

# Infrastructure facilities at historical tourist destinations will be ensured : Minister of State for Culture, Dr. Mahesh Sharma

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The Minister of State for Culture (Indep. Charge) Dr. K. Mahesh Sharma said that steps will be taken to ensure infrastructure facilities at the historic tourist destinations of Kerala under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). In a discussion with officials of Archaeological Survey of India, Thrissur circle in Kottayam today he assured that the construction of toilet blocks in the 7 monuments/sites in the state will be taken as part of up-gradation of tourist amenities to encourage historical tourism network.

The Minister of State said that the Centre will consider the demand for re-notification of temple monuments and wall paintings of the Archaeological Survey of India to ensure its full protection and maintenance. The Archaeological Survey of India has demanded a re-notification of the memorials, including the Mattancherry palace to avoid a dispute with Kerala Devaswom Board.

Dr. Mahesh Sharma said that the issue of notifications to take over the Janardhana temple at Panamaram in Wayanad will be taken up with the State government. The Archaeological Survey of India had been demanding this since 2008.

The Minister also said that the proposal for introduction of entry fee at historic monuments of Thrissur Circle viz. St. Angelo Fort Kannur, Palakkad Fort and Vattakottai Fort in Tamil Nadu is under consideration. He also informed that the issue of protection of various institutions under the State Government which is functioning at Palakkad Fort premises will be taken up with the State Government. Dr. Sharma said the recommendation of the Archaeological Survey of India to increase the current entrée fee of Rs. 5 for foreign tourists in Mattanchery palace is also under consideration.

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