

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding a Cultural, Heritage, Pilgrim and Natural Tourism Circuit based in Thrissur.

**HON. CHAIRPERSON:** You may speak in Malayalam as you have taken permission for that but please stick to the words written in the paper.

**\*SHRI T. N. PRATHAPAN (THRISSUR):** Thrissur Lok Sabha constituency which I am representing in the Lok Sabha is popularly known as the cultural capital of Kerala owing to its rich cultural, natural and spiritual heritage. Located at the centre of Kerala, lying between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea, my Parliamentary Constituency is marked with a number of tourist and cultural landmarks.

The unique cultural landscape of Thrissur has been enriched with the presence of all major religions. The famous Guruvayur Srikrishna Temple, Vadakkumnathan Temple and Kudalmanickyam Temple, which is the lone temple dedicated to Lord Bharatha in South India, are being frequently visited by the devotees. The first mosque in India, was built at Cheraman in Kodungallore and the St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, Palayur, is one of the oldest churches in India.

The religious centres have incredibly produced cultural and tourist heritages over time. The famous Thrissur Pooram, the annual temple festival at the Vadakkumnathan Temple is a world-famous cultural event. 'Boun Nathale', the Christmas-New Year celebration of Thrissur has been included in the Asia Book of Records. Like this, every village or areas has a unique cultural manifestation and celebration which gain huge attraction of tourists. The traditional temple music art forms

flourished in local villages like Peruvanam. Kerala Kalamandalam at Cheruthuruthi is the focus point of learning and performing both sacred and secular performances. Modern art forms and literature have been receiving patronage from institutions like Sahitya Academy, Lalita Kala Academy and Sangeeta Nataka Academy situated at the town head quarter. Besides this, the place is also credited with several natural wonders like Athirappilly and Vazhachal waterfalls. The pristine natural settings at the wildlife sanctuaries at Peechi and Chimminy surrounded by the beautiful dams and the nature gifted beaches scattered at the Western shores of Arabian Sea attract a lot of tourists every year. And the Thrissur Kole wetlands and renowned for its biodiversity and geographical uniqueness. It attracts scientists, scholars and tourist as well. Considering these facts, I would request the Government to implement a tourism circuit connecting all these cultural, spiritual and natural landscapes in Thrissur to boost tourism. The lack of proper connectivity among the destinations is a great hurdle for a better tourist movement. Creating a tourist circuit by developing basic infrastructures and connectivity is highly necessary to advance the tourism sector.

**HON. CHAIRPERSON:** Let me say this. Only the written statement will go on the record. Be careful about that.