

Athithi Devo Bhava dominates events in KTM 2010

Kerala Travel Mart 2010 registers success beyond expectations



The inauguration: Chief Justice Chelameswar lights the lamp, flanked by K. Jayakumar, Riaz Ahmed, Cheriyan Philip, K.G. Mohanlal and others (inset) Minister Kodiyeri Balakrishnan greets Dr. Abdul Aziz from Saudi Arabia

Cochin: The Kerala Travel Mart 2010, which started on September 23, 2010 at the Bolgatty Palace Hotel here, was inaugurated by His Lordship Jasti Chelameswar, Chief Justice, Kerala High Court. The function was presided over by Sri Cheriyan Philip, Chairman-KTDC. Dr. V. Venu, Secretary-Tourism made a presentation on Kerala Tourism. The inaugural function was addressed by Sri Ananth Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, GoI, and Sri M. Shivshankar, Director-Tourism. A promotional film on Kerala Tourism, *Your moment has come* was screened on the occasion.

"The preparations for the Mart were so meticulously planned and executed that we were certain it will be a grand success, in fact, beyond our expectations, and it turned out to be so", said Sri Riaz Ahmed, President-KTM, with visible exuberance.

Kerala's Hon'ble Minister-Tourism, Sri Kodiyeri Balakrishnan visited the KTM venue, went round the stalls and warmly greeted the many titans of the industry from across the world, present at the event.

The venue has been decked up to showcase the culture, traditions and festivals of *God's Own Country* in the most befitting manner. The event was held at the first Marina in the country at the Bolgatty Island, which was crowded with houseboats and lux-

ury yachts participating in KTM.

The inaugural function was followed by a grand entertainment programme, on the theme, *Athithi Devo Bhava* which was this year's theme for the Mart. The objective behind selecting this theme was that tourism is considered as an eternal rainbow which connects countries, continents, people and above all the *athithi* and *athitheya* (guest and host). There was also a cultural program on the theme on the inaugural day. The script for the same was by Sri K. Jayakumar IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala and the

show was directed by Sri K.C. Chandrasan of Kerala Travels Interserve.

The business sessions of the Mart began the next day with Speed Networking. This was a structured networking opportunity to bring maximum number of introductions for both buyers and sellers. Participants in the Speed Networking forum got to meet more people to make more contacts and generate more business ideas in one short session.

There were three seminars in this Mart. The seminars were held on September 25. The first seminar was based on the theme *Buyers perspective of Kerala* and the second seminar was on the theme, *Sustainable Tourism*. There was an exposition on Muziris Heritage on September 26.



Minister Kodiyeri Balakrishnan in conversation with Riaz Ahmed, K.G. Mohanlal and Rajmohan (Mktg.Mgr-KTDC)

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A Newsletter from KITTS

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Sri. Kodyeri Balakrishnan

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Message

Sri. Kodyeri Balakrishnan

Minister for Home & Tourism



Dear Friends,

My hearty greetings to all of you!

The new tourist season is all set to begin. The fact that the year 2009-10 was a successful one augurs well for Kerala tourism in the coming year. Kerala has kept its share in the market intact and has managed to up its tourism receipts in spite of heavy odds. The constant interaction between the private sector and Government has ensured that tourism business will continue to bloom in the forthcoming year. PATA gold award for the best website was grabbed by Kerala tourism this year. Another recent achievement was the PATA gold award 2009 secured for marketing. The Hay festival of literature and arts which is one of the world's largest literary festivals is all set to begin in Trivandrum in November 2010. Another highlight was Kerala tourism's international campaign "Your moment is waiting" which was unveiled in September 2010. Kerala tourism has been conducting various training programmes for personnel at different levels. This will be continued in the coming year also. KTM 2010, the sixth edition of Kerala travel mart was held at Bolgatty palace, Cochin in September. This has proved to be more than successful and will stand in good stead for Kerala tourism in the coming year. There were 262 international and 781 national buyers who attended the mart. This is in addition to 285 sellers who occupied 371 stalls.

I take this opportunity to congratulate you for your good work and continue your efforts to nurture tourism in coming years.

My best wishes for a fruitful tourist season.

Warm regards

Kodyeri Balakrishnan

Editorial

Well done, Team KTM!

After a short interregnum, *Tourism Vogue* is once again reaching you with all the latest on Tourism in Kerala, in the Indian and global contexts, as also news about happenings in our Institute, which basically aims to form and inform the members of the Tourism Club communities comprising students across the State.

Among the noteworthy tourism events in Kerala is the recently held Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) 2010 in the International Mareena premises in the Bolghatty Island, Cochin and the Boghatty Palace Hotel close by. Providing a forum of convergence for sellers from Kerala and buyers from around the world, this 6th edition KTM proved beyond doubt that Expos play a crucial and vital role in the marketing of tourism destinations, products and packages.

We congratulate the Kerala Travel Mart Society, which organised the show, for making a grand success of the effort, ensuring great value addition for Kerala as a unique destination.

We have ensured that the contents of this edition of *Tourism Vogue* too adheres to this basic objective of promoting Kerala, while also ensuring that KITTS as an academic catalyst for growth continues to attract the best of talents from all over India to its portals of teaching and learning.

K.G. Mohanlal
Director-KITTS

IT and Tourism: Made for each other!

Information technology has influenced all walks of our lives over the last few decades in a tremendous manner, with the Tourism and Travel sector being one of the chief beneficiaries. With the advent of IT into the travel sector, things have changed. Travel has become much more enjoyable and comfortable. The modern day traveller has a plethora of options to choose from, with Internet being the favourite haunt for the potential traveller.

In the Kerala scenario the advent of IT has been restricted to travel agencies using reservation systems and development of websites by Governmental and non-Governmental agencies. Also office automation is in place, with the accounting process also being computerized. The official website of Kerala Tourism, keralatourism.org has won many national and international accolades as being one of the best sites in tourism worldwide. In the education sector institutes such as the Kerala Institute of Tourism and Travel Studies (KITTS) has imparted IT education in Tourism sector by giving hands-on training to students in GDSs (Global Distribution Systems) and computerised applications. Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) has also fully computerized their reservations and a tourist can easily book a room through their website www.ktcd.org. Hotels have linked their systems to other global networks so as to establish a link worldwide.

