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PRESS RELEASE

Minister Riyas to flag off seaplane on Nov. 11 at Bolgatty

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 08: Tourism and Public Works Minister Shri PA Mohamed Riyas will flag off the seaplane service that meant to boost the tourism sector in the state on November 11.

Minister for Industries, Law and Coir Shri P Rajeeve will preside over the function to be held at Bolgatty Palace, Kochi at 9.30 am. Later, the flight crew and passengers of the seaplane, 'de Havilland Canada', will be accorded a reception at Mattupetty Dam in Idukki district in the presence of Minister for Water Resources Shri Roshy Augustine.

'de Havilland Canada' will land at the International Airport, Kochi on November 10 at 2pm and it will fly down to the waterdrome at the Bolgatty Palace at 3.30 pm where the crew will be hosted by the Department of Tourism.

The seaplane service that comes under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-UDAN of the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Government of India, is aimed at increasing the connectivity of the airports and the backwaters of Kerala.

Shri Riyas said Kerala places top priority on enhancing connectivity, as it plays a vital role in the growth of our tourism sector.

"The launch of heli-tourism is a significant step in this direction, making our destinations more accessible for quick, seamless travel. Additionally, the expansion of motorable roads connecting even the remotest parts of Kerala ensures that tourists can now reach far-off locations with ease, enjoying scenic routes along the way," the Minister noted.

"Our efforts also extend to the development of national highways, as well as coastal and hill highways, which will further boost connectivity. Seaplane services will soon complement these efforts, positioning Kerala as a well-connected destination through a robust network of transportation channels—including waterways, highways, helicopters, and now, seaplanes. These initiatives underscore our commitment to making Kerala a tourism-friendly state with unmatched connectivity," Shri Riyas added.

Switzerland-based private company and SpiceJet are the service operators of 'de Havilland Canada,' which lands in Kerala after the trial services conducted in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Prior to the launch, a high-level inspection was held under the supervision of officials of Cochin Port Trust, Indian Navy and the seaplane. A feasibility survey and hydrographic survey were also completed ahead of the launch.



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Tourism Secretary Shri K Biju said seaplane service will facilitate tourists to visit more destinations in a short span of time. He added that it can be popularized through campaigns in foreign countries to increase the footfall of visitors to state.

According to Tourism Director Smt. Sikha Surendran, seaplane service is expected to contribute to the growth of domestic tourism as well as tourists can visit even remote areas where waterways are the major mode of transportation.

The seaplane project is aimed at amplifying the connectivity of the four airports as well as the waterdromes. The project offers a lot of prospects to Kerala's tourism sector due to the presence of abundant water bodies. Apart from Bolgatty and Mattupetty, setting up of waterdromes is under consideration in Kovalam, Ashtamudi, Punnamada, Kumarakom, Vembanad, Malambuzha and Bekal.

A seaplane is a powered fixed-wing aircraft capable of taking off and landing on water. Passengers can board the seaplane from the waterdromes lying above the water surface. There are commonly 9, 15, 20 and 30-seater seaplanes available for service.

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