



## Department of Tourism

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### Press Release

## Russia a major market for Kerala Tourism: Tourism Minister Mohamed Riyas



**Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 30:** Russia has been an important market for Kerala Tourism and this partnership is bound to gain further strength in the post-pandemic era as the state has drawn up ambitious plans to add a lot of unexplored destinations to its tourism map, said Tourism Minister Shri PA Mohamed Riyas today.

Speaking while inaugurating the Indo-Russian Travel and Tourism Fair here, Shri Riyas said as per 2019 figures more than one lakh Russian tourists visited Kerala.

“The fair will definitely strengthen the bond between India and Russia. Kerala is one of the favourite destinations for Russian travellers,” the Minister said.



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Tourism is one of the most significant sectors that contributes to the economic growth of the State. The tourism sector alone contributes Rs.45,000 crores to the State GDP and provides employment to more than 15 lakhs people, he said.

Now, Kerala tourism is in a major post-COVID revival stage. The Tourism Department has been making great efforts to regain international tourist footfalls, the Minister said.

Kerala Tourism's speedy revival after the pandemic was made possible by exploring unexplored destinations and promoting the existing ones globally. The Indo-Russian Travel and Tourism Fair is expected to further strengthen Russia's cooperation in developing the State's tourism, said Shri Riyas.

The fair is organized by the Honorary Consulate of the Russian Federation, Thiruvananthapuram, and the Russian House in association with the State Tourism Department and the Russian Embassy.

It is conceived as a platform for B2B discussions for sellers operating in the hotel, resort, ayurveda and houseboat sectors and tour organisers and buyers from Russia. It also facilitates interactive sessions on the travel and tourism industry for the experts from both the countries and enables exchange of ideas and business leads. The stalls at the fair feature their specialties and strengths.

Tourism Principal Secretary, Shri K S Srinivas, who presided over the function, said the Russian participants in the fair who have witnessed the cultural diversity of Kerala will inspire the rest of people of their country to visit Kerala. Also, there will be an increase in the flow of Russian tourists to the State.

Consul General of Russia, Southern India, Mr Oleg Avdeev, said combining various tourist attractions and cultural diversity, Kerala can claim to be a unique tourist destination

Tourism Director Shri P.B. Nooh, welcomed gathering.

Hon. Consul of Russian Federation Shri Ratheesh C Nair, KTM President, Shri Baby Mathew Somatheeram and SKHF Vice President, Mr. MR Narayanan also spoke at the function. Ms Kavitha Nair, Deputy Director, Russian House proposed the vote of thanks.

Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) and Indo-Russian Tourism Forum are also partners to the event.

Tour operators from Russia and India, and representatives of the hospitality industry in the State and Russian are taking part in the event.

**Ends**