

Kerala Tourism

THE HINDU

Stakeholders hopeful of tourism revival

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Stakeholders hopeful of tourism revival

Responsible Tourism Mission comes up with a host of packages in Kottayam

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KOTTAYAM

As the State looks to reopen its tourism sector in September, the village destinations in Kottayam have kickstarted preparations.

From Kumarakom to Vailkom, locations are gradually adjusting to the current circumstances while doing what they can to plan for the future. To get the sector moving, the Tourism Department will soon be opening a house boat terminal at Naalupank and a cultural centre at Kumarakom.

The boat terminal, which can accommodate 40 houseboats at a time, is scheduled to be operational later next month. The project, according to officials, is expected to bring in more visitors to experience the village life.

"These villages, which heavily rely on tourism, are instituting strategies to reopen for visitors as soon as possible. The activities are led by the Responsible Tou-



The house boat terminal at Naalupank near Kumarakom, which is set to become operational in September.

plete towards the end of September.

K. Rupesh Kumar, coordinator of RT Mission, said packages that sought to network the cultural heritage of different locations were being designed to generate a

“With the COVID-19 restrictions to be around for some more time, the immediate focus of these packages will be intra-State travellers. It will later be extended to the inter-State and international guests as and when

ing convened online and people are being prepared for the new normal,” Mr. Kumar added.

The outbreak of COVID-19 in March has dealt a huge blow to the village destinations in Kottayam, which wit-

possible. The activities are led by the Responsible Tourism (RT) Mission, which is also coming up with a host of packages," said Sreekumar G., Deputy Director, Tourism Department.

Work on the cultural centre at Kumarakom, which will be hosting live performances and exhibitions, are slated to be com-

pleted. Different locations were being designed to generate a new profile and visitors. To begin with, special discounted packages would be rolled out for families.

Local delicacies

Besides the local art and festivals, the packages also seek to offer the culinary delicacies exclusive to different lo-

calities. "The packages will attract the inter-state and international guests as and when the global travel and tourism industry recovers," he said.

Warming up to the season, the mission has also reopened its ethnic cuisine restaurant Samridhi, besides commencing the online training for the 3,200-odd RT units under it. "The stakeholder meetings are be-

ing held to bring a new glow to the village destinations in Kottayam, which witnessed a massive cancellation of hotel and holiday packages. With the zero-demand situation, the local economy too came to a standstill during the period, leaving the stakeholders from top to bottom, including artisans, tour guides, and the local transport operators in dire straits.