Let us examine in brief the applications of IT in Tourism.

Global Distribution Systems

Global Distribution Systems (GDS) have evolved over the years and has played a major role in making online travel possible. A Computer Reservation System (CRS) is used to store and retrieve information and conduct transactions related to travel. They were originally developed by airlines, but it was later extended to travel agents as a sales channel. A functionality of CRS has been extended and what is known as the Global Distribution Systems came into existence.

Today's GDS systems have capabilities such as availability & accessibility 99.9% of the time, processing up to 17,000 messages per second during peak time, operating on cutting edge enterprise systems architecture, enjoying response times of a fraction of a second and capability of handling a multitude of transactions.

It can make itinerary changes up to the last minute and complete complex international routings to every country in the world. GDS automates the time consuming and complex process of re-pricing airline tickets when itineraries change, permits customers to send e-mail and faxes without exiting from the system, allows customers to compare fares and availability in order to shop for the most convenient travel at the lowest cost and stores all data related to the tens of millions of travellers securely so that the customers receive the travel preferences they desire.

On a given day a GDS can access over a billion fare combinations, more than 95% of the available seats worldwide, more than 750 airlines, more than 50,000 hotel properties, over 400 tour operators and nearly 30,000 car rental locations.

GDS systems are capable of booking, one way and roundtrip airline seats, hotel rooms, rental cars, tours, cruises, bus and rail tickets, insurance, limousines, event and theatre attractions, dining reservations, itinerary changes and complex international routings

E-Ticketing

An electronic ticket or e-ticket is a means by which a passenger or a group of passengers can ensure their seat in a commercial airline by booking over the internet. This greatly reduces the procedures associated with issuing a paper ticket, which consists of a number of copies. Both the airlines and the passenger are benefited by this form of ticketing. An image of the ticket is stored in the computer from which the customer can take a print out and board the plane directly if he or she is carrying no luggage. If there is luggage, after obtaining the clearance the passenger can board the aircraft. The customer can request that a hardcopy confirmation be sent by postal mail, but it is not needed at the check-in desk. A confirmation number is assigned to the passenger, along with the flight number, date, departure location, and destination location. When checking in at the airport, the passenger simply presents positive identification. Then necessary boarding passes are issued, and the passenger can check luggage and proceed through security to the gate area.

The main advantage of e-ticketing is the fact that it reduces booking expense by eliminating the need for printing and mailing paper documents. Another advantage is that it eliminates the possibility of critical documents getting lost in the mail or being sent to the wrong address. It is estimated that globally about 25% of the passengers book their tickets online which has resulted in the booming of low cost fliers.

The internet has provided a new economic environment to conduct business. E-commerce is a growing sector and many tourism businesses are involved in developing their internet services

GKSF Version-4 from December 1

Yes, it is coming back, Fasten your seat belts! The only shopping festival in the world which covers the largest area – **Grand Kerala Shopping Festival (GKSF), Version-4** is on its way. From December 1, 2010 to January 15, 2011, GKSF promises you, a festival that is beyond your expectation!

The shopping extravaganza - Grand Kerala Shopping Festival, is a Government of Kerala initiative. The version-4 of the shopping festival is all poised to turn Kerala in to a



BIG shopping mall. The event has been conceived and organized to give a big leap for the trade and commerce in Kerala.

The festival first started on 2007 December 1 to next year Jan 15, celebrated as Grand Kerala Shopping Festival and since then it became an annual shopping festival. The event lasts for 46 days and the very special fact about GKSF is that the entire Kerala is participating in this festival.

As done during the previous years, the festival is conducted by Tourism Department in co-ordination with the Industries & Commerce Department, Finance Department and Local Self Government Department to fulfill the objective. Through this shopping festival, the Kerala Government intends to transform the State into a hub for international shopping experience and there by "Launch Shopping Tourism" in the state. In the process, the brand image of



Kerala Tourism would go a long way to help upgrade the infrastructure of traditional marketing centres in Kerala.

The organizers are well set with get show on road of the version-4 of the Biggest ever Shopping Extravaganza, the Grand Kerala Shopping Festival with novel initiatives and exciting prizes to the shops and shoppers. Like the government promised, GKSF is shaping up to its full throttle with the experiences from the previous years.

Offers and offers from big brands and MEs for their product, hotels give their special offers, exciting prizes, fun full events and many more! With all these special discounts available, GKSF would be the right choice for your shopping terminal.

KITTS Journal awarded ISSN

Indian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management, the Journal brought out by KITTS has been awarded ISSN. This is recognition of the excellent quality of the Journal. ISSN stands for International Standard Serial Number, which is a unique eight-digit number used to identify a print or electronic periodical publication. Periodicals published in both print and electronic form may have two ISSN's, a print ISSN (p-ISSN) and an electronic ISSN (e-ISSN or eISSN). The ISSN system was first drafted as an ISO international standard in 1971 and published as ISO 3297 in 1975.

Tourism has in addition to the natural attractions, theme parks, man made rides, simulations etc. Singapore, Disneyland etc house some of most fabulous man made wonders thanks to IT and its applications. Particularly theme parks and rides along with recreation of fantasies and dinosaurs have added mileage to tourist destinations.



including traditional travel agents, tour operators, national tourist offices, airlines, hotels and other accommodation providers and car hire firms. This means of doing business is known as *e-tourism* or *tourism e-business*. The key differences from traditional markets are the speed at which information can be communicated, global accessibility and the minimal costs of establishing a business online.

Property Management Systems

As the term indicates, property management systems refer to systems which have been used world wide to manage and effectively control the various day to day and other procedures related to managing large properties. Even in Kerala, these systems are used on a large scale.

