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Press Release

Kerala Tourism gets on art bandwagon for road shows in East Europe, Spain

- Kochi-Muziris Biennale projected as unique selling point to attract more foreign tourists

Thiruvananthapuram, Mar 23: Adding to its armoury of eyeball-grabbing products, Kerala Tourism is now leveraging the internationally acclaimed Kochi-Muziris Biennale (KMB) to woo art-loving tourists to 'God's Own Country' through a series of road shows abroad, especially in Europe.

The KMB, a spectacular nearly four-month-long festival of visual arts and the biggest in South Asia, was the flagship product showcased in the first of a series of such road shows held last week in Spain, the Czech Republic, Ukraine and Russia.

A three-minute film on the contemporary art event, launched by the state's Tourism Department, triggered an enthusiastic response in Barcelona (Spain), Prague (Czech Republic), St Petersburg (Russia) and Kiev (Ukraine).

Usually, biennales are major international events and attract a lot of artists and other creative people from across the world and drive up the tourist footfalls.

"The road shows will help us showcase the heritage and traditions of Kerala to a wider number of travellers. We have an unmatched tradition and heritage of Ayurveda that brings tourists in droves from Russia, Germany and several other countries," said Kerala Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran.

The KMB would certainly be an alluring product for the new age travellers as well as art cognoscenti from both India and abroad, he added.

Dr Venu V, Principal Secretary, Tourism, said the road shows showcasing the biennale got a rousing response in Barcelona and St Petersburg. "Kerala has been a popular destination for Ayurveda and traditional healing and now we also want to promote it as an art destination," he noted.

Dr Venu, who recently led a delegation to Barcelona and St Petersburg, the second largest city of Russia, said people in the two famous European cities had heard about KMB. Incidentally, Kerala, known for its natural beauty, lush rolling hills and Ayurveda, is a favourite among the Russian tourists and the state is the seventh biggest originating market with 32,726 arrivals registered in 2015.

Spain is another country where Kerala is being aggressively promoted. The registered arrivals from Spain to Kerala were put at 14,187 during 2015.



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Over 71 buyers attended the show in Barcelona, 70 in Prague and 80 in St. Petersburg. Most of the tour operators in these cities, who were fairly excited, said they would include the KMB in their itinerary for their next set of packages.

Go Kerala contest was also held at the road shows with the winner getting free Kerala holiday packages with flight tickets and stay at God's Own country. Emirates Airline was the sponsor airline in Prague and St. Petersburg while Qatar Airways sponsored it for Barcelona. Kerala Tourism will provide free accommodation facilities for the winners.

The Barcelona road show, held at the European Museum of Modern Art in Barcelona, was attended by Shri D B Venkatesh Varma, the Indian Ambassador to Spain. The road show, held last week at the Czech Museum of Music, Prague was attended by Dr Venkatachalam M, First Secretary, Embassy of India in Prague. In St.Peterburg, Shri. Arun Kumar Sharma, Consul General of India attended the roadshow.

The state tourism also organised a road show in Kiev, Ukraine. This is the first time that Kerala showcased its products in Ukraine.

A delegation of hoteliers, resort owners, tour operators and service providers from Kerala got an opportunity to display an array of new tourism products and untapped destinations in the state.

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