

Forts, Folklores and Festivals

KASARAGOD



God's Own Country

www.keralatourism.org

Kasaragod is often described as the land of forts and gods. The place is noted for its ritual dance Theyyam, an art that blends dance, myth, drama, music, art and theatrics. A performing art popular in the northern districts of Kerala, Theyyam can be enjoyed in all its glory at Kasaragod.

In Theyyam, the performer is considered as a medium between the supernatural and the mortal worlds. The Theyyam season gifts one with a grand visual treat as different Theyyams take centre stage and perform the ancient art. Listen to the many lores at Kasaragod, a land known for festivals, folk and visual art.

Yakshagana is one of the popular Indian theatre forms performed in Kasaragod in Kerala and the South Canara districts of Karnataka. The art form is characterised by extravagant costumes, elaborate make-up and unique stage techniques. The stories are mostly based on episodes taken from epics like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharatha*.

Yakshagana cannot be described as an exclusive folk, classical or rural art form since it incorporates elements of all these in its narration and performance. The art form involves dance, music and dialogues. Yakshagana literally translates to 'the music of celestial beings,' and the narration is accompanied by background music played using percussion instruments. The singers and artistes perform in sync with it to create this celestial musical drama.

Kasaragod is almost synonymous with the magnificent key-hole shaped fort, the Bekal Fort which is a historic structure. Other forts include the Chandragiri Fort, Hosdurg Fort, Kumbala Fort, Povval Fort, Kundamkuzhi Fort and Bidadukka Fort.

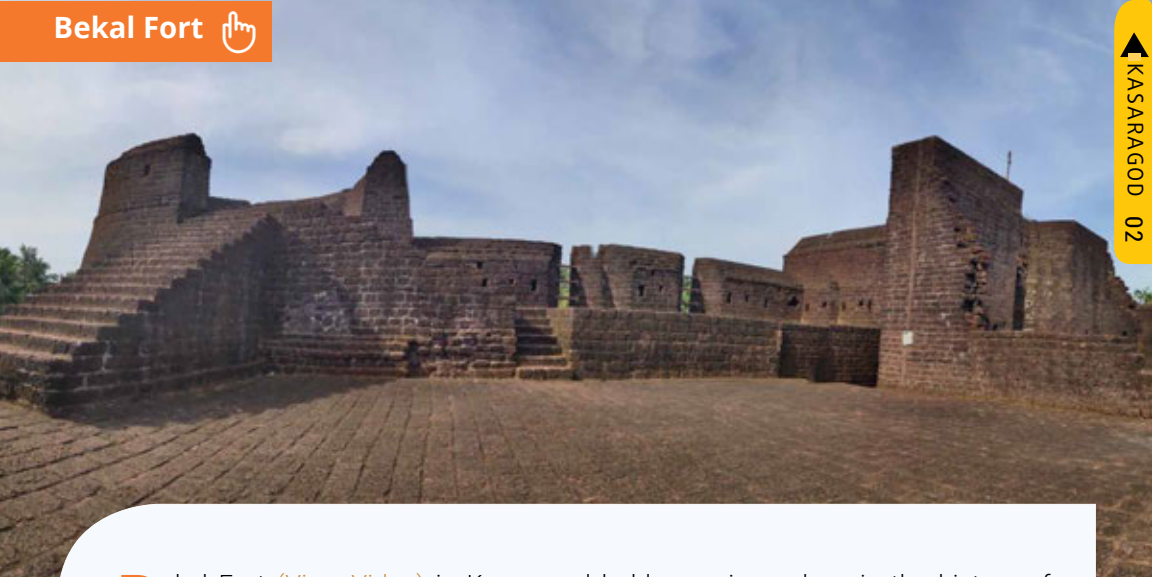


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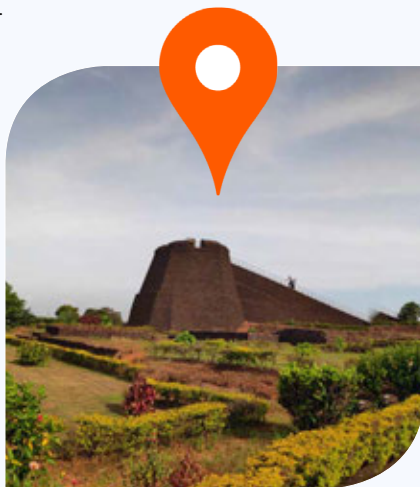
BEKAL FORT



Bekal Fort ([View Video](#)) in Kasaragod holds a unique place in the history of Kerala. The fort, facing the Arabian Sea, was built purely for defence purposes, and is one among the biggest forts in Kerala.

