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**Press Release**

## **150 arts from India, abroad to colour up Onam week conclusion pageantry**

*3,000 artistes at Tvm show largely mirroring Kerala culture*

**Thiruvananthapuram, Aug 29:** A colourful cultural pageantry marking the conclusion of this year's Onam Week celebrations being organized by Kerala's Tourism department will wind along the thoroughfares of the state capital on Monday evening, starting from Vellayambalam and ending at East Fort.

As many as 3,000 artistes will participate in the procession beginning at 5.30 pm, featuring elements from the famed Thrissur Pooram, Uthrali Vela and Mamankam upstate besides the grand aarattu of Padmanabhsamy temple deity here among other items of culture and festivity from across God's Own Country, highlighting its richness in the fields of traditional percussion, music and dance. The show will also showcase art forms from other parts of India as well as certain foreign countries.

A chenda melam involving 100 artistes, propped by the ornate alavattam fans and gorgeous fly-whisks (venchamaram), will lead the show which will have 100-plus ladies and men carrying regal parasols. With around 40 ethnic chenda drums and kompu horns to their accompaniment, the ritualistic Velakali war-dance will add flavour to the show that will be flagged off by Kerala Governor Shri Justice P Sathasivam from a special pavilion off Manaveeyam Road near Keltron Junction.

"There will be more tableaux this time; in fact around 100. The total number of art-forms at the pageantry will be 150," state Tourism Minister Shri A P Anilkumar said today. "We plan to make this event a particularly memorable one," he told a press conference here.

There will be prizes announced for the floats: Rs 1,00,000 for the first, Rs 50,000 for the second and Rs 25,000 for the third, according to Shri Varkala Kahar, MLA, who is the pageantry chairman. The tableaux will mostly focus on current issues such as organic farming and organ donation.

Union Transport Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari will distribute the prizes at the August 31 valedictory ceremony in Nishagandhi auditorium. Prominent dignitaries at the function will be Kerala Health Minister Shri V S Sivakumar, Shri Shashi Tharoor, MP, Shri K Muraleedharan, MLA and Thiruvananthapuram Mayor Smt K Chandrika besides Mr Anilkumar and Mr Kahar.

The August 31 pageantry will come up with exhilarating Rajarani horses, Mayooranrittam and Parunthaattam dance to the frenzied rustic Neyyandi melam orchestra. No less than 70 artistes will dance three forms of sacrificial flowers-laden Kavadi dance—Nila, Poo, Chinda— conjuring up swirling formations.



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The other prominent displays will be Kerala Police's horse cavalcade, CRPF band music, Poothan-Thira from erstwhile Valluvanad fiefdom (of central Kerala) besides a total 1,500 artistes presenting classical and folk ensembles such as pancharimelam, panchavadyam, nadaswaram-thavil, maddalam, udukku, kummattikottu, veekuchenda, kompu and the kuzhal pipe. While a ladies' shinkarimelam will be a cynosure, there will also be drums fusion by 25 artistes. Among the arts from outside Kerala will be Kaliyattam from Puduchery, Fag & Woomer (Haryana), Sambalpuri (Odisha), Mathuri tribal dance (Andhra Pradesh) and Siddi Dhamal dance by immigrated African blacks in Gujarat, besides a grand line-up of dances from Kerala's neighbouring Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

Giving a pan-global representation will be items such as African dance and drums, Western music and B-boying street dance, Jump-rope skipping, Chinese Dragon, Cartoon characters, stilt dance and hilarious clowns.

The Kerala arts at the pageantry will be Kathakali, Mohiniyattam, Theyyam, Yakshagana, Kalaripayattu, Duff Muttu, Arbana Muttu, Margamkali, Parichamuttukali, Chavittu Natakam, Arjuna Nrittam, Vattakkali, Parunthaattam, Kummatti, Padayani, Garudan Parava, Pulikali, Karadikali, Thambolamelam, Bommayattam, Pakkaranaattam and Perumbaramelam. The other attractions will include Mayilattam, Ammankudam, Pampamelam and Naganrittam.

As for the floats brought out by the following government departments, the winners of the competition will be given first and second prizes: central PSUs, Kerala government departments, state PSUs, District Tourism Promotion Councils, state and district-level primary-sector cooperatives, banking institutions, private firms and best art forms.

The government has declared holiday for government offices and schools after 3pm.

Also present at today's press conference were the Pageantry Convener Shri K R Jyothish, who is General Administration Department Secretary (Govt of Kerala), and Onam Celebrations General Convener Shri P I Sheikh Pareeth, who is the Director of Kerala Tourism.

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