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SEPTEMBER 2016



Tourism Travel and Hospitality Fastest Growing Segment In India



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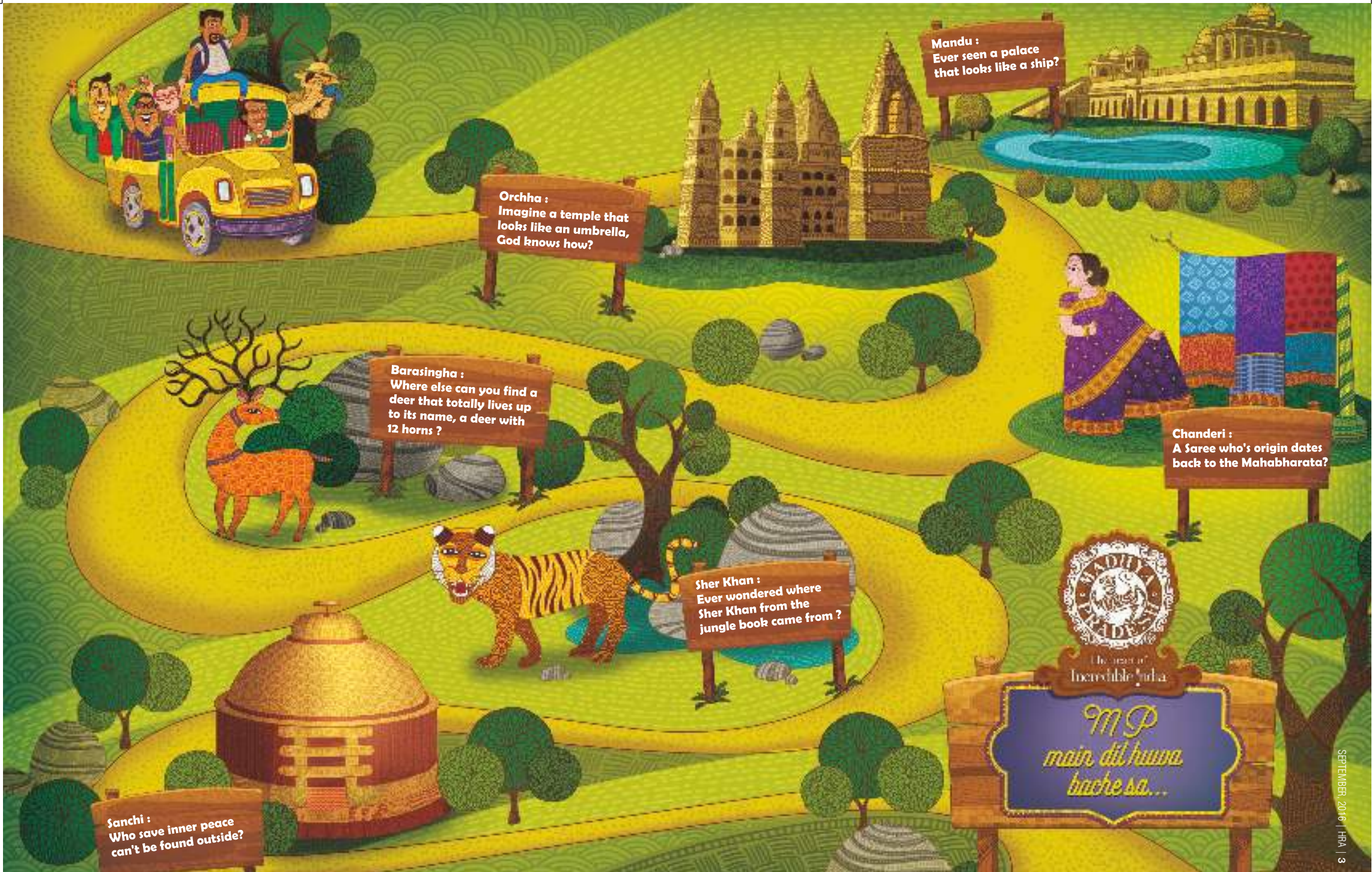
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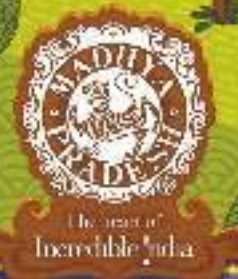
Orchha :
Imagine a temple that
looks like an umbrella,
God knows how?