The core functions which a PMS can handle are reservations, front office operations, some back office operations and some managerial functions. A PMS is commonly used for handling the accounting functions of the various departments in a hotel. This is in addition to being the hub for all interconnectivity with other systems in the hotel. Just as a person, who is cut off from the rest of his colleagues during work, a standalone computer is not of much use. Hence a networked environment is provided whereby a server can cater to the needs of the end-user who may be a manager to receptionist or a waiter. This is achieved by networking the systems and sharing of resources. Software may be developed to suit the needs of the hotel which may have a front end and a back end.

Virtual Reality Systems

Virtual reality is a relatively new area which is related to artificial intelligence and neural networks. Artificial intelligence is an area where technology has made rapid strides in recent years. Human beings have been blessed with intelligence which ranges from their ability to remember things to inventing gadgets and making life more meaningful. It goes without saying that human brain is an amazing and intricate organ which has till date not been surpassed by even the fastest super computer. It is doubtful if such a thing will happen in future too. But artificial intelligence has paved pathways to new gadgets and robots which help humans in potentially dangerous and intricate tasks.

Tourism has, in addition to the natural attractions, theme parks, man-made rides, simulations etc. Singapore Disneyland and similar other locations house some of most fabulous man-made wonders thanks to IT and its applications. Particularly theme parks and rides along with recreation of fantasies and dinosaurs have added mileage to tourist destinations.

Virtual Travel

With the ever increasing need to use the net, Tourism has entered a new era. Virtual travel has gained popularity and a tourist if he wishes can use the various tools and internet and sit at the comfort of his office or home and do a virtual travel. Earlier there used to be armchair travelogue creators who used to design the show from articles and hearsays. But now travel writing has been simplified just because there is a plethora of information in CD's, brochures and on the net.

There are even virtual travel agencies on the net which offers a tour through its gallery and offers a great deal of information. Gone are the days when a guide used to take travelers for a ride narrating several cock and bull stories and feeding the customers with false information. Virtual travellers are more informed and many of them do not even need an introduction to a destination which they plan to visit.

In addition to the virtual tour of the real world, artificially created virtual worlds are there, waiting to be explored. These sites offer a free package for a week which can be downloaded. After going through this demo, the user can see the real stuff, if he registers online and pays for it. This is a trend which is fast catching on. After all globalisation has shrunk the world and it wouldn't be long before new destinations in the cyber world come up.

Travel Recommender Systems

Travel has become a part and parcel in the lives of human beings. Efforts from travel agencies and tour operators coupled with inputs from Governmental organisations have resulted in great changes which have eased the hardships placed on the traveller. The modern day traveller has a plethora of options to choose from when planning his trip. Travel Recommender Systems though in its infancy has established its utility value in travel planning. In the coming years, its importance as a tool in aiding travel planning will be indispensable.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

GIS finds wide applications in tourism especially in mapping tourist destinations, hotels and so on. The end user can pinpoint a destination and even browse the hotel room in which he or she plans to stay.

On the whole, it can be said that information technology has left an indelible mark in the application area of tourism and travel. In the coming years, areas like Travel Recommender Systems, GIS, Space Tourism etc will gain popularity and will help in giving a new dimension to the travel and tourism sector. Kerala Tourism which has established its presence in the global market will bank on these applications to further propel its growth trajectory. The International market which is growing has been given a shot in the arm with introduction of IT and will stand to gain further from it.



Venugopal C.K.
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KTM proved PPP an effective tool: Kodyeri Balakrishnan

KTM a role model for India: Cheriyan Philip

Trivandrum: An informal and friendly get-together hosted by Sri Cheriyan Philip, Chairman, and Sri K.G. Mohanlal, MD of Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) in honour of Team KTM that successfully



Sterling leadership: Kodyeri Balakrishnan presenting memento to Riaz Ahmed in the presence of Cheriyan Philip and K.G. Mohanlal

conducted KTM 2010 in KTDC's Bolgatty Palace Hotel & International Mareena Campus in Cochin, had Sri Kodyeri Balakrishnan, Hon'ble Minister-Tourism as Chief Guest, who described the Cochin event as ample proof of the effect of the Public-Private-Participation (PPP) model in development.

"We have done so well, in fact, that the Government of India is borrowing the KTM idea from us to organise an India Tourism Mart soon", he pointed

out, and offered felicitations to the leading lights of KTM who made the Cochin success story possible.

Speaking at the function, Cheriyan Philip added that KTM 2010 became a challenge that showcased before the World that if we have the will nothing is impossible. In fact, KTM by now has become a role model for other States and the Central Government for conducting similar events, he said.

Sri Riaz Ahmed, President-KTM and Sri K.C. Chandrahasan, who master-minded the cultural shows at KTM 2010, spoke. Sri K.G. Mohanlal, wel-



Mementos being presented to Chandrahasan and Jeibo

comed the gathering. Mementos were presented to Sri Riaz Ahmed, Sri Chandrahasan, and Sri Jeibo Kollarammalil, Manager-Bolgatty Palace Hotel.

Kerala Tourism wins international award for best website

Macau: Kerala Tourism's global consumer travel site – www.kerala-tourism.org has been awarded the prestigious 'PATA Gold Award 2010' for the best website. The award was formally received by Sri M. Sivasankar IAS, Director-Tourism, Kerala from Gregory Duffel, CEO- PATA at a glittering function here on September 17, 2010.

The PATA Gold Awards are considered to be the leading international awards honouring industry stakeholders that have made outstanding contributions to the development and promotion of travel and tourism across the Asia Pacific region.

Kerala Tourism Secretary, Dr. V. Venu said the award win was a tremendous result for the Kerala tourism industry.

"The keralatourism.org website is integral to Kerala Tourism's worldwide marketing effort to promote Kerala's amazing holiday experiences to the world," Dr. Venu said.

"Keralatourism.org attracts one million visits each month and is the digital centrepiece of Kerala Tourism's

marketing activities around the world, so to receive a PATA Gold for best website is a great honour."



