

Kerala Tourism Policy 2012



Department of Tourism

Government of Kerala



OOMMEN CHANDY

CHIEF MINISTER
KERALA

02/06/2012

MESSAGE

I am delighted to learn that the Department of Tourism is bringing out the 'Tourism Policy - 2012'. I understand that tourism in Kerala has come a long way and it is one of Kerala's engines of growth. The initiatives taken by the Department are indeed laudable. They were quite effective in transforming Kerala as one of the most sought-after destinations in India.

The achievements of the Department at the national and international levels have further enhanced the brand value of Kerala Tourism. I hope that the Department would continue to play the perfect host to travellers from around the world by presenting the best we have as a destination and also at the same time preserving the tradition, cultural values and the interest of the people of Kerala.

I hope that the Tourism Policy would serve better to convey the scenario in Kerala to travellers, stakeholders, media and others who are keen to associate with Kerala Tourism.

Wishing all success.

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MESSAGE

It's been a quarter of a century since the State Government declared tourism as an industry to utilize the immense opportunities that Kerala has in this sector. Though it all began in a small way, today Kerala Tourism attracts more than a crore tourists and garners a revenue that totals to more than Rs. 19,037 crores. Even then major share of opportunities still remains unexplored.

We expect that the tourism sector is expected to grow even more. The State's policy aims to make sure that this growth is based on the culture and tradition of the State. And as this sector grows, it is also necessary to identify its strengths and weaknesses and encourage the stronger areas. The Government's agenda aims to provide an environment conducive to the growth of the tourism sector and to invite private investors to utilize the various opportunities. A strong policy that enables the same is the need of the hour.

A policy approach is the base on which growth is envisioned. Once a policy has been drafted, it is impractical to follow it at all times. The policy will have to be in tune with the times, complementing the overall development of the State and must be based on the changes in the scientific and technological fields as per the global scenario. It is in this view that a tourism policy was drafted as soon as the UDF Government came into power. That it was possible within a year's time is a matter of great pride.

Conceived after consultations at various stages, the policy focuses on providing support to private investors, encouraging growth of opportunities in this field and ensuring growth that upholds our tradition and culture. I believe that this policy will help strength the bond between the government and the tourism sector and will contribute not just to tourism development, but also to the overall development of the State.

A.P. Anilkumar

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1. Preamble

1.1 The new economic regime has brought out structural changes in Indian economy, which is reflected in its sectoral contribution to GDP. Technological advancement, growth of trade and other service activities during the last one decade have placed the tertiary sector in the forefront of development and India is not an exception. While service sector contributes 63.2% of World GDP, its share in India and Kerala are 55.2% and 66.28% respectively in 2010. Developing economies particularly, India and China have made remarkable progress during the new regime. This along with the prosperity of advanced economies has given an impetus to global tourism. However, following the economic crisis during 2008-09, tourism industry experienced a downswing that affected India also. The economic significance of tourism in terms of employment, income, foreign exchange and regional development is a major driving force that enables national governments to place tourism appropriately in the development agenda. Natural and cultural heritage are regarded as the major capital of tourism industry and regions that are endowed with these offer immense potential for tourism development. Considering the labour intensive nature of the industry, tourism is being promoted in developing economies to address the issues related to unemployment and poverty reduction. The trend of modern tourist is towards resilience to nature and countries are designing strategies and programmes to promote tourism based on experiences derived from nature, culture and society. Local communities across destinations are encouraged in tourism to minimize leakages and maximize linkages of the industry with a view to reap maximum benefit. Today, tourism is given a due place in the development paradigm of all economies giving specific focus to the concept of sustainable development.

1.2 ¹Global tourism is a US\$ 919 billion business. It has increased by US\$ 67 billion registering a growth rate of 5% in 2010. The world tourist arrival which was a mere 25 million in 1950, reached 924 million in 2008. The UNWTO provisional estimate shows that the international tourist arrival has reached 940 million in 2010 registering a growth rate of 6.6% compared to the previous year. ²The total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP, including its wider economic impact is 9.1% in 2010. The total employment created is worked out as 258 million which forms 8.8% of global employment. These achievements are attributed to a synergy created by Public Private Partnership and community interface.