The walls of the Bekal Fort, which is a few centuries old, are made of laterite and are about 12 m in height. The fort has witnessed many fierce battles both human and natural, and its continued existence is a testimony to the engineering brilliance of those times.

Near the fort stands an Anjaneya Temple and a mosque that testify the religious harmony that once prevailed in the region.



How to reach



Bekal Fort in Kasaragod lies 12 km from Kanhangad railway station.

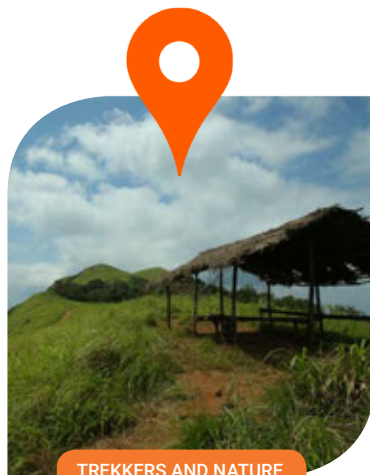


The nearest airport is Mangalore International Airport (Karnataka), about 80 km away.

RANIPURAM

Ranipuram hills stand at a height of 750 m above sea level, and is the region of highest altitude in the district. Once known as Madathumala, Ranipuram is a paradise for trekkers and Nature lovers who are drawn by the evergreen Shola woods, sprawling meadows and monsoon forests. Wild elephants can also be spotted wandering in the mountains.

To reach Ranipuram, one must take a bus from Kanhangad to Pananthady, and hire a jeep from there. The District Tourism Promotion Council has arranged cottages for tourists.



TREKKERS AND NATURE

**How to reach**

The nearest railway station is Kanhangad, about 45 km away.



The nearest airport is Kannur International Airport Ltd. (KIAL) Ltd., about 107 km away.

KANHANGAD

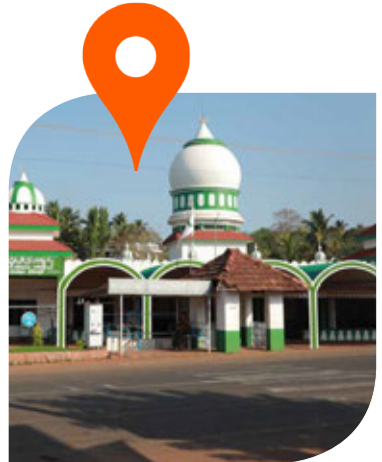




Kanhangad is a major city in Kasaragod that lies 15 km south of Bekal. The city has many beautiful mosques, a testimony to the Sufi culture that prevailed in the area.

Kanhangad is also famous for its chain of forts built by the Somashekhara Nayak of Ikkeri dynasty. In the southern part of Kanhangad stands the Alami Palli, one of the oldest mosques in the region. The Arangadi Juma Masjid and the Parambath Magham Shareef are the other important pilgrim centres here.

The spiritual centre of Guruvanam, 6 km from Kanhangad, is another attraction in the town.