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deer that totally lives up
to its name, a deer with
12 horns ?

Sher Khan :
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Sher Khan from the
jungle book came from ?

Mandu :
Ever seen a palace
that looks like a ship?

Chanderi :
A Saree who's origin dates
back to the Mahabharata?



MP
main dil huwa
bache sa...

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President's Note

Dear Members of the HRA (WI):

As I pen my thoughts to you, I realise that this will be the last President's Note from me. My term ends on the 30th of September this year. As I reflect back on the last two years, I realise that for me it has been a labour of love and commitment that has allowed us to come so far together. I want to thank each and every one of you from the bottom of my heart for making my Term so special. I hope that I was able to bring the best out of each one of our members and give my best to you; and that our Association benefitted from my presence.

FHRAI has announced BRAND INDIA as the theme of its 51st Annual Convention in Indore, it will showcase one of the biggest ever hospitality extravaganza.

Shri Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh; Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister of State For Tourism & Culture; Smt. Sumitra Mahajan, Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha; Shri Amitabh Kant, Chairman, Niti Ayog; are among others to address the inaugural Session of the Convention.

The Convention will encompass several sessions and panel discussions on subjects ranging from Innovative ways of Financing Hotels & Restaurants, Trends in Interior Design, Maximizing Food & Beverage Revenue using Technology and Deployment of Mobile Wallets & Digital Marketing.

The discussion forums will provide an excellent opportunity for the participants to engage with key policy makers, business people from allied industries and inspirational entrepreneurs.

We hope all our members have done their bookings already. If you have not, please do so now as apart from the Business sessions, we have planned some heart warming networking sessions with the best and brightest that our industry has to offer.

HRA NOW this month has focused on Tourism Travel and Hospitality fastest growing segment in India. The industry is flourishing because of both, cause and consequence of economic development. It has the potential to stimulate other sectors in the economy owing to cross-synergistic benefits and its backward and forward linkages. It is also one of the largest employment generators in the world.

The destination covered in HRA NOW this month is Chhattisgarh an Interesting Blend of Tribal Tourism, History Nature and Wildlife. It is a beautiful tourist destination and has an ample future for tourism in the coming years.

We look forward to your continued support, feedback and participation. ■

With Best Regards,
Bharat Malkani
President HRAWI

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**‘HRAWI Seminar on
"REVENUE MANAGEMENT IN HOTELS"
at- The Sun-N-Sand Hotel- Pune’**





FHRAI Announces BRAND INDIA As Theme Of Its 51st Annual Convention; Indore To Play Host; To Showcase One Of The Biggest Ever Hospitality Extravaganzas

Shri Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh; Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister of State For Tourism & Culture; Smt. Sumitra Mahajan, Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha; Shri Amitabh Kant, Chairman, Niti Ayog; Among Others To Address The Inaugural Session In One Of The World's Largest Congregation Of Hoteliers

The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), the 3rd largest hotel and restaurant association in the world, will pivot its 51st Annual Convention on 'Brand India'. In a prelude held in Mumbai, the association revealed its objectives and announced that the convention will be held between 22nd September and 24th September, 2016 at Indore, MP.

"The Convention will encompass several sessions and panel discussions on subjects ranging from Innovative ways of Financing Hotels & Restaurants, Trends in Interior Design, Maximizing Food & Beverage Revenue using Technology and Deployment of Mobile Wallets & Digital Marketing. The discussion forums will provide an excellent opportunity for the participants to engage with key policy makers, business people from allied industries and inspirational entrepreneurs," says Mr. Bharat Malkani, President, FHRAI.

