Press Release

Ethical tourism will ensure Kerala's continued success: Suman Billa

Seminar on Responsible Tourism at KTM

Kochi, September 28: The future of the tourism business is “ethical” and that is the way for Kerala to stay ahead of the curve, said Shri Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, India Tourism at Kerala Travel Mart’s Responsible Tourism seminar, at the Samudrika Convention Centre in Kochi.

“Kerala has done so well because it can create experiences that are close to the earth,” said Shri Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, India Tourism who was instrumental in promoting the Responsible Tourism initiative in Kerala as the state’s then tourism secretary. “As a destination, the way forward is to develop unique experiences by staying on the agenda of Responsible Tourism.”

Shri K. Rupesh Kumar is one of the initiators of the Responsible Tourism programme, when it was introduced in Kumarakom in 2006. In the first phase, it was started in Kumarakom, Thekkady, Vythiri and Kovalam, and later Ambalavayal, Bekal and Kumbalangi. Permissions are now in place to extend the programme to other destinations.

“We did a study on local purchases in Kumarakom and after eight years of starting the Responsible Tourism initiative, Rs 1.5 crore per annum in purchase orders were made in vegetables, dairy, eggs and other things,” said Rupesh, State Coordinator, Responsible Tourism. “We are generating Rs 4 crore income through responsible tourism initiatives in the seven destinations, and though it does not seem like much, it directly benefits the local community.”

ENDS