How to reach

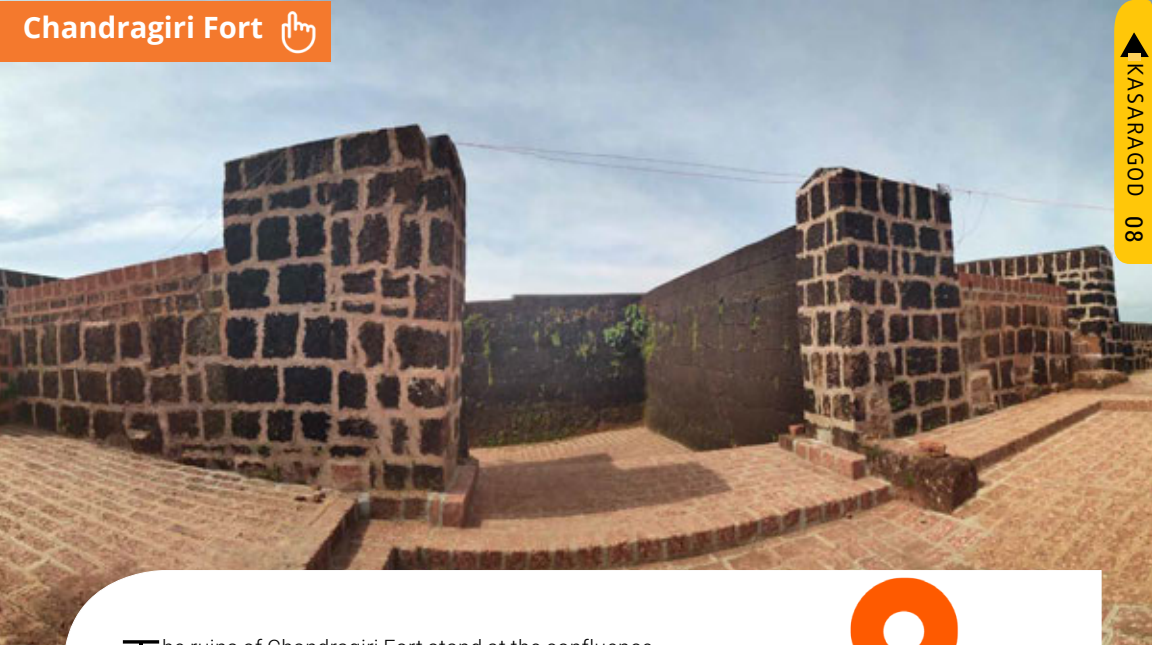


The nearest railway station is Payyanur, about 9 km away.



The nearest airport is Kannur International Airport Ltd. (KIAL), about 63 km away.

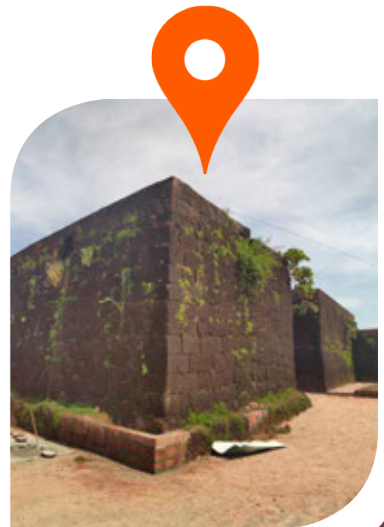
CHANDRAGIRI FORT



The ruins of Chandragiri Fort stand at the confluence of the Payaswini river and the Arabian Sea on the south-eastern side of Kasaragod town. The Chandragiri Fort, one among a chain of forts perched atop a hill, was built in the 17th century by Sivappa Naik of Bedanore.

The ruined fort is about 46 m above sea level, and covers an area of seven acres. The incessantly flowing river and the estuary where the river meets the sea are visible from the fort, which is now managed by the Department of Archaeology, Govt. of Kerala.

The ancient Kizhur Sastha Temple and a mosque are also situated near the fort.



How to reach



The nearest railway station is Kasaragod, about 7 km away.



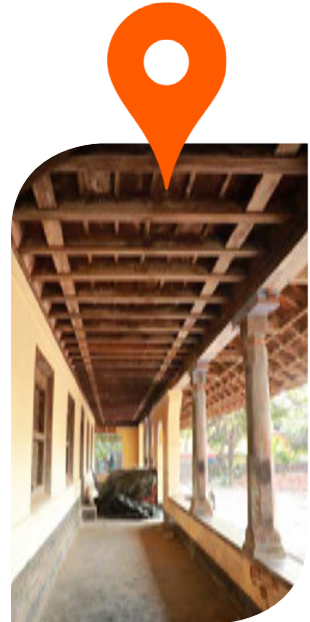
The nearest airport is Mangalore International Airport (Karnataka), about 67 km away.

