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## **ANTHROPOLOGY SNIPPET-417**

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## Kerala: 'En Uru' to showcase traditional tribal knowledge



KOZHIKODE 'En Uru', the first tribal heritage village in the state, which is intended to provide a permanent platform to showcase the diverse tribal traditional knowledge and heritage as well as enhance livelihood options to the tribal communities, was inaugurated at Lakkidi in Wayanad on Wednesday.

The buildings constructed for the first phase of the heritage village was inaugurated by A K Balan, minister for welfare of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes & backward classes, via videoconferencing. The Rs 10-crore project is being set up jointly by the scheduled tribes development department and state

tourism department in 25 acres near Lakkidi.

Balan said that the heritage village will help showcase and preserve tribal indigenous knowledge as well as help the tribal communities sell their unique products to tourists and others without middlemen.

“Once the project is completed it will provide direct employment to 50 persons and indirect job opportunities to about 1,000 people,” he said.

The first phase of the heritage village comprises tribal market, tribal food outlets, facilitation centre and warehouse.

P S Shyam Prasad, CEO of En Uru, said that the tribal market will have 16 individual shops and three exhibition halls to facilitate live manufacture and sale of unique tribal products like medicinal plants, traditional agriculture produce, forest produce, handicrafts, indigenous tribal medicinal products, bamboo products, tribal paintings, sculptures, etc.

The second phase of the heritage village will have an open air theatre which will provide a venue to stage tribal art forms, tribal interpretation centre, heritage walkway and art and craft workshop for live production and sale of artifacts and other tribal products.

The project is being implemented with Rs 5.5 crore from the scheduled tribes development department, and tourism department has earmarked Rs 4.5 crore for the second phase of the project.

In his message, Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi said that despite growing challenges to their way of life, tribal communities are fighting to preserve their art, music, storytelling and culinary traditions. “However, ensuring the survival of this cultural heritage requires interventions that help generate sustainable livelihoods,” he said.