M Sivasankar (middle) with PATA Gold Award, flanked by Gregory Duffel and Joao Manuel Costa Antunes, Director- Macau Govt Tourist Office

Director-Kerala Tourism, M. Sivasankar said the new version of keralatourism.org features inspirational content about travelling to Kerala and the variety of exciting experiences the destination offers, drawing upon new technology, a fresh design and a more user-friendly experience for visitors to the website.

Since its inception in 1998, keralatourism.org continues to be the favourite online gateway for travellers visiting Kerala. The site has evolved by incorporating the latest technology and trends in the virtual

world. The site offers text, photographs, audio and video content through more than 12,000 web pages indexed in major search engines. The website is currently available in English, Hindi, French, German, Chinese, Italian and Spanish as well as select content in Malayalam.

www.keralatourism.org currently receives around 4 million hits, with over

1,00,000 visitors and 5,00,000 page views a month. The website has won several other accolades including the Award of Excellence from the Government of India for the 'Most Innovative Use of Information Technology and Best Tourism Website / Portal and the PC World Web Award for the best tourism website in India.

14% increase in foreign tourist arrival; 9 charter flights due

Trivandrum: During the first half of 2010, there was a 14% hike in the tourist arrival figures from overseas and 5.5% increase in those from the domestic market, according to Sri Kodyeri Balakrishnan, Hon'ble Minister-Home & Tourism, Kerala.



Between January and June, as many as 335,539 overseas arrivals and 4099,992 domestic arrivals were recorded in the State, Kodyeri added. Figures for the corresponding period in 2009 were 294,583 and 3,882,976 respectively.

"The highest number of tourists from abroad came in January- 87583, wherever it was in May that the bright arrival of domestic tourists was: 776,648", the Minister said.

"So far in 2010 tourism industry in the State was generated over a 100,000 employment opportunities", he pointed out. "From October on, till February 2011, a total of 9 charter flights are expected to reach Trivandrum with tourists from Russia and Ukraine."

Kochi International Marina



Built by KTDC, blended by Mother Nature

The tremendous success of the Kerala Travel Mart 2010, held in Cochin this October past brought focused attention on the venue of the event, namely the International Marina built by Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) on its picturesque property on the Bolghatty Island encompassing the magnificent Bolgatty Palace Hotel, and surrounded by the deep blue waters of the Vembanad Lake.

Kochi International Marina, a KTDC venture, is located on the eastern coast of Bolgatty Island adjoining the Bolgatty palace. It is the first full-fledged marina of international standards in India constructed by the Ocean Blue Marinas. The marina provides berthing facility for 42 yachts and also offers services like fuel, water, electricity and sewage pump-outs for boats. The marina is close to the international maritime route at the south west coast of the Indian Peninsula, with favorable conditions and minimum tidal variations throughout the year. By providing the adequate facilities for the yacht owners and their crews, this marina augments the tourist flow to Kerala, which is one of the most sought-after tourist destinations in the world. It provides a base for visits to neighbouring countries like Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Facilities offered include round the clock security, supervision of the yacht while away, power and portable water outlet at every berth, sewage pump out arrangements at location, contact on VHF commercial channel upon arrival in Kochi, charter service guidance, minor repair facilities for hull, electrical systems, machinery and plumbing, shore toilet, laundry facilities, use of resort pool, use of Marina House gym and use of Marina House recreation room.

Marina House

Marina House, built in the traditional Kerala architectural style, is an essential part of Kochi International Marina that serves as a station for vessels to refuel and to replenish their stores. Besides, the Marina House also provides accommodation facilities, coffee shops, Ayurvedic spa, recreation centre, convention centre, playground and an attractive golf course.



An obscure fishing village that became the first European township in India, Kochi has an eventful and colourful history. Reputed as a seafaring commercial town, many travelers and traders from across the world came to

Kochi. Besides architectural delights like the Jewish Synagogue, Dutch Cemetery and the Portuguese Churches, Kochi is a heritage treasure house of enchanting experiences

Your Moment is Waiting launched in London

"The film is cinematic in style, is sophisticated and highly emotive. It is not the traditional slide-show of pretty pictures of places and people"

London: Kerala Tourism released its *Your Moment Is Waiting* global campaign at a red carpet event on Tuesday 21 September, at the Saatchi Gallery to a select audience of London glitterati, literati and business leaders.

Showcasing Kerala as a leading destination for wellness and cultural experiences, the destination film *Your Moment is Waiting* is out to woo the global market to make the state a 'must visit' destination for travelers around the world.

The red carpet event during London Fashion Week drew the who's who of London including: British MPs Lord Swaraj Paul and Keith Vaz, actors Mohanlal, Bill Nighy, Dev Patel, Priya Kalidas, Sadie Frost and Dougray Scott, models Anna Friel, Jade Jagger, Daisy Lowe, Meg Mathews, TV presenters Lisa Snowdon, Mariella Frostrup, Sam Branson and soccer stars Didier Drogba, Gary Linekar, and glamour couple Yasmin and Simon Le Bon, were some of 150 guests who attended the high profile event.



Dr. V. Venu and Sivasankar with British magnate Lord Swaraj Paul



Dr Venu, Rt Hon Keith Vaz, Stephen Perdew and chef Sriram Aylur

Featuring upcoming international model Miriam Ilorah, *Your Moment is Waiting* takes you through the land, raw and refined, sensual and spiritual, flowing slowly, languorously, stirring memory with desire, the real with the surreal. It



Dev Patel and Mohanlal



Soccer star Didier Drogba and his

was filmed in key locations in and around Thekkady, Alappuzha, Munnar, Thalassery & Kannur in northern Kerala. Kerala Tourism Secretary, Dr. V. Venu said the campaign was unlike any other tourism campaigns. "The film is cinematic in style, is sophisticated and highly emotive. It is not the traditional slide-show of pretty pictures of places and people". The campaign will

clearly help Kerala to outperform many of its competitors in a very tough global marketplace. "We are reaching out to our global target audience of Experience Seekers. We know that the film will resonate and influence how they think about Kerala as a holiday destination". Dr. Venu also said that it is no accident that the launch is aimed at the UK market. "Besides being our main source market, Kerala attracts a lot of repeat travelers from the UK, and we felt that it would make great sense to reach out to this loyal and growing market, by premiering the film in London".