1.3 India is relatively a newcomer in global tourism business. ³Though we receive less than one percent of global tourism receipts (US\$ 11.39 billion) and arrivals (5.58 million), it has become a vibrant segment in the national economy. International tourist arrivals in India

¹ <http://mkt.unwto.org/en/barometer>

² WTTC, Travel and Tourism Impact World 2011

³ Ministry of Tourism, Government of India – Tourism Statistics at a Glance (2009), New Delhi

increased from 1.6 million in 1991 to 5.58 million (provisional) in 2010, registering 8.1% annual growth. During the same period, the domestic tourist visits to all states increased from 66.6 million to 740.21 million registering 10.7% annual growth rate. The foreign exchange earnings increased from US\$ 1.86 billion in 1991 to US\$ 14.19 billion (provisional) in 2010 registering an annual growth rate of 24.6%. ⁴The contribution of tourism to GDP is estimated as 8.6% in 2010 and it creates 49 million jobs in India. By developing new destinations, products and experiences to cater to the interest of diverse segments of tourists, the industry is being prepared to make a quantum jump in the international market. The WTTC has identified India as one of the world's foremost tourist growth centres in the coming decade. After Turkey, India is expected to achieve the fastest rate of growth of the total amount of economic activity likely to be generated by travel and tourism, at 9.7 per cent over the next 10 years. Also, the largest employment creation after China is expected to take place in India over the same period. The growth in 'visitor exports' or spending by international tourists is likely to be the fastest in India at 14.3 per cent per annum over the next decade. On the whole, the WTTC forecast for India is promising, subject to key policy issues that affect the growth of the sector being addressed.

- 1.4 Kerala initiated tourism development programmes by establishing an international beach resort at Kovalam in 1976 with the patronage of the central government. Realizing the economic potentials, Government of Kerala declared tourism as an industry in 1986. Within a short span of two and half decades, Kerala succeeded in establishing its tourism brand in the international market. The first tourism policy of the state was announced in 1995 underlining the importance of Public- Private Partnership. Tourism has come a long way since then, capturing new markets with its innovative products and marketing strategies. From hardly 50000 foreign tourist arrivals and 0.13 bn rupees as foreign exchange in 1986, it has reached a status of 0.6 million foreign tourist arrivals and 37.97 bn rupees as foreign exchange in 2010. Total employment generated from tourism is estimated as 1.2 million. The growth of tourism over the decade is depicted in Table 1 below:

⁴ WTTC, Travel and Tourism Impact, India 2011

Table 1 Kerala Tourism Arrival and Earnings

Year	Foreign tourist arrivals to Kerala	Foreign tourist arrivals to India	% of Foreign tourist arrivals to Kerala	Domestic tourist arrivals to Kerala	Foreign exchange earnings in tourism (Rs. in billions)	Total Earnings (Rs. in billions)
2001	208830	2537282	8.23	5239692	5.35	45.00
2002	232564	2384364	9.75	5568256	7.06	49.31
2003	294621	2726214	10.81	5871228	9.83	59.38
2004	345546	3457477	9.99	5972182	12.67	68.29
2005	346499	3918610	8.84	5946423	15.22	77.38
2006	428534	4447167	9.64	6271724	19.88	91.26
2007	515808	5081504	10.15	6642941	26.41	114.33
2008	598929	5282603	11.34	7591250	30.67	131.30
2009	557258	5167699	10.78	7913537	28.53	132.31
2010	659265	5583746	11.81	8595075	37.97	173.48

Source: Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala (2011)

Unique products like backwater tourism and Ayurveda emerged as the innovation of tourism industry which attained international recognition. Currently there are about 1,000 houseboats in Keralan backwaters from basic to luxury resembling floating mini-palaces. Similarly, Ayurveda, the traditional medicine system in Kerala was promoted among the tourists for rejuvenation of health. Accommodation facilities ranging from luxury hotels to homestays including vernacular architectural style, culture, tradition and various art forms are today being widely used for creating memorable experiences to tourists. Succeeding governments attempted to broad-base tourism involving community, private and public sector. The strength of the public-private participation witnessed with the conduct of Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) regularly once in two years since 2000. A new model of marketing emerged with a combined effort of tourism department and tourism industry capturing the national and international markets through innovative campaigns and road shows. Focusing on the need for community benefits and participation in tourism, ecotourism models were conceived in the late 90s and the Responsible Tourism initiative was launched in 2007. The state has already developed institutional

mechanism to take a lead role in promoting accommodation, wayside amenities, and human resource and investment in tourism sector.

