

Lockdown gives infra push for tourism sector

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Kochi: The district tourism department is using the restrictions imposed as part of Covid-19 as an opportunity to rebuild its infrastructure. The department is preparing plans to improve infrastructure in 11 major tourist spots in the district and complete the works before mid-October.

It is very difficult for the department to carry out works to enhance the infrastructure when tourism is active. "Now, the government has asked us to identify infrastructure development and maintenance projects and complete the works soon. We would be completing estimate preparation soon and expect that the works could be started by mid-September," said a district tourism department official.

Renovation of Fort Kochi beach walkway, boat cruise terminal at Marine Drive, Maritime Heritage Museum at Willingdon Island, Kuzhippalay beach, Cherai beach, Munambam beach, Harithavanam Park at Aluva, Manappattuchira boating and facilitation centre at Malayattoor, Kadambayar ecotourism walkway, Indranchira Park at Kolenchery and Nedumparachira Park at Kodanad will be included in the project.

"Tourism operations may be started anytime. So, we have to complete all the works,



Munambam beach is one of the tourist spots that awaits facelift

including construction of walkways, lightings, CCTC cameras and toilet facilities, on a war footing," said an official associated with these projects.

"In Maritime Heritage Museum, we have to complete some interior works and at Harithavanam, we have to clear the silt accumulated in the floods along with other works," the official said.

As the pandemic is expected to stay here for quite some time, the department has included Covid-19 control facilities in their projects.

"In all the tourism locations, there will be Covid-19 control measures like facilities for sanitization, thermal scanners, disinfection equipment, etc. There will be measures for crowd control at all these locations. Moreover, we are giving training for our staff to ensure Covid-19 protocol. Carrying capacity indications at destinations based on

its area will also be fixed and regulated through appropriate mechanisms using both software and hardware," the official said.

Other major works by the district tourism department are tourism facilitation centre at Valanthakkad near Maradu and pilgrim facilitation centre at Thiruvairanikkulam.

"We have awarded the works at Valanthakkad to Wapcos. The Rs 90-lakh project includes construction of a walkway and a floating tourism facilitation centre with amenities including resting rooms and lighting. The work will be over by March next year," an official said.

"The cost of the project at Thiruvairanikkulam is Rs 4 crore. It includes a three-storied accommodation facility for pilgrims who arrive at Mahadeva temple. The work is expected to be completed by December," the official said.

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