KITTS celebrates World Tourism Day

KITTS organized seminars on 'Tourism and Biodiversity' in the 14 districts of Kerala in association with Department of Tourism and District Tourism Promotional Councils (DTPCs) in celebration of the World Tourism Day on September 27, 2010

Trivandrum: Since 1980s, the development and promotion of tourism in the developed and less industrialized world has witnessed that the service sector is dawned an alternate mechanism for reinforcing economic activities, community development, social integration and environmental conservation. Realizing the significant contribution of tourism to the world, September 27 of every year is being celebrated as World Tourism Day by United Nations World Tourism Organization since 1980. The reason to choose the 27th September is that the Statues of UNWTO is adopted in the same day in the year 1970. The United Nations (UN) has announced the year 2010 as International Year of Biodiversity while the UNWTO declared Tourism and Biodiversity for this year's world tourism day celebration.

KITTS, one of the pioneer institutes in the field of travel and tourism celebrated the World Tourism on September 27, 2010. As part of the event,



Dr. B. Vijayakumar, Principal-KITTS lighting the lamp to mark the start of celebrations in Trivandrum

KITTS organized seminars on 'Tourism and Biodiversity' in the 14 districts of Kerala in association with Department of Tourism and District Tourism Promotional Councils (DTPCs). The primary purpose of organizing the event was

to create awareness on 'Tourism and Biodiversity' by giving due emphasis on Kerala tourism and its biological diversity. The DTTPCs were requested to identify the venue and organize the tourism club members for the seminar while KITTS took the responsibility of thematic presentation by extending the services of students as resource persons.

The students of MBA – Travel and Tourism, KITTS prepared power point presentation on Tourism and Biodiversity and 28 students were selected and trained for making thematic presentation in the identified places of 14 districts of Kerala. KITTS, as a venue for Trivandrum district organized painting, essay and quiz competition in which more than 50 student members of tourism club, Trivandrum were participated and the winners were awarded. As part of this celebration, a 'Rangoli' reflecting the 25 mega diversity hot spots of the world was prepared in the KITTS compound. The

Tourism Club of KITTS was also inaugurated by the Principal, KITTS in this function. The programme concluded with the open forum and cultural fest organized by the students of KITTS at Gandhi Park at East Fort with the purpose of public awareness. The students made thematic presentation with special reference to Tourism and Biodiversity of Kerala and the need for conserving the diversity. The general publics who have gathered at the park were actively participated by asking questions and sharing their experience.



Inauguration at Gandhipark, Trivandrum



Presentation on Tourism and biodiversity in KITTS



Quiz competition



Painting competition



There's magic in the air of Kovilloor

Father Johns, a Capuchin monk stays alone in the hideaway village of Kovilloor, 6,500 ft above sea level, raising garlic, broccoli and potatoes while doing a doctoral thesis on the Book of Job. Asked what brought him to this remote place, 50km from Munnar with hardly anyone to talk to, his answer was insightful. "One should live in touch with nature. We are fast losing that. This will help us to reflect on life and renew ourselves".

Vattavada is the remotest Panchayat of Kerala and Kovilloor its most populous village. To reach this part of Idukki district one has to cross pockets of Tamil Nadu territory. The road to Kovilloor from Munnar passes through some of the most beautiful landscapes of Kerala – the rolling grass lands of the Indo-Swiss farm at Madupetty, soothing green of the vast tea estates, the Kundla reservoir and the gently undulating misty hills. Kovilloor is on the Kerala side of Sahyadris while Kodikanal is on the other. From Kovilloor to Klavara on the Kodai route is just 14km, but one has to trek the distance by foot or use a four wheel drive vehicle.

Located on the fringes of Pampadum Shola Reserve Forests, the area is ideal for grandes (grandes grandiola) cultivation, a fast growing softwood used for paper pulp. Pampadum Shola is India's youngest and smallest national park, just 12 sq km in area. It has some of the world's rarest butterflies. Ten km away you have the Kurinji Sanctuary where millions of Neelkurinji (*Strobilanthes Kunthiana*) bloom once in 12 years. The whole mountain-side turns blue then.



Though there are one or two small private resorts on the way, there are hardly any hotels or restaurants beyond the Top Station. We could manage modest accommodation in a Catholic School run by Carmelite fathers. Father Vincechan, the Principal was a good conversationalist and an excellent host. The school was set up to educate the less privileged and those isolated from the mainstream. The people here are illiterate and education is the only escape route. Some voluntary non-governmental agencies provide vocational training.

Befriending a few locals, we had the privilege of visiting some beautiful locations usually unknown to outsiders. There are many spots, ideal for picnicking beside crystal clear mountain streams, or just watching wildlife.

It was harvest time and vast carpets of red chillies spread out in the sun for drying was rare sight. The vegetables of Kovilloor, especially carrot and garlic, command higher prices because of their premium quality. Unfortunately most of the farmers are bonded to traditional merchants who lend them money for cultivation. Even as the prices of vegetables are skyrocketing in the market, the farmers of Vattavada, the vegetable bowl of Kerala known for its winter cultivation, are still seeking to get a fair price for their produce. The reason for the fall in the prices is attributed to the middlemen, who lend money to the farmers during the sowing season, buying their produce at a price far below the market rate. Making matters worse the shoal grasslands in the area, which is important in the conservation of water, had been heavily damaged by planting eucalyptus and black wattle. This in turn has affected the farmers. Fortunately Vattavada still remains as the natural habitat of Kurinji and many other species specific to shoal grasslands.

