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Muziris project to herald heritage tourism

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THRISSUR: The first phase of the Muziris heritage project will be inaugurated by Tourism Minister Kodyeri Balakrishnan at Kodungalloor on Saturday. At the inaugural function, project consultant Benny Kuriakose will elaborate the conservation development plan for the Muziris heritage site. The inaugural function will be followed by a plenary session in which representatives of the local bodies coming under the project area will present their views on the various aspects of the project.

On Sunday, experts will elaborate on the heritage and tourism potentials of the project and its historical significance, besides presenting the road map of the project.

According to the district administration and the Tourism Department, the project that is aimed at restoring and conserving Muziris, the present-day Kodungalloor, will open up the socio-cultural and religious imprints of a glorious period in the history of the State to the tourists as well as the natives.

The project is part of the 'tourism heritage circuit', being developed by Kerala Tourism in association with the Central Government. Muziris was an active port in 1st century BC, though it is unknown when the city-port was established.

The Indo-Greek and Indo-Roman-Egyptian trade channels were instituted by the merchants of Muziris, dealing in metals, spices, gemstones and textiles.

They began trading with the Jews, Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, Chinese and the British since the 1st century. The archaeological and historical data on Muziris provides evidence to show that it was a veritable business and cultural centre, with far-reaching international associations.

The Kerala Council for Historical Research (KCHR) carried out excavations at the site in 2007, 2008 and 2009.

The project would seek to have a holistic approach to tourism, strengthening the economy and boosting the progress of the area in the process.

The aim is to see the monuments in totality, not in isolation, and design in a manner that involves the local communities and integrates the various proposals involved in the other developmental activities.

It would lend itself to bringing back memories of the past through conservation restoration, study of history, environmental projects, research, development of craft and art forms, occupations and other community activities.