In tourism ventures, small and medium enterprises dominate today. The importance of tourism from a development perspective is realized by local self government and local communities also. A perfect synergy between public and private sector is created in tourism and the need of the hour is to promote quality on all fronts to provide world-class experiences to tourist without deteriorating society, environment while strengthening the economy.

2. Vision

Tourism becomes a vibrant and significant contributor to the sustainable development of the state of Kerala.

3. Mission

- 3.1 The state delivers a world-class, yet local visitor experience.
- 3.2 Tourism sector attracts investment, which will be sensitive to the natural environment
- 3.3 Communities benefit from tourism and value its contribution
- 3.4 Kerala is positioned as a visible global brand in tourism
- 3.5 Our market share is enhanced, within and outside India
- 3.6 Kerala becomes a quality human resource provider in tourism for the state and the country

4. Objectives

- 4.1 To ensure quality visitor experience
- 4.2 To focus on benefits for the community from tourism
- 4.3 To create enabling environment for investment
- 4.4 To market Kerala as a visible global brand in domestic and international markets
- 4.5 To develop quality human resources in tourism and hospitality

5. To ensure quality visitor experience

We understand that the visitor is central to our business. In a highly competitive market, a destination can flourish only by delivering quality service and improving customer satisfaction. We will endeavour to deliver world-class experience to all visitors, giving importance to provision of basic amenities in destinations, constant improvement in services in hotels, restaurants and visitor points, upgradation of visitor facilities in places of interest and overall improvement in upkeep and maintenance of local attractions at destinations.

5.1 Basic infrastructure at destinations

5.1.1 Integration of activities of line departments and local bodies is of prime importance for ensuring quality basic infrastructure at destinations. Major infrastructure deficits exist in destinations, which have to be removed on a priority basis. As a large part of this activity depends on the priority provided by the concerned line departments, it is essential that the departments are sensitive to these requirements. Tourism department will prepare infrastructure plans for major destinations in association with the line departments. Key projects include augmentation of water supply systems, providing access, street lights and ensuring waste management. A **Cabinet Committee on Tourism** will be formed with Chief Minister as Chairman, Minister for Tourism as Vice Chairman and Ministers of related line departments as members to oversee the implementation of infrastructure plans which are vital to tourism sector.

5.1.2 The tourism industry has to be continuously consulted on the infrastructure requirements at destinations, to enable the Tourism department to conceive projects that are relevant and important. We will form a **Task Force on Infrastructure Development**, with Minister for Tourism as the Chairman, consisting of members of the tourism industry and representative of line departments.

5.1.3 The accumulation of urban garbage is of serious concern not merely from the point of view of tourism but also as a general public health issue. The Tourism department will co-ordinate with local-self governments, wherever necessary, assisting in managing waste and keeping destinations and major tourist corridors clean. A new campaign on **‘Kerala Waste Free Destination (KWFD)’** will be launched with the active participation of local bodies, NGOs and Self Help Groups. We will constitute a **Task Force for effective KWFD Campaign** chaired by Minister for Tourism and with members from Department of Tourism, LSGD, Suchitwa Mission, Self Help Groups, NGOs and tourism industry.