NILESHWARAM



The town of Nileshwaram ([View Video](#)) used to be the capital of the erstwhile Nileshwara Rajas and was known as the cultural capital of Kasaragod district. There are many Kovilakoms, or palaces of the Nileshwara Rajas, that showcase the fine architectural splendour of a glorious past. The monuments belonging to the royal era, such as the Thekke Kovilakam, the Kinavoor Kovilakam, the Kovilakam Chira, the Thali temple and many more, associated with the royal family, attract visitors from far and wide.

The Nileshwaram Palace functions today as the Folklore Centre of the Department of Archaeology, Govt. of Kerala. The town is also famous for its numerous sacred serpent groves (shrines), temples, and ancient buildings that make it a cradle of folk arts and culture. Another main attraction of the town is the ritual art form 'Theyyam' that is performed in many temples here, giving an insight into the folk music of the place.



How to reach



The nearest railway station is Nileshwaram, about 1 km away.



The nearest airport is Kannur International Airport Ltd. (KIAL), about 75 km away.

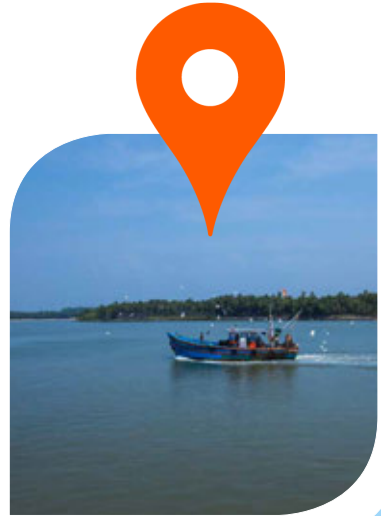
VALIYAPARAMBA BACKWATERS



One of the popular backwater stretches in North Kerala, the Valiyaparamba ([View Video](#)) backwaters are fed by four rivers. The backwaters get their name from the Valiyaparamba Island, a prominent fishing centre that lies 10 km south of Nileshwaram.

A houseboat cruise through the backwaters offers a picturesque view of the surrounding arecanut and coconut palm groves and the rustic charm of the quaint backwaters. Idayilakkadu is a beautiful island on the way, where one can find serpent groves that are home to many troops of monkeys.

The cruise offers an intimate glimpse of the village life close to these backwaters, along with the picturesque beauty of the surrounding rivers.