If Munnar is Kerala's most popular hill station, Kovilloor with its rarefied air remains unexploited. Lack of holiday facilities keeps the tourists at bay. The tea estates and the colonial air slowly disappear and you are left to commune with nature.

The peaceful environment and the tranquility that it provides make it the perfect spot to rejuvenate and revive even the most jaded traveler.

The place can ring in foreign exchange if the tourism planners care to. Munnar too was once a sleepy little hamlet, until the Scottish planters discovered it. Later, the British developed it into one of southern India's most popular hill stations. Kovilloor too has all the potential.



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Kovilloor too has all the potential.



Ahmednagar Fort, where Jawaharlal Nehru wrote the Discovery of India

The Ahmednagar Fort is located in the heart of the city of Ahmednagar, Maharashtra. It was the headquarters of the Ahmednagar Sultanate. In 1803 it was taken by the British in during the Second Anglo-Maratha War. Later it was used by the British Raj as a prison. Currently the fort is under the administration of the Armoured Corps of the Indian Army.

In 1803 the Ahmednagar Fort was round in appearance, with twenty-four bastions, one large gate, and three small sally ports. It had a glacis, no covered way; a ditch, revetted with stone on both sides, about 18 feet (5.5 m) wide, with 9 feet (2.7 m) water all round, which only reached within 6 or 7 feet (2.1 m) of the top of the scarp; long reeds grew in it all round. The berm was only about one yard wide. The rampart was of black hewn stone; the parapet of brick in chunam, and both together appeared from the crest of the glacis to be only as high as the pole of a field-officer's tent. The bastions were all about 4½ feet higher; they were round. One of them mounted eight guns en barbette: it pointed to the eastward; all the rest had jingies, four in each.

The fort was built by Malik Shah Ahmed (after whom the city of Ahmednagar is named) in 1427 CE. He was the first sultan of the Nizam Shahi dynasty and he built the fort to defend the city against invaders from neighbouring Idar. Initially it was made of mud but major fortification began in 1559 under Hussain Nizam Shah. It took four years and was finally finished in 1562. In 1596, Chand Bibi the queen regent successfully repulsed the Mughal invasion but when Akbar attacked again in 1600 the fort went to the Mughals.

Aurangzeb died at Ahmednagar fort at the age of 88 on February 20, 1707. After Aurangzeb's death the fort passed to the Marathas and later the Scindias. During the period of instability in the Maratha Empire following the death of Madhavrao II, Daulat Scindia had the fort and its surrounding region ceded to him. In 1797, he imprisoned Nana Phadnis the Peshwa diplomat at Ahmednagar fort.

In 1803 during the Second Anglo-Maratha War, Arthur Wellesley defeated the Maratha forces and the East India Company came into possession of the fort. It was used by the British Raj as a prison and this was where Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Patel and other members of the Indian National Congress were jailed for almost three years after they passed the Quit India Resolution. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote his popular book -the Discovery of India- while he was imprisoned at Ahmednagar fort.

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Jog Falls, created by the Sharavathi River falling from a height of 253 meters (829 ft) is the highest plunge waterfall in India. Located in Shimoga District of Karnataka state, these segmented falls are a major tourist attraction. It is also called by alternative names of *Gersoppa falls*, *Gersoppa Falls* and *Jogada Gundi*.

There are many waterfalls in Asia - and also in India - which drop from a higher altitude. But, unlike those falls, Jog Falls is untiered, i.e., it drops directly and does not stream on to rocks. Thus, it can be described as the highest untiered waterfalls in India. The waterfall database gives it 83 scenic points while Angel falls is at 97.

'Sharavati': A river which rises at Ambutirtha, near Nonabar, in the Tirthahalli Taluk. It takes north-westerly course by Fatte petta, receives the Haridravati

on the right below Pattaguppe and the Yenne Hole on the left above Barangi. On arriving at the frontier it bends to the west, and precipitating itself down the celebrated Falls of Gersoppa and passing that village (properly Geru-Sappe), which is really some 29 Kilometers distant, discharges into the sea at Honnavar in North Kanara. The name Sharavati, arrow-born, is in allusion to its flowing from the Ambutirtha, which was formed by a stroke of Rama's arrow. The stream is crossed by 70 anicuts, from which small channels are drawn having an aggregate length of 42 Kilometers.

The magnificent Falls of Gersoppa or Jog, that is, the waterfall, are unquestionably the grandest natural beauty in Karnataka, rich as it is in splendid scenery. They eclipse every other falls in India and have few rivals in any part of the world.

Seychelles

The Indian Ocean archipelago thriving on tourism

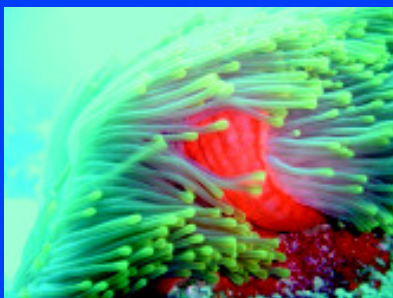
Tourism is the most important nongovernment sector of Seychelles' economy. About 15 percent of the formal work force is directly employed in tourism, and employment in construction, banking, transportation, and other activities is closely tied to the tourist industry. Tourists enjoy the



Seychelles' coral beaches and opportunities for water sports. Wildlife in the archipelago is also a major attraction.

The tourist industry was born with the completion of the Seychelles International Airport in 1971, advancing rapidly to a level of 77,400 arrivals in 1979.

After slackening in the early 1980s, growth was restored through the introduction of casinos, vigorous advertising campaigns, and more competitive pricing. After a decline to 90,050 in 1991 because of the Persian Gulf War, the number of visitors rose to more than 116,000 in 1993. In 1991 France was the leading source of tourists, followed by the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and South Africa. Europe provided 80



percent of the total tourists and Africa—mostly South Africa and Reunion—most of the remainder. European tourists are considered the most lucrative in terms of length of stay and per capita spending.

