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Golden Chariot launch put off by a week

Staff Reporter



— Photo: M.A. Sriram



A showpiece: The Golden Chariot will give a boost to Karnataka's tourism industry.

BANGALORE: The first commercial launch of Golden Chariot, Karnataka's luxury train, has been postponed by a week, from the scheduled launch on March 3 to March 10.

Similarly, the first trial run of the train that should have taken off from Yeshwanthpur Railway Station on Monday has been postponed to next Monday.

"We are still working with Railway officials about the route and timings for the train, which required some time," sources told *The Hindu*.

According to sources, the launch has been postponed keeping in view the annual ITB Berlin, one of the largest tourism trade fairs in the world, which will commence from March 5. "ITB Berlin will provide a good platform to market the train internationally and it also has the potential to generate business," sources added. Besides, authorities wanted to accommodate tour operators in the trial run, which would also be the familiarisation tour.

The ITB Berlin is among the biggest platforms bringing together tour operators, booking systems, carriers, hotels and all suppliers in tourism industry to showcase their products.

It is learnt that the luxury train would be marketed in the five-day trade fair at Berlin in which senior Tourism Department officials will

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participate. Besides,

The Luxury Trains, the marketing partner for Golden Chariot will also promote the train at the fair.

The Tourism Department officials are also planning road shows in Bangalore, Delhi, Mumbai and Goa before the commercial launch. Though the train is completely ready, workers are testing water connections, television connections and others, and the interior decorators would remain with the train till the completion of the trial run. "We want to ensure that every thing is ready and perfect by the commercial launch date," the sources pointed out.

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Sajivve Trehaan, the Chief Executive Officer of The Luxury Trains, said that bookings for the train had commenced keeping in mind the commercial launch on March 10.

"Response, so far, has been very good and there is a lot of interest about the train," he added.

He said more enquiries have been coming from the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland and the U.S.

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