Kerala Piravi: 70 years of Kerala – CM V.D. Satheesan inaugurates 'Festival of Kerala 2026' in Thiruvananthapuram

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News

On 1 Nov 1956 the Malayalam-speaking State of Kerala was formed by uniting Travancore-Cochin, the Malabar district of Madras State and the Kasaragod taluk of South Canara district. Marking 70 years, CM V.D. Satheesan inaugurates the State-level 'Festival of Kerala 2026' at Nishagandhi Auditorium, Thiruvananthapuram, on Kerala Piravi day, 1 Nov 2026. Events showcasing Kerala's arts, culture, tourism and investment potential are also planned in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Kolkata. Since August 2026 the State's official name is 'Keralam'.

Key facts

Formation	1 Nov 1956 – Travancore-Cochin + Malabar district + Kasaragod taluk
2026 event	70 years; 'Festival of Kerala 2026' – Nishagandhi Auditorium, Thiruvananthapuram; CM V.D. Satheesan
Travancore-Cochin	Merged 1 July 1949; Rajpramukh – Chithira Thirunal Balarama Varma; capital Thiruvananthapuram
First government	5 Apr 1957 – Communist government under E.M.S. Namboodiripad; dismissed under Article 356 in 1959

Name	Kerala (Alteration of Name) Act 2026 – passed by Parliament in Aug 2026; official name 'Keralam'
To Madras State	Thovalai, Agastheeswaram, Kalkulam, Vilavancode taluks (Kanyakumari district) and part of Shenkottai taluk

Background

- History: the 'Aikya Keralam' (United Kerala) movement sought to unite Malayalam-speaking areas. In 1949 the princely states of Travancore and Cochin merged as 'Thiru-Kochi'; Malabar was a district of Madras Presidency (later Madras State). The Laccadive and Minicoy islands were separated from Malabar and became a Union Territory in 1956.
- Polity: the 1957 government led by E.M.S. Namboodiripad was one of the world's first elected Communist governments; land reforms and the Education Bill were key. It was dismissed under Article 356 in July 1959.
- Culture: Malayalam got classical-language status in 2013. State animal – elephant; State bird – Great Hornbill; State flower – golden shower (kanikkonna).

Tamil Nadu link: in 1956 the Tamil-speaking Thovalai, Agastheeswaram, Kalkulam and Vilavancode taluks of Travancore-Cochin joined Madras State as Kanyakumari district; the Tamil area of Shenkottai taluk (Quilon district) joined Tirunelveli district (now in Tenkasi district, formed 2019). In turn, Madras State's Malabar district went to Kerala. Festival of Kerala 2026 events are also planned in Chennai.

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