



Department of Tourism
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Press Release

Kerala Tourism thrives despite demonetisation drive *State registers 5.71% increase in tourist arrivals*

Thiruvananthapuram, Feb 8: Kerala witnessed a 5.71% increase in tourist arrivals last year, welcoming 14.2 million visitors to the state, despite the challenges faced due to demonetisation.

Provisional figures from the tourism department show 14, 210,954 tourists came to Kerala in 2016, out of which 13,172,535 were domestic arrivals and 1,038,419 foreign visitors — an increase of 5.67% and 6.23% respectively when compared to 2015.

The month of November, a peak tourist season for Kerala, saw a significant half-percentage drop in domestic tourist arrivals following the Centre's announcement of the ban on high-value currency notes.

Given the fact that we expected an 8% increase in arrivals in November, the decline effectively resulted in an overall decrease of 8.5% from the estimates. Although the visitor numbers did increase in December, the previous month's fall affected the overall figures for the year.

"Had it not been for the demonetisation, Kerala would have had a commendable increase in tourist arrivals," said Tourism Minister Shri Kadakampally Surendran. "A setback to the tourism sector will have a significant impact on the economy. The continuous efforts by the government and private tourism partners helped Kerala Tourism withstand the demonetisation crisis."

"The unique tourism products and innovative marketing strategies helped Kerala to a large extent to tide over the difficult phase," said Tourism Principal Secretary Dr Venu V. He said he expected to see an increase in tourism footfalls in the coming months.

The note ban, however, did not have a large-scale impact on foreign arrivals. While the months of October and December saw increases of 8.45% and 8.01% respectively when compared to 2015, November saw a smaller increase of 6.98%. The overall scenario was better compared to domestic arrivals since foreign visitors tend to book their holidays in advance.

"We were expecting an overall increase of 7% in foreign tourist arrivals and 6.5% in domestic tourist arrivals for 2016 before the demonetisation" said Kerala Tourism Director Shri UV Jose. Tourist arrivals in the second half of the year - from June to December - were higher when compared to last year; but the projections of 8.5% for foreign tourist arrivals and 7.5% for domestic tourist arrivals were impacted by the Centre's announcement, he added.



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The provisional 2016 statistics of district wise arrivals (foreign and domestic): Alappuzha (78049, 315466), Ernakulam (407653, 3073159), Idukki (50366, 752478), Kannur (5264, 632332), Kasaragod (1823, 282906), Kollam (8520, 298297), Kottayam (49513, 477950), Kozhikode (12649, 884477), Malappuram (19769, 471028), Palakkad (2385, 512271), Pathanamthitta (1620, 134466), Thiruvananthapuram (383608, 2030384), Thrissur (10133, 2721174), and Wayanad (7067, 586146).

The department will release the detailed report on the statistics probably by April.

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