Inspired by the Hon' Prime Minister's vision based on the 5 Ts, 'Talent, Tradition, Tourism, Trade and Technology' the 51st Convention will embody these as intrinsic part of the theme. One facet of the convention will draw emphasis on accommodating the increasing tourist arrivals in the country. The hospitality industry plans to take up the challenge to set up the required tourism infrastructure for this and complement the Government's efforts to make Brand India the beacon of growth in both products and services.

The present projection expects 10 million tourists to visit India by the year 2020. This can only be achieved if 180,000 guestrooms are added at an estimated cost of Rs. 200,000 crores to the existing supply of 120,000 guestrooms in all the classified categories from 1-star to 5-star. "This will require for the hotel industry to work inclusively with the Govt. and the convention will serve as a great platform for presenting to the



various stakeholders including tourism authorities, policy makers, investors and industry players the ways and means to make their valuable contributions," says Mr. Kamlesh Barot, Past President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI).

Besides the inaugural session, business sessions, networking sessions and entertainment programmes, the 3-day convention will concurrently run an exhibition featuring the latest products and technologies in hospitality. The concluding day will also feature a conferring of FHRAI Awards – the most prestigious hospitality awards in India. The award ceremony will be participated by Shri Surendra Patwa, State Minister, Tourism and Culture, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Digvijay Singh, National General Secretary, Indian National Congress and Shri Vinod Zutshi, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, among others

"I am delighted to know that Indore is hosting the 51st FHRAI convention," said Shri Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh in a written message to FHRAI. The Governor of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Ram Naresh Yadav, also expressed his pleasure and conveyed his welcome to the delegates and wished success to the convention. "This event will serve as an opportune platform to bring together key stakeholders for insightful deliberations on innovative strategies which can support the buoyant growth trajectory of India's tourism sector," wrote Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister of State, Tourism & Culture.

"It's a delightful moment for the Federation, our members and Indian hospitality industry. The annual convention has evolved as the most important event for an hotelier over the last 51 years. Our impetus this year will be 'Brand India' which will focus on the country's diverse tourism portfolio that includes adventure, wellness, sports, MICE, eco-tourism, film, rural and religious tourism among others. The convention in Indore will be the single largest platform for hundreds of entrepreneurs to explore business opportunities, exchange ideas and strengthen business ties," concludes Mr Malkani ■

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Tourism Travel and Hospitality Fastest Growing Segment In India

India is the most diverse place in the world. It has different Kaleidoscope of landscapes, spectacular historical sites and cities, misty mountains, varied and rich cultures, and festivals. Ancient and modern India both leaves a lasting impression. Hospitality is an old tradition of India. From spectacular Himalayas and, beautiful beaches, deserts of Rajasthan and lush forests, to interesting villages and bustling cities, India creates opportunities for every individual

preferences. These days for lodging in India, country offers different alternatives, from comfortable home stays and tribal huts to beautiful heritage mansions and spectacular maharaja palaces, there are many cultures, languages, life styles, and cuisines. This diversity is reflected in many forms of accommodation available in India, ranging from the simple guest houses and government bungalows to the luxurious royal palaces and five star hotels.

The Indian tourism and hospitality industry has emerged as one of the key drivers of growth among the services sector in India. The second-largest sub-segment of the services sector

comprising trade, repair services, hotels and restaurants contributed nearly US\$ 295.7 billion or 19.2 per cent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2015-16, while growing at 8.9 per cent year-on-year. Tourism in India has significant potential considering the rich cultural and historical heritage, variety in ecology, terrains and places of natural beauty spread across the country. Tourism is also a potentially large employment generator besides being a significant source of foreign exchange for the country.

The industry is expected to generate 13.45 million jobs across sub-segments such as Restaurants (10.49 million jobs), Hotels (2.3 million jobs) and Travel Agents/Tour Operators (0.66 million). The Ministry of Tourism plans to help the industry meet the increasing demand of skilled and trained manpower by providing hospitality education to students as well as certifying and upgrading skills of existing service providers.

India has moved up 13 positions to 52nd rank from 65th in Tourism Travel and Hospitality competitive index. Tourism Australia expects Indian tourist's arrivals in Australia to increase



12 per cent year-on-year to reach 245,000 visitors during FY 2015-16, thus making India the eighth largest source market for tourism in Australia.

