

Stranded British fighter jet becomes unlikely tourism mascot in India

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Dhaka: A British F-35 fighter jet that made an emergency landing in Kerala last month has unexpectedly become a viral symbol for Indian tourism.

The jet, grounded at Thiruvananthapuram airport since June 14, has been featured in a light-hearted AI-generated image shared by Kerala's tourism department.

Surrounded by coconut trees, the jet is seen giving Kerala five stars and declaring, "I don't want to leave. Definitely recommend." The humorous post was originally created by satire site The Fauxy and quickly gained attention online.

Kerala Tourism Secretary Biju K described the post as "creative and fun," calling it one of their most eye-catching campaigns yet. Tourism

branding agency Stark Communications added that the state's promotional efforts have increasingly shifted beyond traditional government messaging.

Known as "God's own country," Kerala remains a top destination for domestic and international travelers, attracting over 22 million visitors last year with its beaches, backwaters, festivals, and cuisine.

The Indian Air Force is assisting in the aircraft's repair and return. The UK has accepted an offer to move the jet to a nearby maintenance facility, with British engineering teams expected to arrive soon.

A Royal Air Force crew is already on site, working alongside Indian personnel, according to UK Defense Minister Luke Pollard. The Royal Navy has yet to comment on the situation.

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