEASE

## Govt aims to make Kerala poverty-free by 2025: CM



- **CM inaugurates Kerala Tourism's Onam fest**

**Thiruvananthapuram, Aug. 27:** Chief Minister Shri Pinarayi Vijayan today announced that the government has set November 1, 2025 as the deadline for ensuring the state with no family living in extreme poverty.

Opening state-wide Onam Week celebrations organised by the Kerala Tourism Department in the capital city, Shri Vijayan said the state had around 64,000 people living in extreme poverty, adding one section of them is expected to be emerge from the BPL category by November 1 this year.

"A majority of them will be free from extreme poverty by November 1, 2024. Our aim is to make the state entirely poverty-free by November 1, 2025," he said, seeking the support and coordination of public sector offices, public sector undertakings and local self-government institutions.

November 1 is the formation day of the state.

At this evening's function in Nishagandhi open-air auditorium of Kanakakkunnu Palace grounds, the CM said the government's 'Nava Keralam' initiative is aimed at creating a new prosperous Kerala, going far beyond the conventional concept of Onam. Enumerating the state's various welfare projects in various sectors, he said Life Mission project enabled the completion of around four lakh houses so far.



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The week-long Onam Week celebrations will set the stage for presenting before a wider audience a variety of classical, folk, ethnic and popular art forms in multiple venues in the state capital and districts across the state in the next seven days.

Tourism Minister Shri P.A. Mohamed Riyas, who presided over the function, said Onam celebration is a symbol of unity among people and we must strive for making it more popularising this year.

Minister for General Education and Labour Shri V Sivankutty, in his welcome address, lauded the meticulous efforts of Department of Tourism in organising the annual festival on a large scale.

Others present at the function were Minister for Finance Shri K N Balagopal; Minister for Food and Civil Supplies Shri GR Anil; and Minister for Transport Shri Antony Raju; MPs Shri Binoy Viswom and Shri John Brittas; MLAs Shri VK Prasanth, Shri Kadakampally Surendran, Shri D K Murali; Shri G Stephen; Shri V Joy, Shri P K Murali and Shri IB Satheesh; Deputy Mayor Shri PK Raju; District Panchayat President Shri D Sureshkumar; Councillor Dr Reena K S; Kerala Tourism Director Shri P B Nooh and District Collector Shri Geromic George.

Noted danseuse Mallika Sarabhai and actor Fahadh Faasil were the chief guests.

In her address, Sarabhai said Kerala is the rare place in the country where one can witness the convergence of people from all religion and race. "The spirit of Malayalis is the spirit of democracy," she added.

Fahadh Faasil said the growth of Kerala Tourism has benefitted other sectors, including Malayalam cinema. He also extended his whole-hearted support to Kerala Tourism's 'Cinema Tourism' initiative.

Heralding the festival ahead of the inaugural ceremony, a *Panchavadyam* ensemble was performed by students and alumni of Peringode High School near Pattambi in Palakkad district. Dance performance by artistes of Kerala Kalamandalam was also held.

Around 8,000 artistes, including of the indigenous genres, will present various art forms in 30 venues in the state capital alone. The Department of Tourism will do illumination this year at Kanakakunnu Palace, where a laser show will also be conducted.

The week-long celebrations will conclude with a colourful pageantry from Vellayambalam to the East Fort in the city on September 2. Governor Shri Arif Mohammed Khan will flag off the Onam procession at Manaveeyam Veedhi.

As part of the Onam celebrations, special illumination has turned the capital city into glittering zones from Kowdiar to East Fort and from Vellayambalam to Sasthamangalam.



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The festival has, over the years, become one of the most popular cultural events that enthrals both tourists visiting the Kerala during the season and the local communities as well.

In the capital district alone, programmes will be staged in as many as 30 venues.

**Ends**