

[Karnataka](#) - [Hassan](#)

Take up tourism-related business ventures: official

Staff Correspondent

Hotel to come up in Belur at a cost of

Rs. 10 crore

Hassan best suited for tourism as it is in Malnad

HASSAN: Tourism Secretary I.M. Vittalamurthy has said that India is rich in cultural as well as archaeological heritage, but hardly any efforts have been made to exploit its potential.

Mr. Vittalamurthy was speaking in connection with the Hassan District Tourism Conclave in Hassan on Saturday and said countries such as Malaysia and Singapore get 60 per cent of their revenue from tourism. They were small countries with fewer tourist hotspots, but still make an effort to explore them. He said Karnataka had rich tourist potential, but was never used to its advantage.

The tourism and hospitality sector in India stood third in terms of providing employment, he said, and added that if tourism was to be developed, the people should consider take up interesting tourism-related business ventures. For women, it provided employment by way of travel agencies and home stay facilities. He suggested that the zilla panchayat provide infrastructure to improve road connectivity to tourist centres. He said that in Belur, a hotel would come up at a cost of Rs. 10 crore. He advised the Deputy Commissioner to have land acquired for the purpose.

Director of Tourism C. Somasekhar said tourism opportunities could be explored, enhanced and enriched in Hassan district, as it was best suited for development because of its presence in the heart of Malnad.

The Hoysala architecture provided an excellent insight into history, while many parts of the district were well landscaped. The temple of Hoysaleswara was another attraction for tourists.

Earlier zilla panchayat president C.N. Balakrishna inaugurated the conclave and sought development of Ramanathapura, Janivara and Nuggi Halli areas in the district. Delivering a lecture on "India's first heritage passport programme," Jyoti Hosagrahar, Adviser to the United Nations Education Social and Cultural Organisation and Adjunct Associate Professor at Columbia University, said a large number of tourists visited Hassan and suggested that the Tourism Department plan a five-day tour of the district for tourists.

She described Belur as multi-religious place and that the first Kannada inscription was found near there.

‘Keep old homes’

She asked residents not to demolish their old houses and convert them into concrete ones instead. They could be used for home stay facility, she added. M.B. Balachandar, Director, Institute of Hotel Management, Bangalore, spoke on tourism and hospitality education and said that cottage industry would be started in Belur and Dharwad.

A hotel management institute would be started in Belgaum where three-year training would be provided to professionals.

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