



**Department of Tourism**

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**Press Release**

**Kerala to form new tourism circuit with Sri Lanka**

**Thiruvananthapuram, Apr 24:** Buoyed by the success of its pioneering initiatives, Kerala Tourism has taken yet another leap by extending its frontiers to Sri Lanka and forming a new tourism circuit with the island country.

“The Sri Lankan Minister of Tourism and Sports, Shri Navin Dissanayak, has applauded Kerala's growth in tourism and expressed his interest in joining hands with us for developing tourism circuits and joint promotions,” said Kerala Tourism Minister Shri A P Anil Kumar.

The minister, along with Kerala Tourism Secretary, Shri G Kamala Vardhana Rao; Director, Shri P I Sheikh Pareeth; and Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) Managing Director, Shri Ali Asghar Pasha, had been to Sri Lanka for a two-day visit to hold discussions with the Sri Lankan officials.

This visit was further to the meeting Shri Rao had with Shri Dissanayak during the four-day ITB Berlin in March, where Kerala Tourism bagged the Golden Gate Award.

“We are looking forward to developing circuits that link tourism destinations in Kerala and Sri Lanka, with the support from the Central government,” the Kerala Tourism Minister said.

He also divulged that Sri Lanka had expressed interest in starting a cruise ship between Kochi and Colombo.

The island's seaplane operator based in Colombo expressed its interest to partner with corporates in Kerala to start sea plane services in the state, while in a discussion with the Pathfinder Foundation.

“The Sri Lankan team was appreciative of the high quality standards of Ayurveda treatment in Kerala,” Shri Rao said, adding: “A high-level delegation from Sri Lankan Tourism will visit Kerala shortly for further deliberations in the identified tourism destination areas and finalise steps for cooperation.

Shri Rao also noted that after exploring Kerala's market in Sri Lanka, a regional circuit with the Maldives would also be formed.

Joint promotional activities will be conducted by Kerala and Sri Lanka to target travellers from big source markets like China, Germany and Russia. This will help in bringing more tourists to both these places.

“Tourist cruises linking Colombo and Kochi will be explored for this purpose,” said Shri Pareeth.

“We will also make maximum use of tourism clubs and cultural exchange programmes through student exchange programmes to promote people-to people contact,” he added.

Leveraging the Visit Kerala initiative by Kerala Tourism, Shri Dissanayak has agreed to take up the issue of special fares on Sri Lankan airlines that flies between Kerala and Colombo.



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Another area identified for cooperation is Human Resource (HR) development and skill training in the tourism sector.

During his visit, the Kerala Tourism Minister also met High Commissioner of India to Sri Lanka, Shri Y K Sinha, who offered support for Kerala Tourism's promotional activities in the island country.

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