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Press Release

Steady growth of European tourist arrivals in Kerala in 2015

Nearly 5% rise until October despite sluggish economic recovery in Euro Zone

Thiruvananthapuram, December 28: Tourist arrivals from Europe have registered a respectable 4.8 per cent increase until October despite Euro zone recovery losing steam this year.

A total of 420,247 European travellers arrived in the state between January and October this year compared to 401,063 during the whole of last year amid many West European countries struggling to protect their economies in the aftermath of the Greek debt crisis and the downturn in China.

More number of tourists continued to arrive in Kerala last year even from countries like Italy, Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal and Germany, whose less than expected economic growth is worrying financial analysts.

"Europe remains the number one traditional market for Kerala while we have been able to create strong markets in several countries abroad along with finding new ones," said state Tourism Minister Shri A P Anilkumar.

"This is evident from the fact that more number of tourists from European countries have visited our state so far this year compared to last year in spite of their economies encountering hurdles in a full recovery," said Shri Anilkumar.

"The Chinese downturn and the turmoil in many emerging economies have had a negative impact on the European economy slowly recovering from the 2009 financial meltdown, but Europe will certainly rebound from the present situation," he added.

"The tourism industry in our state, which has been built over the last many decades by the strong commitment of the governments, the participation of the common people and the lasting will of the private sector, will always strive harder to achieve higher growth," the Minister said.

The foreign tourist arrivals in the country are expected to register a significant growth this year in the backdrop of the economic slowdown in Europe and in many emerging economies. According to figures, the country has witnessed a growth of 4.5 per cent in foreign tourist arrivals between January and August 15 this year.

The marketing campaign by Kerala Tourism over the years to create a spread of strong markets while continuing to explore new markets has significantly contributed to the state staying away from over dependence on tourists from a particular country.

According to statistics pertaining to this year, the tourist arrivals from Europe has showed an overall increase across the continent. As many as 125,795 tourists have visited Kerala this year from the United Kingdom, Kerala's number one market in Europe, as against 119,605 in the whole of last year.



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The number of tourists from France, the second biggest European market for Kerala, visiting the state this year was 75,216 till October compared to 73,368 last year.

A total of 61,962 German nationals have also visited Kerala this year as against 59,225 in the whole of last year.

From Italy, one of the countries affected by the sluggish recovery, 20,489 tourists have visited the state up to October against 19,740 last year.

The figure for Finland was 4,895 compared to 4620 in 2014. A total of 12,541 tourists from the Netherlands have arrived in the state until October against 11,632 last year. For Portugal, the figure was 1,787 compared to 1,635 last year.

The state has registered an arrival of 9,884 tourists from Belgium till October compared to 9,524 last year. The number of visitors from Denmark until, October has been 12,228 compared to 11,667 in the whole of 2014.

Even from countries like Spain, severely affected by the financial meltdown, the number of visitors to our state so far this year has been more than last year's, at 9,912 compared to 9,411 in 2014.

Even as traditional products like Ayurveda and the backwaters have remained popular among foreign tourists, especially those from Europe, new tourism products like Village Life Experience have been attracting more and more visitors to the state. The marketing campaigns by Kerala Tourism along with partners in the tourism and hospitality sector in the state this year in countries like Belgium besides the UK and Germany will prove to be significant in boosting foreign tourist arrivals from Europe in the coming years.

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