Under the 1990-94 development plan, which emphasizes that the growth of tourism should not be at the

expense of the environment, the number of beds on the islands of Mahé,



Praslin, and La Digue is to be limited to 4,000. Increases in total capacity are to be achieved by developing the outer islands. To avoid future threat to the natural attractions of the islands, 150,000 tourists per year are regarded as the ultimate ceiling. The higher cost of accommodations and travel, deficiencies in services and maintenance of facilities,

and a limited range of diversions handicap Seychelles in attracting vacationers at the expense of other Indian Ocean tourist destinations.



In addition to the world famous beaches of Seychelles, there are a host of special attractions in Seychelles for the visitors. These include the legendary Vallée de Mai in Praslin. L'Union Estate in La Digue Island is home to the one of the most pristine beaches in Seychelles.

Aride Island, is one of the world's most important Nature Reserve. Aride Island is home to breeding seabirds of ten species endemic birds such as Magpie Robins, Fodies and Brush Warblers. Ile Coco Marine National Park is set around 3 small islet in shallow turquoise sea by large expanses of coral reefs. The combination of red and green, colour the hillside of Curieuse Island and gives it its unique characteristics. The hills are



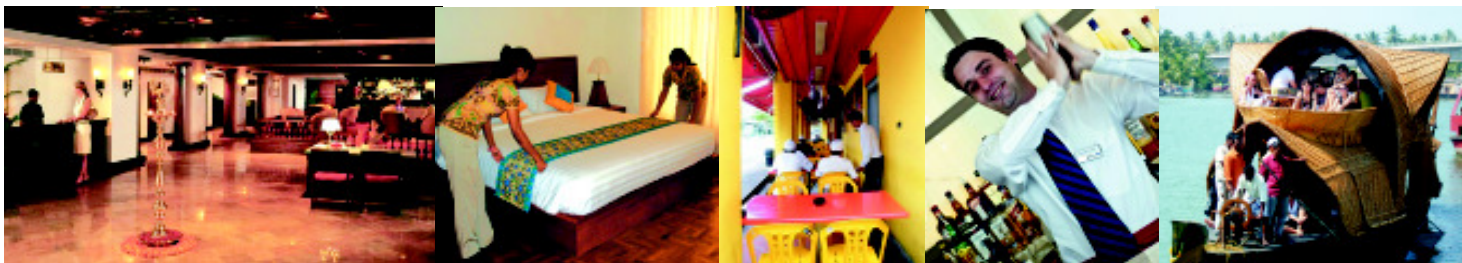
peppered with Coco de mer trees, of the eternal symbols of the Seychelles.

Most visitors visit The Curieuse Marine National Park by chartered boat from Praslin. Standing at a height of 740 m Silhouette Marine National Park is the only "paper park" left in Seychelles. Set in turquoise sea Anne Marine National

Park has one of the largest areas of sea grass meadows in the granitic islands.



Let's Learn..... to become more competitive and dynamic



Professional retraining and up-gradation of skills are essential ingredients of industrial development and progress; especially so in a fast-growing and dynamic industrial activity like Travel & Tourism.

In recognition of this basic principle, KITTS has been identified as the nodal agency for providing capacity building programs for employees in the various segments of the hospitality industry in the Kerala sector.

As part of this laudable effort, KITTS, in association with the Dept. of Tourism, Kerala has already launched, under the general title 'Let's Learn', separate training programs for personnel working in Front Offices, House Keeping, Home Stays, House Boats, Food & Beverages Service and Barmen, covering all districts of the State.

"Offered with a view to improve the quality of service, the training is provided free of cost, so as to sharpen the competitive edge of our hospitality sector in relation to the global tourism market", points out Dr. B. Vijayakumar, Principal, KITTS. "By now we have given training to over 2000 employees from the various hotel establishments in Kerala."

Besides this, KITTS provide training programs for Tour Operators, VSS, SHGs, Taxi Drivers, Tour Guides and Prospective Entrepreneurs. The research & consultancy division of KITTS extends service to public and private sectors.

More details can be obtained from: KITTS, Department of Tourism and D.T.P.C. Tel: 0471- 2329539, 2339178, Fax: 2323989. Mob: 9447347974, 9745107974. E-mail: jojoseph1975@gmail.com

Studentfolio

Anjana Jyotsna C.K

KITTS – An overwhelming experience

We walked through the gates of the Kerala Institute of Tourism and Travel Studies on July 1, 2010, wondering like small children as to what is in store for us in the next couple of years. Students from all corners of the state and various parts of India had come in, creating a cultural mixture in our MBA-S1 classroom. The week long induction course provided us with a lucky chance of meeting and interacting with the most famous and eminent professionals in the tourism industry. They left us amazed with the wide areas of work and possibilities waiting for us in the future.

Moving away from the conventional methods of learning, the classroom sessions at KITTS turned out to be much more interactive, challenging and more into solving case-



studies. As part of learning, we students are given opportunities to get hands-on experience on various tourism related activities by the government, private stakeholders and several NGO's. The major highlights of activities for the past four months were KTM 2010, Punarjani'10 and CMS Vatavaran'10. Volunteering at these huge events was a great experience and gave us a chance of assisting tourism professionals in organizing such events. The 6th Kerala Travel Mart was held at the Bolgatty Island, Kochi from 23 to 26, September where 48 students from KITTS volunteered to work with the KTM society. Punarjani'10 was conducted on the 27, September by the students of KITTS commemorating the World Tourism Day. Many competitions were conducted at inter-school level at Trivandrum and also representatives from KITTS went to all the districts of Kerala to conduct local level seminars on 'Tourism and Biodiversity'. The CMS Vatavaran Wildlife Film Festival was conducted by Centre for Media Studies, Delhi, celebrating the wildlife week from 3-7, October. KITTS students rose to the occasion and 25 of them participated.

The past four months have been an overwhelming experience and we find ourselves privileged and lucky to be a part of this prestigious institution. We look forward to a fruitful and successful 2 years of study.