Market Size

India's rising middle class and increasing disposable incomes has continued to support the growth of domestic and outbound tourism. Total outbound trips increased by 8.7 per cent to 19.9 million in 2015. Inbound tourist volume grew at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 6.8 per cent during 2010-15.

The number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) has grown at a CAGR of 3.7 per cent to 5.29 lakh year-on-year in May 2016. Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) during the month of May 2016 grew at a rate of 8.2 per cent year-on-year to Rs 10,285 crore (US\$ 1.52 billion).

The number of tourists arriving on e-Tourist Visa during June 2016 reached a total of 36,982 tourists registering a year-on-year growth of 137.7 per cent.

Online hotel bookings in India are expected to double by 2016/17 due to the increasing penetration of the internet and smart phones.



Investments

The tourism and hospitality sector is among the top 10 sectors in India to attract the highest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). During the period April 2000-March 2016, the Tourism Travel and Hospitality sector attracted around US\$ 9.23 billion of FDI, according to the data released by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).

With the rise in the number of global tourists and realising India's potential, many companies have invested in the tourism and hospitality sector. Some of

the recent investments in this sector are as follows:

- Marriott International Inc, the US-based hotel chain, is now looking for expanding its operations in North India, including prominent cities in Uttar Pradesh like Kanpur, Varanasi and Agra.
- Steigenberger Hotels, a German luxury hotel company, and MBD Group, a Delhi-based firm which runs 5-star Radisson Hotels in Noida and Ludhiana, have formed a joint venture to build five luxury hotels and manage another 15 luxury hotels in India by 2030.
- Keys Hotels, a premium brand of Berggruen Hotels, plans to



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launch three new hotels in India at Vishakhapatnam, Calicut and Jaipur, and further add up to 10 Keys Hotels in the country by the end of FY 2017.

- Stayzilla, a budget hotels and homestays aggregator, has raised over US\$ 13 million in Series C round of funding from Matrix Partners and Nexus Ventures, which will be used to improve product, technology and marketing initiatives for its alternate stay business.
- Travel Tripper, a US-based hotel technology firm, has entered the Indian market by setting up its second global delivery centre outside the US in Hyderabad, which will serve as a development and client service centre for the company's worldwide operations.
- Marriott International Incorporation, the global diversified hospitality industry major, has launched its first dual branded hotel in India, called the Courtyard and Fairfield, in Bengaluru, Karnataka with an investment of Rs 300 crore (US\$ 44.47 million) and thus increasing the number of Marriott hotels in India to 31.
- Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has partnered with OYO Rooms, India's largest branded network of hotels, to provide standardized accommodation options to train travellers through its convenient booking platform.
- Ctrip.com, China's largest travel portal, has bought a stake in India's largest travel portal MakeMyTrip for US\$ 180 million via convertible bonds, which allows Ctrip to increase its share in MakeMyTrip up to 26.6 per cent.
- Global investment banking major Goldman Sachs has invested Rs 441 crore (US\$ 65.37 million) to acquire an equity stake in Gurgaon-based hotel development and investment start-up SAMHI Hotels which will help fund SAMHI's expansion plans.
- Fairfax-owned Thomas Cook has acquired Swiss tour operator Kuoni Group's business in India and Hong Kong for about Rs 535 crore (US\$ 79.31 million) in order to scale up inbound tour business.
- US-based Vantage Hospitality Group has signed a franchise agreement with India-based Miraya Hotel Management to establish its mid-market brands in the country.
- Thai firm Onyx Hospitality and Kingsbridge India hotel asset management firm have set up a joint venture (JV) to open seven hotels in the country by 2018 for which the JV will raise US\$ 100 million.
- ITC is planning to invest about Rs 9,000 crore (US\$ 1.33 billion) in the next three to four years to expand its hotel portfolio to 150 hotels. ITC will launch five other hotels - in Mahabalipuram, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Colombo - by 2018.
- Goldman Sachs, New-York based multinational investment banking fund, has invested Rs 255 crore (US\$ 37.8 million) in Vatika Hotels.
- Japanese conglomerate SoftBank will lead the Rs 630 crore (US\$ 93.4 million) funding round in Gurgaon based OYO Rooms.
- MakeMyTrip will acquire the travel planning website Mygola and its assets for an undisclosed sum, and will together look to focus on innovating the online travel segment.