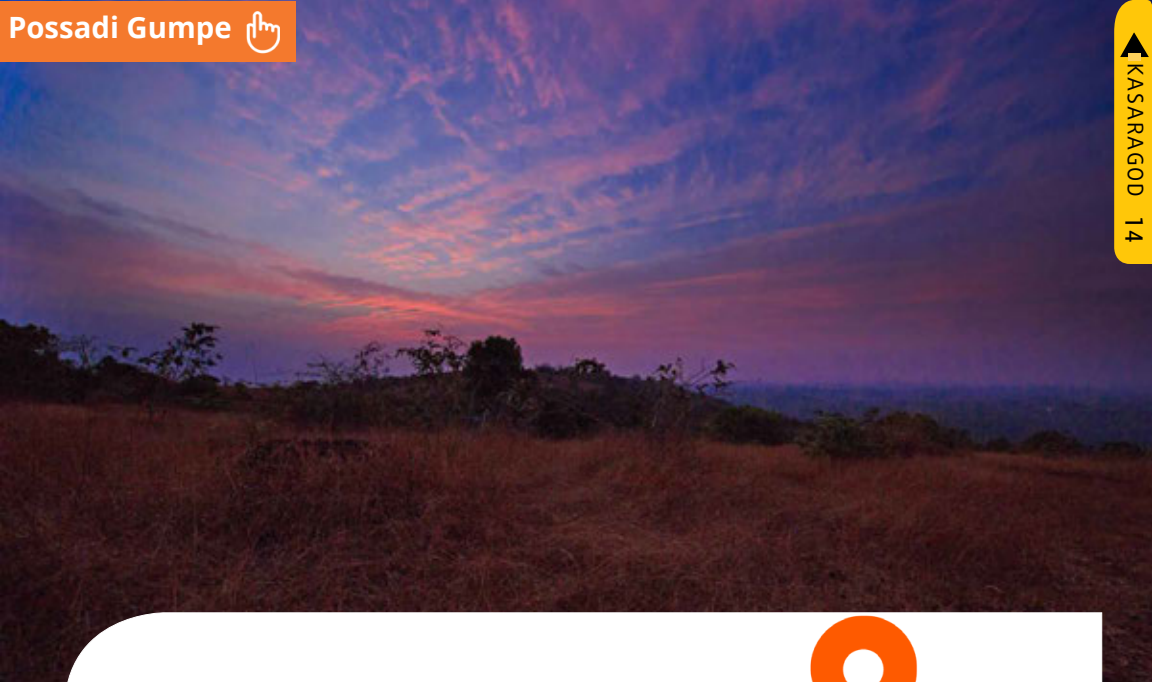


How to reach

The nearest railway station is Payyanur, about 9 km away.

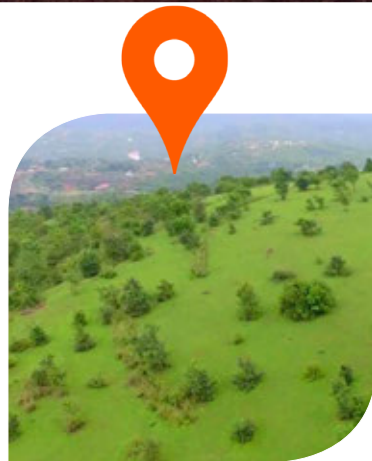
The nearest airport is Kannur International Airport Ltd. (KIAL), about 63 km away.

POSSADI GUMPE



Possadi Gumpe ([View Video](#)) is a hillock that stands 1060 ft. high above sea level, situated east of Manjeshwaram and 15 km south of Bekal. The hilltop offers a picturesque view of the Arabian Sea, Mangalore and Kudremukh.

The picture-perfect scenery along the way makes the trek uphill an enriching experience. However, as this less explored hillock is off the beaten track, tourists are advised to go well-equipped with food, water and other trekking necessities. The nearest village from here is Paivalike.



How to reach



The nearest railway station is Manjeshwar railway station, about 23.8 km away.

The nearest airport is Mangalore International Airport (Karnataka), about 54 km away.

PULIYAMKULAM



Puliyamkulam village that lies 35 km from Bekal is known for the efforts of a man, P. Abdul Kareem, who toiled hard to convert a wasteland into an area of fertile greenery. Kareem worked diligently for almost 28 years to convert a barren landscape into a Nature-rich zone, teeming with rare plants, trees and birds, and is now the proud owner of India's first private sanctuary – Forest Park.

Apart from the nearly 300 species of flowering plants that Kareem planted, the sanctuary is rich in diverse species of trees, herbs and also medicinal plants. The fauna here include small wild animals, birds, reptiles, insects, etc.



How to reach



The nearest railway station is Kanhangad railway station, about 30 km away.



The nearest airport is Kannur International Airport Ltd. (KIAL), about 88.6 km away.

UMMICHIPOYIL AND VARIKULAM



Ummichipoyil, a prominent tribal settlement, about 23 km from Nileschwaram, is situated on the laterite hills of Karintham village. It is known for its rock-cut caves called Muniyaras, which are believed to be more than 2000 years old. These rock cut caves on the banks of the Nileschwaram river show strong links with the Megalithic age. Pillars, benches, beds and many other structures cut into the rock can be seen in the caves here.

In Varikulam, near the Chandragiri river, visitors will find Kudakkallu or Umbrella stones. There are caves here as well, that contain unique benches carved out of stone.



