



Department of Tourism

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PRESS RELEASE

232 European Tourists stuck in Kerala due to COVID-19 fly home



Thiruvananthapuram, Mar 31: A batch of 232 tourists from European Union nations, a majority of them from Germany, got held up in Kerala due to ban on international flights in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak, departed to Frankfurt today in a special Air India aircraft following joint efforts by Kerala Tourism and the Embassy of Federal Republic of Germany.

The special flight arranged for the home-bound journey of the asymptomatic tourists took off from the International Airport here in the morning, after their hassle-free stay in the state for over a fortnight.

“We are glad that the foreign tourists have been able to fly back home after their smooth stay in the state. It was not an easy task to bring together the tourists stranded in different locations in 13 districts. We have taken great care to ensure that they did not



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face any difficulty during their stay. We always live up to the ideal of Adhithi Devo Bhava”, said Kerala Tourism Minister Shri Kadakampally Surendran.

“Some other countries including UK have sought the state government’s help for facilitating the transportation of the tourists from their countries”, Shri Surendran said.

“All the passengers on the special aircraft were asymptomatic and were kept under quarantine for 14 days. It was the seamless working together of the Department of Tourism, the Embassy of Germany in India, the Hon’ble Consul General at Bangalore and the Honorary Consul at Thiruvananthapuram that led to the successful repatriation of the tourists,” said Smt Rani George IAS, Secretary, Tourism, Government of Kerala.

“The unstinted support from Hon’ble Chief Minister and Hon’ble Minister for Tourism has greatly helped in facilitating the repatriation of the tourists. Today, it is gratifying to know that the tourists are on their way home,” she said.

“Kerala Tourism had provided all support and assistance to the tourists who were not able to return home due to the ban on international flights in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak as a global pandemic,” said Shri P Bala Kiran IAS, Director of Tourism.

The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany had come forward to operate charter flights for the repatriation of the German and European Union nationals stranded in India. All asymptomatic tourists, who have not been in contact with high risk individuals and had completed 14 days in Kerala or had tested negative, were eligible to be repatriated under the programme.

Officials of the Tourism Department and the helpdesk set up under the Director of Tourism to ease the difficulties of the visitors worked tirelessly through the last week to contact the tourists and arrange their transportation to the state capital.

Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) also stepped in by arranging accommodation for home-bound tourists in Thiruvananthapuram and provided services in their hotels, said Shri VR Krisha Teja, Managing Director, KTDC. The tourists stranded in different destinations of the state were brought to the state capital by specially arranged vehicles and expert drivers.

The Home Department, Police and a special medical team from the Health Department also joined the efforts for the safe passage of the tourists. The tourists had undergone the required medical check-up before their departure, which was arranged in KTDC’s Hotel Samudra in Kovalam.



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The flight was arranged as part of an agreement between the German Embassy and Air India with required clearances from Ministry of External Affairs and Civil Aviation Ministry.

The Director of the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport made meticulous arrangements for the tourists at the airport.

Ends