5.2 Managing tourism resources

- 5.2.1 Most of the tourism attractions in the state are under the custodianship of departments like Local Self Government, Forests and Wildlife, Culture, Ports, KSEB, Irrigation, Fisheries, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. As tourism sector is the user and consumer, we will take coordinated efforts for the development, management and promotion of these resources under Kerala Tourism brand.
- 5.2.2 The nature based tourism resources are vulnerable to any intervention in the name of tourism or otherwise. It is vital to have rational use of such resources for its sustenance. Approval of Department of Tourism will be made mandatory for interventions at declared vulnerable tourism areas by any agency.
- 5.2.3 Backwater based tourism activities are now concentrated in the Alappuzha region. More than a thousand houseboats are now operated in this region, resulting in some backwater stretches in this region with density much above the carrying capacity. We have to disperse houseboat operation and cruise activities to relatively underused stretches and regions. The Department, in association with Water Resources Department, will build infrastructure facilities like jetties, parking bays and boarding points that will enable investors to begin backwater tourism operations in new areas. We will also introduce special incentives for starting houseboat operations in areas other than Vembanad Lake.
- 5.2.4 Approval from Department of Tourism will be made mandatory for obtaining license from local self governments for the homestays, serviced villas, Houseboats and Ayurveda centres. We will work with the Local self government, Health and Port departments for this.
- 5.2.5 Department of Tourism, in association with Forests and Wild Life Department, will take steps to augment ecotourism initiatives that will provide visitors new experiences and bring revenue to the local community.

5.3 Development of local leisure destinations and enhancing local level experiences

- 5.3.1 To showcase the diverse natural and cultural heritage of the state, separate thematic museums will be established in the state. The Department of Tourism will extend financial support for starting 10 such museums within a decade.

5.3.2 There are known and lesser known attractions in the state. Ensuring essential facilities in these areas can enhance visitor experience. We will improve the facilities at the known destinations and create facilities at the lesser known destinations.

5.3.3 The management of the destinations at the local level will be strengthened through District Tourism Promotion Councils and Destination Management Councils.

5.4 Assessing the quality of destinations

5.4.1 To improve the quality of the destinations, it is important to understand the satisfaction level of tourists on the available facilities. Tourism Department will conduct feedback surveys at major destinations periodically. Based on the information received from the surveys, the department will initiate corrective steps that will directly address issues of concern of visitors.

5.5 Wayside facilities at the destinations and en-route

5.5.1 A commonly raised issue is the lack of well maintained public toilets and tourist facilities in popular tourist destinations and routes. The Department will formulate an Action Plan with a simple objective – to provide, directly or through partnerships with stakeholders, toilets and restrooms of acceptable standard, in every destination. We will also ensure that washroom facilities are maintained at international level. The aim is to develop this into a zero complaint project.

5.5.2 Schemes will be provided to encourage building and maintenance of pay and use public toilets and for the use of new technologies.

5.6 Environment friendly practices promoted

5.6.1 Pollution of backwaters and other water bodies due to tourism activities is a major concern. Department, in association with Kerala State Pollution Control Board, will take stringent measures to see that all the houseboats will have scientific solid and liquid waste management system and use only 4-stroke engines. Department will also explore possibilities of introducing these systems in other tourist boats.

5.6.2 Plastic waste continues to be a major concern for the local population and the visitors. Department will ban the use of disposable plastics at major destinations such as Kovalam, Ponmudi, Veli, Varkala, Thenmala, Alappuzha Backwaters, Kumarakom, Fort Kochi, Eravikulam, Thekkady, Pookot Lake, Soochipara, Kuruva and Bekal in the first phase in association with tourism industry.

5.6.3 Department will support environment friendly initiatives such as production of paper bags and converting plastic and other wastes into resources, through viability gap funding.

5.7 Promotion of local souvenirs

5.7.1 Throughout the world, souvenir trade is an important part of the tourism industry serving a dual role, first to help improve the local economy, and second to allow visitors to take with them a memento of their visit, ultimately to encourage an opportunity for a return visit, or to promote the locale to other tourists as a form of word-of-mouth marketing. But, studies show that visitors to Kerala spend only less than 5% of their expenditure for souvenir shopping. Considering limited choices and availability of souvenirs, Department will support production and marketing of exclusive local Kerala souvenirs by making Kerala souvenir shops compulsory in all the classified and approved tourism units. Government will also support this initiative by providing spaces for exclusive local souvenirs wherever possible.

5.8 Promotion of local cuisine

5.8.1 Spices of Kerala and its cuisine are widely known and acknowledged. Department will encourage the hoteliers and restaurants to provide local cuisine. Steps will also be taken to establish Kerala Culinary Institute to ensure the much needed manpower.

