



**Department of Tourism**

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**Press Release**

**Tourism 'Oscar' for 'God's Own Country'**

*Golden Gate Award in Silver Category at ITB-Berlin for Kerala Tourism's The Great Backwaters Television Campaign*

**Thiruvananthapuram, March 6:** Kerala Tourism's hugely popular global multimedia campaign to promote the backwaters has won the prestigious Golden Gate Award at the Internationale Tourismus-Börse Berlin (ITB-Berlin) - 2015, the world's leading travel trade event.

The state tourism department bagged the silver prize at the Das Golden Stadttor (Golden Gate) Awards presented in the German capital on Thursday night. Kerala Tourism Secretary Shri G Kamala Vardhana Rao, who is leading the state tourism delegation at the ITB 2015, and Shri Suman Billa, Joint Secretary in the Union Tourism Ministry and former state tourism secretary, received the prize at a glittering awards ceremony.

Kerala Tourism received the Golden Gate Award's Silver Prize in the Multimedia-campaign category. The award was presented for The Great Backwaters campaign in the television-commercial medium.

Conceptualised by Kerala Tourism's creative and marketing agency Stark Communications, The Great Backwaters campaign had won the Golden Gate Gold Prize in the Print category at the ITB-Berlin last year. Earlier, Kerala Tourism had won the Golden Gate Silver Prize for the hugely successful 'Your Moment is Waiting' ad campaign in the print category.

The Great Backwaters campaign of Kerala Tourism was notable for its use of aerial photography for the first time in the country on such a wider scale, covering the state's backwaters as a single destination. A renowned aerial photography team from Finland had conducted the photography using helicams launched from the makeshift platform of a boat to capture the beauty and essence of the vast backwaters.

Presented every year at the ITB-Berlin, Golden Gate Awards, dubbed the 'Oscar in tourism communication', are considered the ultimate recognition in global tourism communication. The awards, in its 14th year, provide worldwide attention to the tourism industry.

The awards are handed over to the tourism representatives and their creative works in different categories. The works are judged by an international jury based on a point system. Each category receives a gold, silver and bronze award. The award ceremony is held every year under the patronage of the German Federal Association of Film and Audio-Visual Producers.

"We are honoured by the remarkable recognition for the Great Backwaters Campaign at the world's biggest travel trade event," said Kerala Tourism Minister Shri A P Anilkumar. "The award shows the significance of our state on the world tourism map," he said.



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"The honour in Berlin will inspire us to promote our state further across the world. Our efforts are aimed at promoting Kerala in the most creative and effective way to a larger global audience," Shri Anilkumar added.

"We are highly confident that during 'Visit Kerala 2015', we will be accomplishing many more awards in various other categories," said Kerala Tourism Secretary Shri Rao.

He also added that the state tourism is committed to a substantial growth in the number of visitors to Kerala from across the globe.

Besides The Great Backwaters campaign, Kerala Tourism's unique marketing strategies last year also included the theme branding of the hop-on-hop-off boats in the backwaters through a public contest among the state's artists, the successful branding of the Mumbai Metro Train and several multimedia marketing initiatives during road shows and at industry exhibitions abroad.

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