How to reach

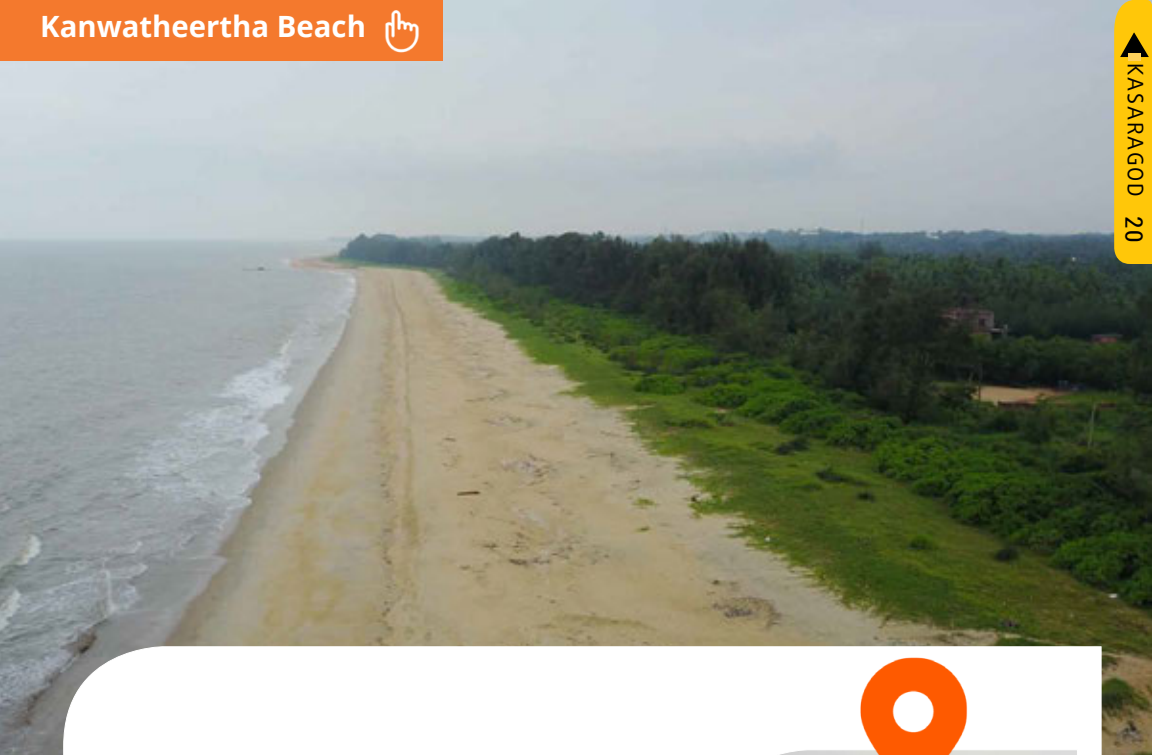


The nearest railway station is Nileschwaram, about 23 km away.



The nearest airport is Kannur International Airport Ltd. (KIAL), about 83 km away.

KANWATHEERTHA BEACH



The scenic beach of Kanwatheertha, ([View Video](#)) situated about 3 km from Manjeshwaram, is a swimmer's paradise. The secluded beach has a small lagoon in the middle of the sea called 'Kanwatheertha' that looks like a large swimming pool from afar. A swim in the lagoon amidst the vast blue sea is quite enjoyable.



How to reach



The nearest railway station is Kasaragod, about 30 km from Manjeshwaram.



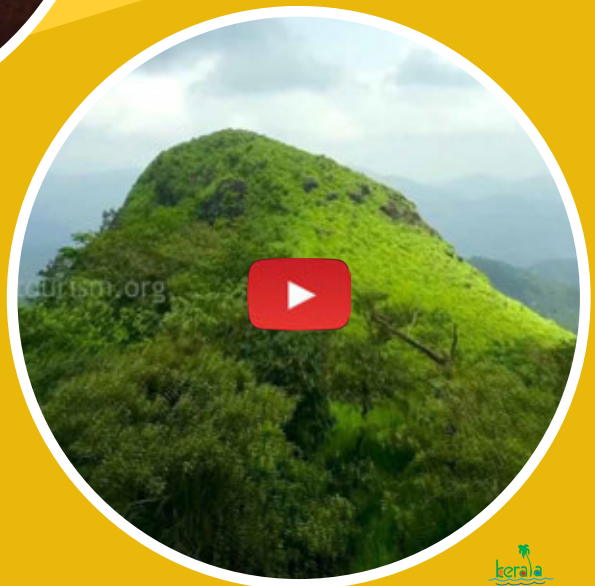
The nearest airport is Mangalore International Airport (Karnataka), about 29 km away.

