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Kerala plans to reopen 160 tourist destinations by next month

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Only destinations where Covid-19 regulations can be adhered to will be reopened

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AFTER the Covid-induced lockdown of several months, Kerala Tourism is now planning to reopen God's Own Country to travellers after the withdrawal of the Southwest Monsoon this month-end. According to a proposal submitted to the state government by the tourism secretary, around 160 destinations are ready to be reopened once the Southwest Monsoon withdraws, which traditionally marks the onset of the foreign tourist season in the state. The government will soon make its plans public after finalising the dates.

Commenting on the proposal, P Bala Kiran, director of Kerala Tourism, said, "The proposal is now before the state government which is likely to take the call after due consultations with the health department and other stakeholders. The tourism department is planning to reopen the destinations where access

Getting back on track

The sector has already suffered losses to the tune of over ₹20,000 crore in the last six months. The tourism sector in 2019 had clocked a total turnover of ₹45,000 crore in 2019.

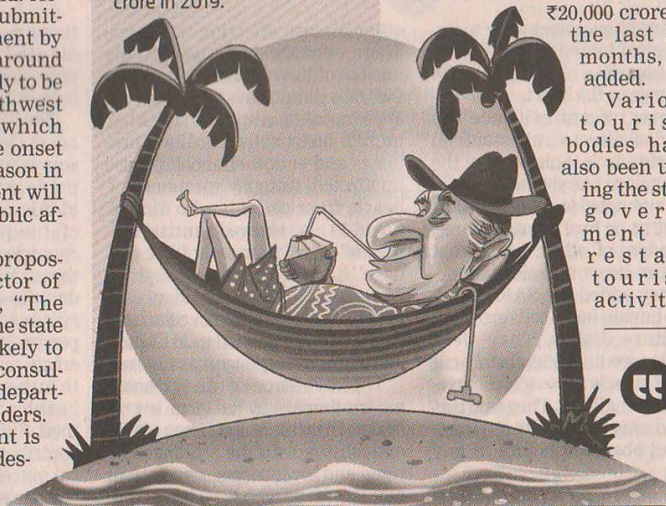
can be controlled to ensure adherence to Covid regulations. For instance, parks, houseboat sector and eco-tourism spots where tourists can be allowed in a controlled manner will be reopened in the first phase." The sector has already suffered losses to the tune of over ₹20,000 crore in the last six months, he added.

Various tourism bodies have also been urging the state government to restart tourism activities

in the state in the wake of neighbouring states resuming tourism operations on their respective territories.

In Kerala, the tourism sector which provides direct employment to over 15 lakh people and indirectly employs 20 lakh people had clocked a total turnover of around ₹45,000 crore in 2019, which accounted for around 12 per cent of the state's GDP.

"Over 20,000 local investors and entrepreneurs are engaged in the sector. So the sector has to be opened in a controlled manner to sustain the livelihood of several lakh people associated with the sector," said E M Najeeb, president, Confederation of Kerala Tourism Industry (CKTI).



Facilities like parks, houseboat sector and eco-tourism spots where tourists can be allowed in a controlled manner will be reopened in the first phase

P Bala Kiran, director of Kerala Tourism