



## Department of Tourism

Park View Thiruvananthapuram 695 033

Kerala India Fax: +91-471-2322279

Tel: +91-471-2326579 2321132

Email: info@keralatourism.org

marketing@keralatourism.org

www.keralatourism.org

### Press Release

## Trafalgar Square Beats to 'Chenda' in 'Visit Kerala' London Campaign

**Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 12:** The famed Trafalgar Square reverberated with the beats of 'chenda' and movements of 'Kathakali' performers as 'God's Own Country' captured the hearts of visitors to the 'Mayor of London' event in the British capital.

More than half-a-lakh people thronged the London landmark visited by tourists from around the world to witness a series of traditional music, dance and martial arts performances organised by Kerala Tourism on October 11.

"The Trafalgar Square presented a grand stage to introduce the cultural diversity of our state to the people of the United Kingdom and visitors from the rest of the world," said Kerala Tourism Minister Shri A P Anilkumar.

"Our objective is to present the 'Best of Kerala', its natural beauty and rich culture and heritage, to our distinguished visitors from around the world so that we can contribute to the development of our state and empowerment of our communities," Shri Anilkumar said.

Kerala Chief Secretary Shri Jiji Thomson introduced the cultural extravaganza to the audience at a function attended by Deputy Mayor of London, Mr Roger Evans at the ceremony, held in collaboration with the Indian diaspora's 'Diwali in London' committee. Kerala Tourism Secretary Shri G Kamala Vardhana Rao was also present on the occasion.

"Kerala is a top destination on the world tourism map because of the harmony between our land and culture as seen in the beautiful backwaters, majestic hills or calm countrysides in the state," Shri Thomson said after the event, which also had cultural presentations like 'Garba' and 'Bhangra' dances, fusion, Bollywood songs and performances by Indian children.

The Kerala cultural presentation included 'Chendamelam', 'Thiruvathirakali' and a 'Bharathanatyam-Mohiniyattom - Kathakali fusion. Another attraction was a 'Kerala Nadanam' classical dance fusion.

The Chief Secretary, who called upon the large Indian community in London to invest in the tourism sector in Kerala, said: "Investing in Kerala's tourism sector is being part of the mission to save the nature and the planet as we are the world leaders in practising sustainable and responsible tourism."

Britain is the biggest tourism market for Kerala. A whopping 151,497 travellers from the United Kingdom had visited the state last year. The Kerala delegation also met with prominent tour operators and top media persons in London to promote 'Visit Kerala' campaign.

"The tens of thousands of visitors at the 'Mayor of London' event were happy to learn more about Kerala," said Shri Rao.



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"We are confident of a major increase in foreign tourist arrivals in the state during the 'Visit Kerala' year and beyond," the Tourism Secretary said.

While the 'Thiruvathirakali' and 'Kerala Nadanam' were presented by the Chitra Lakshmi and team, Vinod Navathara and team performed 'Chendamelam' and the 'Mohiniyattom-Bharathanatyam-Kathakali' fusion was performed by Vinod Nair.

Launched in April this year in New Delhi by Union Tourism Minister Dr. Mahesh Sharma and the state Tourism Minister Shri A P Anilkumar, 'Visit Kerala' campaign, which will run until April next year, brings together a variety of tourism products, presenting a unique opportunity for a 'once-in-a-lifetime' experience in 'God's Own Country'.

The Indian diasporas in London are the largest ethnic minority in the city known for its multiculturalism. The 'Mayor of London' event sets the stage for the celebration of Diwali in November.

Kerala Tourism will also participate in the influential World Trade Mart (WTM) in London, which will be held during November 2-5. The Who's Who of global travel and tourism industry attends the WTM, the world's leading tourism show.

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