360°
VIDEOS

Malik Dinar Mosque

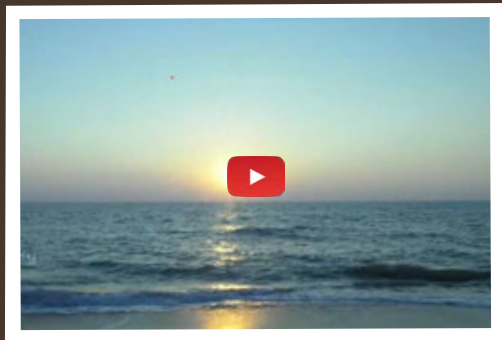


Kottancheri Hills



VIDEO GALLERY

Kanwatheertha Beach



Nileshwaram



Kasaragod
a North Malabar Wonder



Valiyaparamba Backwaters



Theyyam

Cheruvathur Sree Veerabhadra Temple



Rediscovering Bekal Fort & Beach



Possadi Gumpe



Achamthuruthi



Kavvayi Backwaters



Chembirikka Beach



Kottancheri Hills



PHOTO GALLERY

Ranipuram Hill



Ananthapura Lake Temple



Swami Nithyananda Ashram



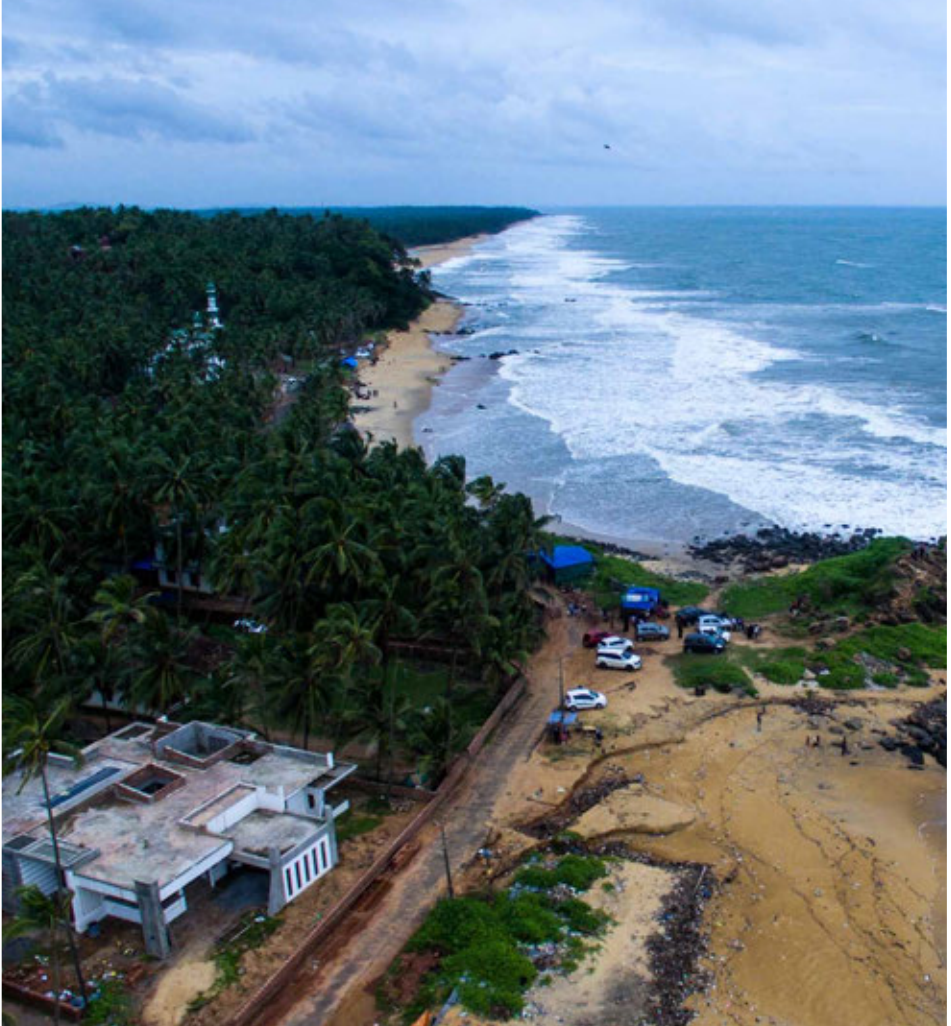
Kappil Beach



Chandragiri Fort



Chembirikka Beach



Malik Dinar Mosque



Theyyam



Kalaripayattu



Ummichipoyil and Varikulam



**THANK
YOU**