Government Initiatives

The tourism policy of the government focused at development of integrated tourism circuits, faster implementation of tourism projects, building of special capacity in the hospitality sector and new marketing strategies. Hotels have a major share when we talk about the hospitality services and India made a special place in the international world of hospitality. The Indian government has realized the country's potential in the tourism industry and has taken several steps to make India a global tourism hub. Some of the major initiatives taken by the Government of India to give a boost to the Tourism Travel and Hospitality sector of India are as follows:

- The Ministry of Tourism plans to revise its guidelines to exempt homestays from service tax or commercial levies and make their licensing process online, which is expected to encourage people to offer homestays to tourists.
- ITC Ltd has renewed its 40-year partnership with Starwood Hotels & Resorts to operate 11 luxury hotels in India, and three more luxury hotels in Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Kolkata which will be completed in the next four years, thus increasing the total number of hotels to 15.
- The e-Tourist Visa (e-TV) scheme has been extended to 37 more countries thereby taking the total count of countries under the scheme to 150 countries.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Tourism of India and the Ministry of Trade Industry and Tourism of Colombia in order to boost cooperation in the field of tourism between the two countries.
- The Central Government has given its approval for signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Cambodia for cooperation in the field of tourism with a view to promote bilateral tourism between the two countries.
- Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned Rs 844.96 crore (US\$ 125.26 million) to States and Union Territories for developing tourism destinations and circuits during FY 2014-15, which includes projects relating to Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits (PIDDC), Human Resource Development (HRD), Fairs and Festivals & Rural Tourism.
- The Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY) action plans for eight missions cities including Varanasi, Mathura, Ajmer, Dwaraka, Badami, Vellankini, Warangal and Amaravati have been approved by HRIDAY

National Empowered Committee for a total cost of Rs 431 crore (US\$ 63.89 million).

- Government of India plans to cover 150 countries under e-visa scheme by the end of the year besides opening an airport in the NCR region in order to ease the pressure on Delhi airport.
- Under 'Project Mausam' the Government of India has proposed to establish cross cultural linkages and to revive historic maritime cultural and economic ties with 39 Indian Ocean countries.

Road Ahead

The Indian economy continues to integrate with the world economy. Therefore, the advantages of conducting business with and in India are enormous. This has resulted in maneuvering of variety of jobs to the shores of India, bringing in its wake transit travelers, business travelers, business meets and holiday seekers. India is the ninth largest civil aviation market in the world in 2014. The sector is

forecasted to be the third largest aviation market globally by 2020. India's aviation market catered to 118 million domestic and 44 million international passengers in 2014. Over the next decade the market could reach 338 million domestic and 85 million international passengers

Types of tourists in India have grown over the years. Tourists can also be classified based on their purpose of visit

Business tourists

This segment typically comprises those travelling for meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE); however, this definition is not conclusive and includes any tourist on a visit to India for business purposes. Business tourism is viewed as an important market in the country and one of the high-yielding sectors of the tourism industry.

Leisure tourists

Leisure tourism comprises trips for pleasure. It includes holidays within the country or abroad. Visiting friends and relatives and travel for a variety of reasons such as health and fitness, sports, education, and culture also come under the purview of leisure trips. In the past few years, opportunities in India for leisure tourism have emerged strongly owing to the following factors: changing consumption pattern of Indian customers, burgeoning Indian middle class population, and geographical diversity.

Tourists can also be classified into domestic and foreign tourists based on their nationality. Furthermore, depending on the duration, tourism can be classified into picnic, excursion, holidays, weekend getaways, etc.

