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**Press Release**

**Kerala Tourism Hitches Ride on Dubai Cabs**

*State's marketing campaign shifts into high gear with branded taxis promoting tourist offerings*

**Thiruvananthapuram, August 5:** With the onset of the outbound tourism season in the Middle East, Kerala Tourism has rolled out a high-octane promotional campaign in Dubai targeting Arab travellers and showcasing the state's spectacular features via colourful visuals draped on a bevy of taxis moving through the bustling metropolis.

As many as 200 Kerala-branded taxis will ferry the message of 'A Faraway Land Four Hours Away' – with eye-catching visuals featuring hill stations, backwaters, waterfalls as also Ayurvedic therapies – through the streets of Dubai, the throbbing heart of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The campaign will see the cabs take to the streets sporting wrappings aimed to promote the state's Monsoon getaways, offering respite from the tortuous sizzle of the Arabian summer.

"Apart from the favourable climate, the relative proximity and excellent air connectivity between Kerala and the cities of the Middle East make it easier to attract holiday makers to the state," said Dr Venu V, Principal Secretary (Tourism). "Dubai, being the hub for air travel in the region, was the logical choice of location for the marketing campaign. The exposure and footfalls gained by Kerala will bear this out."

The campaign, inspired by the previous highly successful branding efforts on London taxi cabs and the Mumbai metro, will run until August 15. Besides serving to augment Kerala's destination pull, it is an acknowledgment of the growing importance of the Middle East outbound tourist market – the world's fastest-growing segment with a nine per cent rise in outbound trips in 2015.

Arab tourists are also the biggest spenders. Kerala received more than one lakh visitors from the region in 2015, with some 20,506 tourists from the UAE alone. The majority came from Saudi Arabia with 51,149 Saudi nationals visiting last year, while Oman accounted for 18,763 footfalls.

"As the holiday season in the Middle East coincides with the Monsoon season here, Kerala is well-positioned to benefit from the influx of travellers looking to trade in the sizzle and dust for cooler climes and greener pastures," said Shri U.V. Jose, Director, Kerala Tourism.

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