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## New lease of life for Alankuppam tourism project

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(From left) Muruganandam Mandjiny, India representative of Ille-et-Vilaine. Tascon-Mennetrier, Councilor, Vice-president of Ille-et-Vilaine, JOUHIER Marta - In charge of International Relations and Indian Affairs and Loïc Frémont, Executive Vice-President of French network 'Si tous les ports du monde' with Tourism Minister P.Rajavelu in Puducherry on Monday. \_Photo: T.Singaravelou

**Government says project could be completed by year-end**

The Alankuppam rural tourism project seems set to get a new lease of life after the government announced that the project could be completed by the end of the year through a tie-up with the administration of Ille-et-Vilaine in the Brittany region of France.

The Alankuppam rural circuit has been included among projects under the action plan for the 'Development of Tourism in Union Territory of Puducherry' which will be co-financed by the Government of Puducherry, Ille-et-Vilaine and the French Ministry of External Affairs under the 2nd call for Joint Indo-French Projects in Support of Decentralised Cooperation for the year 2015-16. An MoU was signed between the French region and the Puducherry government in 2012, with the total budget set at around Rs 96 lakh.

A delegation from Ille-et-Vilaine called on Tourism Minister P. Rajavelu at his chamber on Monday. The interaction was also attended by Tourism Secretary Mihir Vardhan and director R. Mounissamy.

Another project, the Chinna Veerampattinam Sustainable Eco-Tourism Project with a budget of Rs34 lakh, which has been funded by Ille-et-Vilaine, and is being carried out by the Puducherry-based NGO Intercultural Network for Development and Peace (INDP), in association with the Department of Tourism will be inaugurated on February 4.

### Delegation

The delegation consisted of Tascon-Mennetrier, Councilor, Vice-president of Ille-et-Vilaine, JOUHIER Marta - In charge of International Relations and Indian Affairs, Loïc Frémont, Executive Vice-President of French network 'Si tous les ports du monde' and Muruganandam Mandjiny, India representative of Ille-et-Vilaine.

Mr. Rajavelu said that the government would be seeking the expertise of the delegates in developing rural tourism here, and mentioned the Alankuppam rural tourism circuit project which is being planned in association with Mohanam Cultural Centre as one among these. Mr. Vardhan said this project would be completed by the end of this year.

Ms. Mennetrier said that while the Ille-et-Vilaine administration has worked on projects in India before, the ecotourism beach project is the first government-to-government pilot project in India. The ecotourism beach project will be participatory in nature, with the local community being in charge of its sustenance. Shops will be leased out to community members to sell handicrafts and other products.

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