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## Press Release

### Connect state's heritage with tourism sector, Shri Pinarayi Vijayan

*The state tourism sector targets to create 4 lakh jobs: Tourism Minister*



**Kozhikode, December 18:** Chief Minister Shri Pinarayi Vijayan presented the State Tourism Awards for 2014-15 underlining the need for connecting Kerala's heritage and culture to the tourism sector.

Speaking at the event held in Kozhikode on Sunday, he said "International and domestic tourists should get the experience of Kerala products, heritage and culture to enhance the sector. And this can be achieved only by connecting Kerala's traditional industries with the sector. Tourism is a gateway to take the state's history to the world map," said the Chief Minister while delivering the inaugural address of the Sargaalayaa International Arts and Crafts Festival at Iringal here.

He also said that the revamped Kozhikode Airport and the Kannur Airport, which will start its functioning soon, will boost tourism in the Malabar area.

A high powered committee under the chairmanship of Tourism Principal Secretary Dr Venu V picked 27 winners under three categories for the tourism awards.

Tourism Minister Shri Kadakampally Surendran, who presided over the event, said that the state tourism sector targets to create 4 lakh jobs in next five years.

"With many innovative initiatives, Kerala has already grabbed a space on the world tourism map. The government is planning to identify and develop 79 new destinations in the state



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apart from creating more model tourism villages. This will be with the help of the cooperative sector,” said the Tourism Minister.

Excise and Labour Minister Shri T P Ramakrishnan delivered the keynote address at the ceremony.

Marvel Tours won the award for best in-bound tour operator. Crowne Plaza, Kochi, bagged the top award for five star deluxe hotel, while Uday Samudra Leisure Beach Hotel and Spa bagged the best five star hotel award.

Spice Village in Thekkady, has been adjudged best four star hotel and Marari Beach in Alappuzha won the top three star hotel award. Coconut Lagoon, Kumarakom, took the best heritage hotel award.

Somatheeram Research Institute and Ayurveda Hospital won the award for the best Ayurveda Centre, while Coconut Creek Farm and Homestay at Kumarakom won the best homestay award. The award for the best serviced villa went to Teak Town, Malappuram.

The award for the best hotel manager went to Jaya Chitra of Somatheeram Ayurveda Resort and Sanjay Kaushik of Crowne Plaza, while Munnar Catering College pocketed the award for the best tourism management institute.

The special recognition for new initiatives in tourism for this year went to Joseph K of Malappuram for ‘Adventure on Wheels’ initiative while Somatheeram Ayurveda Group and The Travel Planners from Thiruvananthapuram won the award for the best use of IT in Tourism.

The Best Adventure Tourism Award went to Kalypso Adventures. Some other awards were the best tourism police award for Sanal Kumar A G; best tourism lifeguard for Mahesan C and best tourism destination for Sargaalaya Kerala Arts and Crafts Village, Iringal.

Dr K C Krishnakumar, Chief Sub Editor, Mathrubhumi won the award for best tourism related report while Arun Sreedhar, Chief Photographer, Malayala Manorama won for best tourism photography.

St Xavier’s College for Women, Aluva, was adjudged for best tourism club award.

K Dasan MLA delivered the welcome address. Kerala Tourism Principal Secretary Dr Venu V and Tourism Director Shri U V Jose were among the host of dignitaries at the event.

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