



NEHRU TROPHY BOAT RACE

PUNNAMADA LAKE



LOCATION

**Panchayat/
Municipality/
Corporation**

Alappuzha Municipality

District

Alappuzha

**Nearest Town/
Landmark/ Junction**

Alappuzha Town – 1.7 Km

Nearest Bus station

Alappuzha KSRTC Bus Stand - 500 m

**Nearest Railway
station**

Alappuzha Railway Station - 5 Km

Nearest Airport

Cochin International Airport - 85 Km



ACCESSIBILITY



CONTACT

District Tourism Promotion Council (DTPC)

Boat Jetty Road

Near KSRTC Bus Station

Alappuzha -11

Phone 1: +91-477-2251796

Phone 2: +91-477-2253308

Email: info@dtpcalappuzha.com



TIME

DATES

2nd Saturday of August

FREQUENCY

Annual

DURATION

1 Day

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL (Legend/History/Myth)

The Nehru Trophy Boat Race is organized on the Punnamada Lake in Alappuzha. Held on the second Saturday of August every year, it is one of the most popular and competitive of all the boat races happening in Kerala. Snake boats or *Chundanvallams* measuring over 100 feet in length are an integral part of the race. The history of the Nehru Trophy Boat Race can be traced back to a visit by late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India to Alappuzha. He happened to travel from Kottayam to Alappuzha by boat through the water logged Kuttanad. A pageantry of boats accompanied him on the trip. The first race was impromptu conducted in honour of Panditji who visited Alappuzha. Thrilled and excited in the performance of the oarsmen, Panditji jumped into the *Nadubhagam Chundan* that came first in the race. The boat proceeded to the boat jetty carrying the Prime Minister. On his return to Delhi in December, Nehru donated a Silver Trophy - a replica of a snake boat placed on a wooden abacus bearing the inscription, "To the winners of the boat race which is a unique feature of community life in Travancore Cochin" above his signature. The race has since then been an annual spectacular treat with flavors of the culture of Kerala.



RELEVANCE-
(Local / National / International)

International



NO. OF PEOPLE PARTICIPATED

Over 2,50,000

EVENTS/PROGRAMS

DESCRIPTION (*How festival is celebrated*)

Vanchipattu
Boat Race
Traditional Percussion
Music
Traditional Performing
Arts

The Snake Boat Race is a remarkable festival which encourages a sense of unity, alliance and sportsmanship. The race course having a length of about 1370 meters is divided into various tracks for the conduct of the competition. The advancing snake boats resemble fast moving snakes. The oarsmen splash the oars in unison with the rhythmic chants and beats of drums. The movements of competing boats are so thrilling that the spectators get a tune with the excited mood of the surrounding uproars. The festival begins with a procession of the snake boats. The snake boats and the smaller varieties of Kerala race boats like the '*Churulan*', '*Veppu*' and '*Oadi*' move in a formation down the 1.4 Km stretch of the lake. The celebrations in this event include folk dance performances along with loud drum beats and songs called '*Vanchipattu*' that harmonize and encourage the oarsmen and spectators into frenzy and promote a thrilling sensation in the entire race. There are numerous beaded umbrellas held aloft in each boat. Floats lend glimpses of Kerala's rich cultural heritage follow the race boats, with *Padayani* exhibits and artists performing *Kathakali*, *Theyyam* and *Panchavadyam*. The competition is rigorous as each boat with over 100 rowers race to the finish line with the sound of inspiring and thriving music.