Medical tourism

Medical tourism also known as health tourism has emerged as one of the important segments of the tourism industry. The term

has been coined by travel agencies and the mass media to describe the rapidly-growing practice of travelling across international borders for healthcare. Travelers typically seek services such as elective procedures as well as complex specialized surgeries such as joint replacement (knee/hip), cardiac, dental, and cosmetic surgeries. Psychiatry, alternative treatments, and convalescent care are also available. Several factors have contributed to growth in medical tourism worldwide.

Significant reduction in travel costs worldwide has made travel to other countries for medical treatments more affordable. This has also boosted industry growth.

High growth of world-class medical treatments in developing countries

Healthcare facilities in many developing countries have improved significantly in recent years and their standards of healthcare are now on par with that in the US or Western Europe.

Medical tourism has done exceptionally well in India and the number of medical tourists coming into the country is increasing. Rising healthcare costs in the developed economies, especially the US and the UK, is forcing patients from the region to look for cost-effective and alternative forms of treatment. India, with its pool of highly trained and specialized doctors, good healthcare infrastructure facilities, relatively lower cost of treatment and availability of alternative forms of treatment such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Siddha, and Naturopathy is seeing strong growth in medical tourism.

Medical tourism is promoted through suitable packaging of identified best hospitals and price banding as per treatment requirements. The medical costs in India are much lower at around 25% of the costs in the European and US markets. Medical tourism has grown swiftly despite the economic slowdown. The industry is still at a nascent stage and holds immense potential.

The key benefits of medical treatment and medical tourism in India are:

- World-class treatment at fraction of the cost in western countries
- Patients from more than 55 countries availing treatment in India
- Medical technology, equipment, facilities and healthcare infrastructure in India at par with international standards
- The Indian doctors recognized among the best globally.

Various medical treatments that can be availed in India include knee replacement, hip replacement, cosmetic surgery, dental treatment, and cardiac care.

The government is also taking several measures to promote medical tourism in the country. This includes issuance of "Medical Visa" for patients and their attendants coming to India for treatment. It has also requested the state governments to promote healthcare packages. Under the Market Development

Assistance Scheme, financial assistance would be provided to medical tourism service providers (MTSP), i.e. accredited hospitals and medical tourism facilitators (travel agents and tour operators approved by the Ministry of Tourism and engaged in medical tourism).



Wellness tourism

Wellness tourism is regarded as a sub-segment of medical tourism. Here, the primary purpose is achieving, promoting or maintaining good health and a sense of well-being. India with widespread presence of Ayurveda, Yoga, Siddha, and Naturopathy, complemented by its spiritual philosophy, is a well-known wellness destination. Wellness tourism includes Ayurveda therapies, Spa visits, Yoga and Meditation. The government is promoting this form of tourism with publicity and promotional activities.

Adventure tourism

Travel for the aim of exploration or travel to remote, exotic and possibly hostile areas is known as adventure tourism. With tourists looking for different options, adventure tourism is recording healthy growth. Adventure tourism refers to performance of acts, which require significant efforts and some degree of risk or physical danger. The activities include mountaineering, trekking, bungee jumping, mountain biking, river rafting, and rock climbing.

India with its diverse topography and climate offers tremendous scope for adventure tourism. The mountain regions offer lot of scope for mountaineering, rock climbing, trekking, skiing, skating, mount biking and safaris; rushing rivers provide opportunities for river rafting, canoeing and kayaking; and oceans provide tremendous opportunity for diving and snorkeling.

The government is undertaking measures such as financial assistance to governments of states and union territory for development of adventure tourism destinations. It has also provided financial assistance for organising mountain biking expedition. The Ministry of Defense has given permission for opening of 104 additional peaks in Leh area of Jammu & Kashmir for adventure tourism, while customs duty on inflatable rafts, snow-skis, sail boards and other water sports equipment has been exempted.

Heritage tourism

Heritage tourism is defined as "travel undertaken to explore and experience places, activities, and artifacts that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present". It is oriented toward cultural heritage of the tourist location.

