

## **Art Walk: Little sculptors to mould tall sculptures in open space at Bekal Beach**

A first-of-its-kind initiative to mould public sculptures with a height of more than 10 feet by under-18 students has been started in the Bekal beach park.

Fourteen years old M.V. Chithraj and thirteen year old K.M. Revathy have begun the work of their sculptures. The little sculptors got this opportunity as part of the 'Art walk' project of BRDC being implemented at Bekal Beach. BRDC is a public sector corporation under the Department of Tourism Kerala. 'Art Walk', an innovative concept is focused to promote Cultural tourism and attract tourists to the destination. The 400-meter stretch Walk will have hundreds of paintings and sculptures from various segments of international as well as native artists.

The upper age limit of the student contestants for sculpting was 18 years. Twelve students have applied for the opportunity. Selection was made by a committee consisting of noted Art Historian KK Marar and Dr.T.G. Jyothilal former head of the fine arts faculty of Kaladi Sri Shankarachary University.

A child below the age 18 making a sculpture with a height of 10 feet is something unique, says Mr.Marar. Sculptures by children may carry a child-like appeal and this may even attract the grownups. One cannot belittle the work of children. World famous artists like Mathias have modeled their works after the creations of children.

"The concept of art walk being implemented by BRDC in the Bekal beach is a new path in beautification and development concepts of the tourism sector. The concept of art walk gets its totality with the creation of sculptures by children along with grown ups" Marar said.

This is the first time that students under the age of 18 getting a chance to make public sculptures, says Dr.T.G. Jyothi Lal. With the entry of these students who have already attained national attention, vast opportunities are being opened in the world of art.

“Taught only in the colleges of fine arts, sculpting is not a subject for learning at the schools or colleges of Kerala. The Art walk project of BRDC will enhance the knowledge on contemporary art and developing a new visual culture” Dr Jyothilal continued.

Chitra raja has been honored with the talent search award of the Government of India in the year 2014-15. Only six students were selected from about 12,000 applicants from various states of India. He was the only child sculptor selected for the National Culture Festival 2018. He has creations include sculptures like Parayi Petta Panthirukulam, mother and child, Gandhiji, Budhan, Pinarayi Vijayan, (the Chief Minister of Kerala) etc., This 10<sup>th</sup> standard student of Cheruvathoor technical Government High School started learning sculpting at the age of eight. Hailing from Thimiri, Cheruvathur, Chitra raj got first prize for work experience from sixth standard onwards.

Revathi, hailing from Orottachal Harijan colony is one of the five students of India who got Bharat Sankar Talent search Award in 2016 - 17. This 9<sup>th</sup> standard student of K.M.V.H S.S, Kodakkad, Kasaragod has made the sculptures of great souls like Sree Narayana Guru, Swami Vivekanandan and B.R.Ambedkar.

Chitra raj aims at a 15 ft high sculpture and Revathi a 10 ft one. Including helpers, there are seven students each of the two teams. There are 14 students, including eight boys and six girls.