5.9 Promotion of adventure tourism

5.9.1 Kerala's topography, dotted with a wide array of peaks, mountains and waterbodies, is ideal for adventure tourism. Steps will be taken to promote land and waterbased adventure tourism activities at identified locations in the state and special incentives will be provided to adventure tour operators.

5.10 Tourists information centres at all major tourism destinations

5.10.1 It is important to have facilities for providing quality information on tourism at every tourist centres, cities and major transport nodes. We will commence information centres at all major destinations, cities and transport nodes with IT enabled information kiosks and trained staff to cater the needs of visitors.

5.11 Signage at destinations and en-route

5.11.1 Taking into consideration the need to constantly improve way-finding signages on highways and roads to destinations, Tourism Department will prepare a specific project to

improve upon the existing signage system. As far as possible, internationally accepted and recognised symbols and colour codes will be used. The project will include establishment of a detailed destination signage system in major destinations.

5.12 Grading of wayside establishments

5.12.1 We will introduce a grading system for wayside establishments providing facilities like toilets, parking bays and refreshment as a means to assure quality.

5.13 Hop-on Hop-off services

5.13.1 We will introduce hop-on hop-off services at Thiruvananthapuram, Alappuzha, Fort Kochi, Kochi backwaters and Munnar. Based on the success of these programmes, similar services will begin in more destinations.

5.14 Development of destinations accessible to all including differently abled persons

5.14.1 Visitors with disabilities find it difficult to experience most of the attractions of Kerala. We intend to create facilities for persons with disabilities at a few select destinations on a pilot basis such as the Zoo and Museum Campus, Thiruvananthapuram and Fort Kochi, by working in coordination with custodian departments.

5.15 Life Saving Initiative

5.15.1 Kerala Tourism is heavily dependent on water based attractions such as beaches, backwaters, rivers, lakes and ponds which are prone to meet with accidents and casualties. Even though we have deployed trained life guards in major beaches, more trained life guards have to be deployed, improving their skills and providing them with safety equipments. We will conduct training programmes for improving the skills of the existing lifeguards and provide them with sufficient modern life saving equipments.

5.15.2 Recognizing the need for increasing the number of trained persons, we will augment the existing life guard service by initiating '**Life Saving Volunteer**' scheme at potentially high risk water bodies. The scheme provides for identification and training of volunteers in life saving and first aid from among the persons who are working or residing in the vicinity of the destinations and designating them as 'Life Saving Volunteers'. We will undertake this new scheme with the help of the tourism industry and local community.

5.15.3 A separate society will be formed for the Life Guard Services to make the service more efficient by providing proper training and latest equipments.

5.16 Tourist Wardens at tourism destinations

5.16.1 There are many instances of harassment and misbehaviour to the tourists at the destinations. To strengthen the existing systems that address such issues, we will introduce '**Tourist Warden**' scheme in all major tourist destinations. These wardens, at least half of whom will be women, will be selected from the educated unemployed youth from the local community, and trained and certified by Department of Tourism. They will be placed under DTPCs or DMCs. They will provide assistance and guidance to the visitors as well as the community in maintaining the destinations hassle free.

5.17 Contingency Response Cell (CRC)

5.17.1 In order to manage situations of crisis affecting tourists, the Department will constitute **Contingency Response Cell** at the state level to act quickly to manage such eventualities. The cell will be equipped with staff and infrastructure to manage crisis situations.

5.18 Exemption of tourism sector from hartals

5.18.1 Tourism Department will initiate discussions with political parties and trade unions to exempt tourism sector from hartals which cause serious inconvenience and loss in terms of money and time to tourists.

6. Community and Tourism

We know that the participation and acceptance of the local community is critical for tourism. We believe that tourism development in any destination should benefit local community on economic, social and environmental fronts. The economic objective should focus on generating employment opportunity besides enabling households and individuals to produce and supply products that are demanded by industry so that local people will be able to get maximum economic benefit out of tourism. On social and environmental fronts, steps will be taken to minimise negative impacts and enable the community to live in harmony with nature, culture and traditions. Suitable mechanisms have to be developed to enable the industry partners and visitors to strengthen and achieve above set goals. The Responsible Tourism programmes is designed and implemented in the state keeping these objectives in mind.

