

KERALA

Muziris site will give boost to tourism: Isaac

STAFF REPORTER

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Minister witnesses presentation on the heritage site

At least 2 lakh school children, scholars and tourists are expected to visit the Muziris heritage conservation site each year. "Our plan is to convert the locale into a centre of education," the Minister for Finance Thomas Isaac has said.

He was speaking after a presentation on the Muziris heritage site, located off Paravur and Kodungalloor, at the ongoing Kerala Travel Mart here on Saturday. "The Muziris conservation project will contribute to economic growth and also usher in a new wave of development in the State's tourism sector. It will also benefit members of the local community. Different government departments will have to pool in their mite for the initiative."

India Tourism's Joint Secretary Anand Kumar said that the Centre has promised Rs 46 crore for the project, which is the biggest assistance extended so far by India Tourism. "History will come alive here and the world is waiting to revisit Muziris."

Original setting

Making the presentation, architect and the chief project consultant of the Muziris heritage site, Benny Kuriakose, said that the original setting of the site would be preserved as it is.

"As of now, not even 100 tourists come, despite the area being home to the first mosque, synagogue and church in India. Seventy-eight people from the area have been appointed to collect archival items from people. Roads, waterways and drains will be cleaned."

"Since Muziris is well connected to water bodies, boats will link the different excavation sites. For this, canals are being deepened and boat jetties built. We will also develop pedestrian and bicycle paths. Many conventional tourism amenities found in many other locales will not be there in Muziris, so that the area's heritage value is preserved. Interactive museums will be established and old markets and shops in the locale renovated," Mr Kuriakose said, adding that Kerala has not yet marketed its history, architecture and intangible heritage.

Speaking on the occasion, Jose Dominic, MD and CEO of cghearth, said tourism is not just for tourists. "It is a vehicle to provide livelihood to the community."