

# NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

## STATE TOURISM GOES GREEN TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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AS the calls for adopting more sustainable tourism and environmental management practices get louder and eco-friendly tourism becoming a global movement, the state tourism is leaving no stone unturned to champion sustainable, environment friendly tourism in the state. Among the various projects conceived to promote eco-friendly measures at the destinations in the state, setting up of water kiosks in selected tourism destination would soon command public attention as the department is

₹4.72 Cr

has been sanctioned to carry out 'green grass' project in 79 spots across the state

Miyawaki forest, developed by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, would be developed at selected destinations across the state, for which tender would be floated soon

planning to ban plastic mineral water bottles in these destinations in a phased manner. According to tourism depart-

ment officials, water kiosks to be set up in the selected destinations would provide quality drinking water to the tourists round the clock and plastic bottles would be banned in these destinations as part of making the destination plastic free. The department has given sanction for a pilot project in the Kankakunnu Palace ground and this would be replicated in the selected destinations based on the response of the people.

As part of 'Green Grass' project, waste (both biodegradable and non-biodegradable) would be segregated at tourist spots and handed over to agencies concerned for safe disposal and processing

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Tourism secretary Rani George told *TNIE* that the state government had sanctioned a sum of ₹4.72 crore to carry out 'green grass' project in selected

79 destinations across the state. The project envisages collecting waste littered across the tourist destinations in association with local self government bodies and various agencies involved in waste collection. The segregated waste both biodegradable and non-biodegradable would be handed over to agencies for safe disposal and processing, she said.

The project would be rolled out in the current fiscal itself as similar projects have already been started by other departments also. The forest department has launched 'Operation Green Grass' to en-

sure cleaner forests in the state as part of implementing green protocol in the forest zones after huge influx of disposables especially plastic wastes in protected areas, including national parks, sanctuaries and community reserves, posing grave threat to environment.

Another project, the Tourism department aims to extend to selected tourist destinations across the state is the concept of 'Miyawaki Forest', developed by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki. The Tourism department has recently started a project to set up Miyawaki park at Kanakakkunnu Palace

Grounds, set up on five cents of land with the support of Nature's Green Guardians Foundation and Invis Multimedia. This would be extended to selected urban and rural destinations across the state to combat climate change and spread awareness about eco-tourism.

The department will soon invite an expression of interest from agencies to prepare a DPR and execute the project across the state, she added. The Forest department has already begun trial of the Miyawaki method of afforestation on five-cent plots at Neyyar, Nedumbassery and Mudikkode in Thrissur.

