



**Department of Tourism**

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**Press Release**

**Kerala accelerates total Covid-19 vax drive for tourism hubs**

- *Vythiri in Wayanad becomes the first 100% vaccinated tourism destination*

**Thiruvananthapuram, July 29:** Kerala has accelerated its total Covid-19 vaccination campaign to turn all tourism destinations completely risk-free for visitors, with Vythiri in upland Wayanad district becoming the first holiday hub to cover the entire population including tourism sector stakeholders under the initiative.

Rolled out on mission-mode to keep the whole of Kerala ready to receive visitors when the pandemic recedes, the inoculation drive has picked up momentum in all destinations including hill stations, backwater hubs, sea-side holiday spots and heritage and cultural tourism centres in the length and breadth of the state.

Kerala Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas had earlier this month announced the initiative.

A verdant eco-tourism hotspot located 700 metres above sea level and 60 kms from Kozhikode, Vythiri had its entire population, including all tourism service providers, vaccinated during an intensive inoculation drive held from July 13-17. Wayanad, sharing borders with Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, is a major tourist haven in South India, known for its stunning scenic appeal and congenial ambience.

“In the post-pandemic phase visitors will be looking for safe and hospitable places to spend time. The Government considers it as vitally important to administer Covid-19 vaccine to the entire stakeholders in all the destinations across the state”, said Shri Riyas.

“Blessed with unsurpassed natural beauty, Wayanad has immense tourism potential. We have major plans to develop the area as a hub for a rich mix of holiday and leisure activities including adventure tourism,” the Minister added.

“The vaccination campaign is picking up well as it is being conducted on a mission mode. Along with the Tourism Department, the industry bodies and employee forums and local communities are actively involved for its success”, said Dr V Venu IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism, Government of Kerala.

“This initiative will certainly position Kerala as a risk-free place to visit in the post-pandemic phase. Enhancing the visitor confidence in places they choose to travel will be a key factor in the future”, said Shri V R Krishna Teja IAS, Director Tourism.



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The campaign is being rolled out to the entire service providers connected with the travel and hospitality industry including employees of hotels, resorts and home-stays, tour guides, taxi and auto rickshaw drivers and traders in tourism centres.

Major centres to be covered by the initiative include Alappuzha, Munnar, Fort Kochi, Kovalam, Kumarakom, and Varkala, lying in the length and breadth of the state.

In tourism segment alone, 5395 people were administered the first dose of the vaccine during the campaign organized by the Tourism Department in Vythiri with the support of the Health Department, district administration and the industry bodies.

The inoculation drive in Vythiri was conducted by the doctors and paramedical staff of Vythiri Taluq Headquarters Hospital and Sugandhagiri Primary Health Centre.