The writer is from the current 1st MBA batch, KITTS

Coconut Development Board announces *Kerapadham* Project Coconut Trees to the fore in Tourism

Cochin: With a view to make coconut a tourism product rather than a food supplement, India's Coconut Development Board has announced *Kerapadham*, an innovative tourism initiative, capable of saving coconut plantations and farmers from their present state of decline, if implemented in the right manner.

"We plan to educate and convince tourists, overseas and domestic, arriving in India on the immense potential of coconut as a multi-purpose entity" C.V. Ananda Bose, Chairman of the Board said. "That's primarily the aim of *Kerapadham*."

As a first step, a *Coconut Village* is to be set up in the Kumbalangi Island off Cochin, already a major presence on South Asia's tourism map.

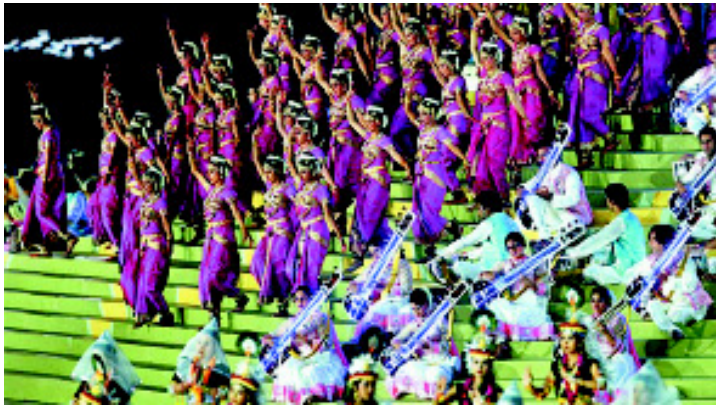
"The *Coconut Village* is to be formally launched either on Onam Day 2010, which falls on August 23, or on the World Coconut Day, which will be September 2", Chairman Bose added. "After Kumbalangi, similar villages will be launched in Goa, Lakshadweep, Andaman-Nicobar and the North Eastern Region of the country."

The special features designed for *Kerapadham* will include *Nalukettu* (traditional Kerala Bungalow) using coconut wood and fronds, handicrafts made of coconut shells, and food & nutraceutical products with coconut as major ingredient. Tourists will be provided opportunities to participate in, and enjoy the thrills of coconut farming and coconut tree climbing.



Sports Tourism gets great boon at CWG 2010

New Delhi: Sports Tourism in India received its biggest ever boon when and partook of the multifaceted tourism experience the event unfolded.



The 19th Commonwealth Games got off to an inspiring and magnificent start on October 3, 2010 here in the Indian capital with the opening ceremony, which unfolded without any glitch. The opening ceremony put up a brilliant show of more than two hours at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. The ceremony beautifully portrayed and upheld the great journey of India with all its unique features. In addition to the thousands of sports stars and their supporting personnel, a very large number of sports minded tourists also converged on the city

The opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games 2010, which kick started the twelve days sport extravaganza continued till October 14. Both



the Indians as well as the foreigners were simply moved by the richness and prosperity of the Indian culture that was all put together to perfection on October 3. Almost 65,000 people gathered to watch out the mes-

merizing show put up by India at the CWG 2010 opening ceremony. The Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Delhi roared with the rapturous applause of



Many traditional and prestigious dance forms like Mohiniattam, Kathak, Bharatanatyam, Odissi, Manipuri and Kuchipudi were performed

by talented and popular artists along with the great musicians playing the sitars. Young athletes put up their stunning

performances in the form of *Surya Namaskar* and yoga *asanas*. The participants from all the countries at the Commonwealth Games 2010 were welcomed. Many popular and important personalities graced the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth

the numerous visitors.

The Prince of Wales, HRH Prince Charles and his wife Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall were present at the opening ceremony. Smt. Prathiba Patil, President of India and Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister were



Niruba's Arthanarreshwara adds extra colour to Navarathri



For Niruba Sathish, the Navarathri season has always been a lot more colourful than all the rest of us. In fact, her sense of colour and the inimitable style of colour mixing, creating rangoli idols depicting the triumph of good over evil, have thrilled everyone with a spiritual attachment to Navarathri Pooja.

Over the past two decades, Niruba, whose daily chore is in KITTS as its Librarian, has been at it. And this year too she excelled herself and enthralled the viewers with the creation of an *Arthanarreshwara* rangoli of 20 ft. x 15 ft. using artificial colours interspersed with charcoal, sand and turmeric, at the Navarathri Pooja in Trivandrum Club. Her dedicated effort was celebrated by the media in the Kerala capital as an example of the triumph of colour over drabness in life.

Well done Niruba, be at it, and keep it up!!

among the VVIPs on the dais. The ceremonies commenced with the national anthem of India. Kerala drummers joined by the Nagada drummers along with the Shankha trumpeters beat the countdown of the opening ceremony as the *Aerostat* moved high up into glory.

Traditional classical dancers from India showcased the guru-shishya heritage which was popular in ancient In-

Games 2010 with their presence. The Commonwealth Games Theme Song performed by A.R Rahman and the dazzling fireworks were also there to add to the excitement and joy of the 19th Commonwealth Games.

With the successful conduct of the CWG 2010, Delhi along with the entire country is smiling and proud to have been able to put up such a show of grandeur and worth.

Question Corner

What is Sports Tourism?

Sports Tourism is classified into hard and soft sports tourism. Hard definition of sports tourism refers to the quantity of people participating at competitive sport events. Normally these kinds of events are the motivation that attracts visitors visits the events. Olympic Games, FIFA World Cup, F1 Grand Prix and regional events such as NASCAR Sprint Cup Series could be described as Hard Sports Tourism. Soft definition are relatively the tourists travel for participating on recreational sporting, or signing up for an leisure interests. Hiking, Skiing and Canoeing can be described as the Soft Sports Tourism. Sport event tourism refers to the visitors who visit the city with the purpose of watching the events. A good example of this would be during the Olympics. Each Olympic host city receives an immense amount of tourism.

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