6.1 Community and Economic benefits

- 6.1.1 We will sensitise the local community on industry requirements in employment opportunities, local products, while the industry will be sensitised on the locally available skills, the benefits on promoting local employment and purchase of local products.
- 6.1.2 The Department will create environment for making local products available working closely with local bodies, Self Help Groups, NGOs, Farmers' group, Department of Agriculture & Animal Husbandry, Forest, Fisheries, Traditional industries etc
- 6.1.3 The Department will provide Entrepreneurship Development Programme to develop Local Level Entrepreneurs (LLE) in identified areas.

6.2 Community and Socio-cultural aspects

- 6.2.1 The Department will do a mapping of the extinct or near extinct arts, work for their revival and protect the original styles and authenticity. The revived art forms will be promoted by Tourism Department.
- 6.2.2 We will give prominence to heritage development programmes that would lead to the refurbishment and renovation of heritage buildings in association with Department of Culture.
- 6.2.3 A **Task Force against Trafficking and Abuse** will be formed with officials from the departments of Social Welfare, Education, Law, Home, Health and Tourism to develop mechanisms and action plans to implement and monitor zero tolerance on trafficking, substance and child abuse in tourism.

6.3 To strengthen and promote Responsible Tourism (RT)

- 6.3.1 We will take steps to broad-base the RT initiative throughout the state, learning from the pilot locations of Kovalam, Kumarakom, Thekkady and Wayanad.
- 6.3.2 It is essential to distinguish and encourage enterprises that are practicing RT principles. We will introduce and promote a new classification scheme for the tourism service providers known as RT Classification based on the principles of Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria. At least 30 percent of the classified and approved units located in rural areas will be converted to RT classified units in 10 years. The direct incentives given by the Department will be linked to RT practices.
- 6.3.3 The **Kerala Responsible Tourism Task Force** will be created at the state level with representatives from Tourism Department, Local Self Government, Tourism industry, Self Help Groups, NGOs, Department of Agriculture & Animal Husbandry, Fisheries.

6.4 Active involvement of Local Self Governments

- 6.4.1 In planning and development of tourism in destinations, the local self governments can play a decisive role. Tourism development programmes will be integrated with other developmental activities of local self governments. We will encourage and assist local bodies to form Tourism Working Group in places of tourism importance.
- 6.4.2 As most of the tourism attractions in Kerala are based on the bounty of nature, unplanned and haphazard development of tourist destinations is a serious issue affecting tourism growth. As per the Panchayath Raj Act, the sole power for regulating the development activities is vested with the local bodies. Master plans, Detailed Town Planning schemes and Kerala Municipal Building Rules (KMBR) are the tools used for controlling and regulating the development of any area. There is provision in the Town and Country Planning Act for declaring any area with special character as special zones and controlling its development with special guidelines prepared for that particular zone. In this context, Department in association with Town and Country Planning Department and local bodies will identify tourism important areas for its conservation and preservation, and prepare and implement special guidelines considering its carrying capacity. We will also associate with Town and Country Planning department for the preparation and implementation of Area Development Plans for the areas of tourism importance.

7. To create enabling environment for investment

Recognizing the importance of tourism in stimulating the economic development of the state, the Government of Kerala declared tourism as an industry in 1986. Super structure and infrastructure are the most important components of any tourism destination. The success of Kerala Tourism is mainly owed to the synergy between private and public sector. Government act as a catalyst and facilitator to create enabling environment for private investment. Considering the peculiar geographical conditions of the state, we give priority for small and medium level investment. Also the Government will take steps to encourage private investment in tourism adhering to the principles and practices of sustainability.

7.1 Fast track clearance to tourism projects with investment above Rs. 10 crores

7.1.1 In order to facilitate speedy clearances of the tourism projects, we will introduce fast track clearance to tourism projects for investment above 10 crores integrating with the existing system.