It involves visiting historical or industrial sites, religious travel or pilgrimages. India is well known for its rich heritage and ancient culture. The country's rich heritage is amply reflected in the various temples, majestic forts, pleasure gardens, religious monuments, museums, art galleries and urban and rural sites which are citadels of civilization. All

these structures form the products of heritage tourism.

Ecotourism

Ecotourism, also known as ecological tourism, is travel to natural areas to appreciate the cultural and natural history of the environment, while not disturbing the integrity of the ecosystem and creating economic opportunities that make conservation and protection of natural resources advantageous to local people. It involves travel to destinations where flora, fauna and cultural heritage are primary attractions. Ecotourism also minimises wastage and the environmental impact through sensitised tourists. It can be one of the medium to preserve local culture, flora and fauna and other natural resources.

India, with its great geographical diversity, offers several eco-tourism destinations. It is home to a wealth of ecosystems which are well protected and preserved. These include:

- Biosphere reserves
- Mangroves
- Coral reefs
- Deserts
- Mountains and forests
- Flora and fauna
- Seas, lakes and rivers
- Caves

The basic principles to be followed in ecotourism are:

- Minimise the impact
- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation
- Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people
- Raise sensitivity to political, environmental, and social climate of the host country
- Support international human rights and labour agreements.

A few places for ecotourism include the Himalayan region, Kerala, North East India, Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands. Thenmala in Kerala is the first planned ecotourism destination in India. Some most popular ecotourism locations in the country are Hrishikesh, Kerala and Puducherry.

Ecotourism consists of:

- Eco parks
- Eco places

- Eco fauna
- Eco flora
- Eco destinations
- Eco trivia
- Eco treks
- Eco adventures

Rural tourism

Rural tourism showcases rural life, art, culture and heritage of rural locations, benefitting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and locals for a more enriching tourism experience. Rural tourism is multi-faceted and may entail farm/agricultural tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, and ecotourism. Rural tourism has certain characteristics: it is experience oriented; locations are sparsely populated; it is predominantly in a natural environment; it meshes with seasonality and local events; and it is based on preservation of culture, heritage and traditions.

India's rural geographical and cultural diversity enables it to offer a wide range of tourism products and experiences. Increasing levels of awareness, growing interest in heritage and culture, improved accessibility to rural areas, and environmental consciousness are playing an important role in promoting rural tourism. This form holds immense potential in India, where more than 70% of the population resides in villages.

The Ministry of Tourism along with UNDP undertook the "Explore Rural India" Campaign, to give tourists a chance to experience life in rural India. It is one of the most successful tourism campaigns so far. During the "Visit India Year 2009" campaign, 15 rural tourism sites were selected as rural eco-holiday sites.

Wildlife tourism

Wildlife tourism, one of the fastest segments of tourism, involves travel to different locations to experience wild life in natural settings. Due to its varied topography and distinctive climatic conditions, India is endowed with various forms of flora and fauna and it has numerous species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and plants and animals.

To tap the potential of wildlife tourism, the government has launched some wildlife packages for travelers. Wildlife Tourism in India includes wildlife photography, bird watching, jungle safari, elephant safari, jeep safari,

jungle camping, ecotourism etc.

The country offers immense opportunities for wildlife tourism. The strong heritage of wildlife in India comprises more than 70 national parks and about 400 wildlife sanctuaries including bird sanctuaries. However, concrete steps by both the government and the private sector need to be taken to promote wildlife tourism. Taj Hotels & Resorts has a joint venture with Conservation Corporation Africa to provide wildlife enthusiasts, circuit tourists and high-end domestic travelers with fascinating wildlife experiences within India through an ecologically-sustainable model. In a bid to preserve the natural habitat, the Ministry of Tourism has launched an initiative, "Tigers: Our Natural Beauties".

