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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Kerala Tourism holds trade meets in USA; draws sound response**



*Image caption: Ms. Rani Geroje, Tourism Secretary handing over Go Kerala Winner certificate*

**Thiruvananthapuram, Mar 5:** In an aggressive bid to cement its position as a top international destination, Kerala Tourism held a string of trade meets in major cities of USA, showcasing its signature assets before leading stakeholders of travel and tourism industry that drew an enthusiastic response in American markets.

New Jersey, Chicago, Houston and Los Angeles were the four American cities where Kerala Tourism held trade meets during February.

“USA is the second largest market for Kerala Tourism after Europe. The four trade meets that were conducted there were part of a concerted campaign to tap the full potential of American travel market. In particular, the campaign was aimed at tapping the premium



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segment of travellers from USA,” said Kerala Tourism Minister Shri Kadakampally Surendran.

“We also wanted to send out a strong message to American travellers and prominent stakeholders of travel and hospitality industry in that country that Kerala has fully overcome the impact of last year’s floods and is ready to receive the guests with an array of new products and fascinating destinations,” he added.

Tourism Secretary Smt. Rani George, who led the trade meets, said Kerala may be a long-haul destination but its touristy charm has remained undiminished for travellers from America.

There has been a consistent uptick in the number of American travellers visiting Kerala. In 2018, the number of tourists from USA visiting God’s Own Country was pegged at 96,522 compared to 75,773 in 2015. The number of total international arrivals to Kerala in 2018 was 10, 96,407.

This was the fourth trade meet of Kerala Tourism in USA which was aimed at attracting high-spender tourists from that country. The number of attendees at B2B meets during the trade meets were 40 at New Jersey, 58 at Chicago; 56 at Houston; and 63 at Los Angeles.

“The trade meets generated a very positive and good response. Kerala Tourism unveiled new destinations and tourism products during meetings with tour operators to woo American travellers and make them aware of magnificent holiday options in the state which provides not just a vacation but also a lifetime cultural experience,” she added.

The chief guests at the trade meets in USA were Shri Shatrughna Sinha, Deputy Consul General, Consulate General of India in New Jersey; Smt. Neeta Bhushan, Consul General in Chicago; Dr Anupam Ray, Consul General, Houston; and Shri. Rohit Rathish , Deputy Consul General, San Francisco.

India Tourism also joined in all the trade meets and extended their unconditional support. As part of the trade meets, ‘Go Kerala Contest’ was conducted where Air India provided two airline tickets per city to the winners for a FAM trip to Kerala.

Kerala Tourism has chalked out a series of trade meets in international markets in a bid to substantially to increase footfalls in the state. Earlier this year, it held trade meets in Rome (January), Vienna (January), Zurich (February) and Prague (February).

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