7.2 New subsidy system to promote Responsible Tourism (RT) practices

7.2.1 In order to promote RT practices within the state, incentives linked to RT practices will be introduced in the state. The existing investment subsidy schemes will be withdrawn by 2013. A new system will be introduced whereby 15% of the total investment subject to a maximum ceiling limit of 20 lakhs will be provided for investors classified under RT.

7.2.2 Department will provide industrial tariff on electricity charges for the first five years for establishments which are classified under RT.

7.3 Marketing Assistance for Service Providers

7.3.1 We will devise a scheme for new investors in tour operations, homestays, serviced villas and Ayurveda centres to participate in international and national tourism promotional events for the first three years. The marketing assistance will be limited to one international fair and one domestic fair in a year. The Department will bear 25% of the travel fare and promotional materials subject to a maximum of Rs.75,000/- for international fairs and Rs.50,000/- for domestic fairs. New small and medium level accommodation units of less than 30 rooms located in 6 northern districts viz., Kasaragod, Kannur, Wayanad, Kozhikode, Malappuram and Palakkad, and new houseboat operators operating in backwaters other than Vembanad Lake will also be eligible for the above support.

7.4 Residential tariff for homestays

7.4.1 In order to promote homestays in the state, we will ensure residential tariff on electricity and water charges for homestay providers in consultation with KSEB and Water Authority.

8. To market Kerala as a visible global brand with equal focus on domestic and international markets

Kerala from early 90's has been concentrating on international tourists from Europe with emphasis on UK, Germany and France. In the last few years, the world witnessed severe economic recession, especially Europe and it catered to a dip in the number of foreign tourists. This prompted us to commence aggressive campaign to attract domestic tourists. Earlier the ratio between international and domestic marketing fund allocation was 70% and 30% respectively and which is now giving 50:50 thrust to domestic tourism.

An examination of last decade's foreign tourist arrivals to Kerala shows that it has registered average annual growth rate of 12%. During 2010, the state received 6.5 lakhs foreign tourists. Considering the strategy envisaged for aggressive marketing we target to achieve a yearly growth rate of 15%, which will yield 30 lakhs foreign tourist arrivals by 2021. The average annual growth rate of domestic tourist arrivals during the last decade is 4.5%. In 2010, we received 86 lakhs domestic tourists. We will target an annual average growth rate of 7% for the next decade that will bring 180 lakhs domestic tourists by 2021.

8.1 Strengthening the existing International markets

8.1.1 The current source markets for Kerala as per the tourist statistics 2010 are UK (23.7%), USA (10.8%), France (9.8%), Germany (7.6%) and Australia (5.6%). The potential of these markets are not tapped to the optimum. We will formulate market specific strategies to optimally use the potential of the existing markets.

8.2 To tap the new and emerging International markets

8.2.1 Markets like USA, Scandinavia, Russia, China, South Africa, Middle East and Malaysia have tremendous potential among the emerging markets for Kerala. Due to financial constraints we have been limiting marketing efforts in established European markets. We will now spread our marketing efforts to make our destinations visible in the above markets. Specific strategies will be developed for short haul/long haul tourists.

8.3 To tap the existing domestic markets

8.3.1 Studies show that Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh are the major domestic source markets for Kerala. This reveals that Kerala has not tapped the domestic leisure market from Central and Northern parts of the country fully. While continuing the aggressive market strategy we will spread out to emerging domestic source markets also.

8.3.2 Given the fact that there is a steep increase in room inventory, we need to position Kerala as a destination of choice for the MICE market. We will form the **Kerala Convention Promotion Bureau (KCPB)** with participation of the tourism industry, to market the region aggressively in the MICE business segment.

8.4 Strengthen Market Research

8.4.1 The present method of collection of tourist statistics does not give more detailed input for conducting market research and marketing strategies. The system will be strengthened by incorporating collection of detailed tourist profile with the support of tourist accommodation providers.

8.4.2 Separate market research will be conducted by the Department to identify the necessity of direct air connectivity from major source markets to Kerala.

8.5 Strengthen Internet enabled marketing strategies

8.5.1 Kerala has been successfully using Information Technology down the years. Department will make maximum use of social marketing tools for effective promotion of Kerala Tourism.

