

# NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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WITH the successful completion of the pioneering Champions Boat League (CBL) on Saturday, the government has decided to take the water event's next edition to venues across the state. "The 2020 CBL will be pan-Kerala, thus spreading northward across Malabar with stronger sponsorships from corporate houses," said Finance Minister T M Thomas Isaac after inaugurating the 12th and final round of the league held in Ashtamudi Lake in Kollam.

Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran, who presided over the event, announced that the trendsetting CBL had succeeded in reviving Kerala's traditional boat races with a high degree of professionalism. "CBL has given a brand value to boat races," he added.

Fisheries Minister J Mercykutty Amma said the excellent coordination between various departments of the state has made CBL a world-class event. The state Tourism Department has succeeded in pulling off the near-impossible task of cre-

ating and conducting an inaugural IPL-style league with 3,000 players, 12 venues, participation of eight TV channels, commentaries in six languages, legal agreements, organisational challenges, etc. said Tourism director P Bala Kiran. The league had 19.5 million viewers on TV and social media channels, he added.

The preparation for the next edition will start in January, said Isaac.