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**Press Release**

**Army team gives a leg up to Kerala's Adventure Tourism**

**Thiruvananthapuram.Feb.12:** A 35-member Army team that explored Kerala recently had a hands-on feel of the best of what adventure lovers look for---high mountains, lush forests criss-crossed by rivers and gushing brooks and sylvan beaches where water sports flourish.

The uniformed visitors from the Arms and Ammunition Control Unit, led by Brigadier Sudhindra Itnan, had come to the state on invitation from the Kerala Adventure Tourism Promotion Society, set up by the Tourism Department to give a push adventure tourism in the nature's paradise.

The itinerary of the special guests included night trekking at Thekkady in the Periyar Tiger Reserve, trekking to the colonial-era hill station Munnar and a visit to the water sports hub of Cherai beach near Kochi.

Congratulating the Army team, state Tourism Minister Shri Kadakampally Surendran said "visits of groups like this will impart fresh energy to Kerala tourism."

"Kerala has a string of alluring spots that appeal greatly to adventure-lovers including unspoilt rain forests, high mountains and wildlife sanctuaries. These are going to be prime attractions for visitors, especially youngsters ," said Smt Rani George IAS, Secretary, Tourism.

Shri P Bala Kiran IAS, Director Tourism, said the department will take all necessary steps to promote adventure tourism in the coming days, for which the industry and other stake-holders will also be taken aboard.

"This is for the first time that Kerala tourism had an opportunity to welcome a defence team to our adventure tourism spots. We expect more such visits, since adventure tourism is on the rise and Kerala has the best the tourists look forward in this promising segment", said Mr. Manesh Bhasker, CEO, Kerala Adventure Tourism Promotional Society. He also added that the visit by the Army team was quite an encouragement to the adventure tourism of Kerala.

Combining the thrill of seeing the unseen places with community service, the visitors from the defence service voluntarily undertook a cleaning drive when they reached Cherai beach, inspiring other tourists and local community of the need to keep the premises spick and span.

On their arrival at Kochi, the visitors were set on their track by Major General M.A Prasad. Brig. R S Mehta attended the closing ceremony when the contingent wound up the five-day visit at Munnar.

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