8.6 Increasing average length of stay

8.6.1 The average length of stay for foreign tourists is estimated as 16 days. The Department will assist, support and promote industry in developing multi-experience packages and products to increase average length of stay to 21 days.

8.7 To develop Kerala as an all season destination

8.7.1 Product-Market Seasonality Matrix will be developed by the Department to match products to main markets and indicate main seasonality factors so that Kerala can become an all season destination. Ayurveda, backwaters, adventure, eco-tourism, MICE and Medical Tourism will be developed and promoted as special tourism products.

8.8 New Destination Promotion campaign

8.8.1 Department will initiate new destination promotion campaign for emerging destinations such as Bekal and Wayanad.

8.9 Task Force on Tourism Marketing

8.9.1 A **Task Force for Marketing** will be constituted to continue the synergy of Private Public Partnership in marketing and to formulate innovative marketing strategy.

9. To develop Human Resources in tourism and hospitality

There is an alarming situation between demand and supply of skilled manpower in tourism sector. The requirement of HR in tourism and hospitality industry is approximately 0.2 million per annum, whereas the supply is only 12,000. We have done a detailed study on HRD in tourism sector in Kerala, which brought out some notable observations on the education system in travel, tourism and hospitality. Some of their observations were:

- There is a strong need for creating awareness among the people regarding the employment prospects in travel, tourism and hospitality sector.
- There is a need for common standards, uniformity and harmony in curriculum, faculty qualification and education delivery.
- The hospitality and tourism sector is not considered as a popular career option because of unattractive wages and the demanding working conditions.

The employment opportunities are found both in the formal and informal segments and the role of informal segment is more prominent in tourism. The HR requirements of the industry is at present met by the Kerala Institute of Tourism & Travel Studies (KITTS), State Institute of Hospitality Management (SIHM), Institute of Hotel Management & Catering Technology (IHMCT), Food Craft Institutes (FCI) and a good number of institutes in the private sector.

9.1 Develop KITTS as an apex institute in HR development

9.1.1 KITTS will be transformed as an apex institute to cater to the Human Resource requirement of Department and industry. Besides conducting academic programmes, KITTS will undertake the following activities to enhance the quality of HR in tourism.

- To offer training and capacity building programme for service providers labelled as Let's Learn Capacity Building Programme. Under the scheme, we will train at least 25000 employees in the tourism sector in the next five years.
- A separate research wing will be constituted to conduct research and studies of various aspects of tourism.
- A Council for Quality Education System in Tourism (C-QUEST) will be launched to ensure quality education in tourism to meet the HR requirements of the industry.
- KITTS will take a lead role in preparing curriculum and designing courses that are needed for the industry. Technical support for the same will be offered to various institutes including Arts & Science Colleges offering tourism courses. Permanent arrangement will be made for Faculty Development Programmes also.
- KITTS will start a RT school for capacity building and training programmes of all stakeholders in tourism. The school will also work as a resource centre for researchers, academicians, policy makers and tourism practitioners.
- KITTS will take a lead role in promoting awareness in tourism education and career options in tourism.

9.2 Integration of tourism educational activities of technical institutes

- 9.2.1 Today, Vocational Higher Secondary Schools and Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) are offering skill based courses in identified trades. These institutes will be encouraged to offer more industry demanded courses in tourism.
- 9.2.2 The Government institutes and aided private institutes offering tourism courses will be encouraged to offer skill oriented courses in tourism to unemployed youths by tapping funds from local self governments and departments like Social Welfare Department, Scheduled Caste & Scheduled Tribe Department and Youth Welfare Department.
- 9.2.3 In order to address the scarcity of qualified faculty in tourism and hospitality, short-term teaching courses will be offered to experienced industry personnel.

10. State Tourism Advisory Committee (STAC)

- 10.1 Department will form **State Tourism Advisory Committee (STAC)** to advise Department on destination development, tourism product development, tourism marketing strategies, HR and tourism research to promote and enhance the state's reputation as a premier tourism destination. The Committee will have nominated members from the tourism industry stakeholders and members of various Task Forces in tourism.