MICE tourism

MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) tourism is also one of the fastest growing in the global tourism industry. It largely caters to business travelers, mostly corporates. It caters to various forms of business meetings, international conferences and conventions, events and exhibitions. Hong Kong, Malaysia and Dubai are the top destinations for MICE tourism. India is also present in this segment. This form of tourism combines annual business meetings and conferences with pleasurable events for delegates and attendants. India can be competitive with other MICE tourism destinations owing to its natural beauty, rich heritage and geographical diversity. One of the requisites for this form of tourism is world-class convention centers. The Ashok, New Delhi; Hyderabad International Convention Centre, Hyderabad; and Le Meridian, Cochin are forerunners in the Indian MICE tourism industry, facilitating domestic and International business meetings and conferences.

Tourism Travel and Hospitality is the fastest growing segment in India, it is also the largest service industry globally in terms of gross revenue and foreign exchange earnings. It is one of the largest employment generators in the world. It has been a major social phenomenon and is driven by social, religious, recreational, knowledge seeking and business interests and motivated by the human urge for new experience, adventure, education, and entertainment.

Tourism Travel and Hospitality industry is flourishing because of both, cause and consequence of economic development. It has the potential to stimulate other sectors in the economy owing to cross-synergistic benefits and its backward and forward linkages. ■



HYATT RAIPUR

A five star luxury hotel in Raipur

Hyatt Raipur is the first international luxury hotel with five star facilities in Raipur City. Hyatt Raipur enjoys a prime location in Labhandi area which is a key commercial and residential district.

Strategically located on National Highway 6, it is a premium business hotel with close proximity to Raipur's Swami Vivekananda Airport which is just 15 minutes away.

Hyatt Raipur offers 103 contemporary guestrooms including 4 luxury hotel suites measuring 27 sq m to 84 sq m, each with a work station and high-speed complimentary Internet connectivity.

Guests can choose to dine at Café Oriza, their all-day dining café or enjoy the comforts of a lounge-bar at The Bar. StayFit at Hyatt offers state-of-the-art fitness equipment. Offering over 10,000 sq ft of meeting and event space with a Ballroom measuring 4,740 sq ft which opens into a 5,500 plus sq ft terrace, Hyatt Raipur is the perfect choice to host conventions, business events and weddings. With a capacity of up to 600 guests in reception style, the Hyatt Ballroom can be used for weddings with elaborate décor, product launches and conferences of varying capacities.

ACCOMMODATION

Hyatt Raipur hotel offers 103 guestrooms and four luxury hotel suites, ranging in size from 27 sq m (290 sq ft) to 84 sq m (900 sq ft).

Standard -Hyatt King

Dark walnut decor plays stylishly against pastel hued walls in this 27.3- to 29.2-sqm guestroom that comes appointed with one king bed. Floor-to-ceiling windows grant lush views of the city and N.H.6 highway, while flamed black granite flooring and Biotique toiletries await in the bathroom. Modern amenities includes complimentary Internet, international TV stations and iPod docking station.

Deluxe -Hyatt Deluxe King

Enjoy a deluxe 32 to 35-sqm corner guestroom featuring

dark walnut decor against pastel hued walls, extensive storage space and a king bed. Floor-to-ceiling windows grant lush views of the city and N.H.6 highway, while flamed black granite flooring and Biotique toiletries await in the bathroom. Modern amenities includes complimentary wireless Internet, international TV stations, and iPod docking station.

Suite -Hyatt Suite

Dark walnut decor plays stylishly against pastel hued walls in this 45.1-sqm suite that comes appointed with one king



bed. Floor-to-ceiling windows grant lush views of the city and N.H.6 highway, while flamed black granite flooring and Biotique toiletries await in the bathroom.

FOOD & DINING

Hyatt Raipur has the best in quality food at their restaurants which are full time available for guest all year round, serving delicacies from a large menu.

Café Oriza

The Indian state of Chhattisgarh, the capital of which is Raipur, is revered as the 'rice bowl of central India'. Drawing



inspiration from ‘Oryza Sativa’, the scientific name for rice, Café Oriza has been aptly christened in the capital city of Raipur. Café Oriza, the hotel’s all-day dining restaurant, features international specialties and authentic Indian kebabs and curries prepared in an interactive show kitchen. The restaurant has both an à la carte selection, as well as a sumptuous buffet for breakfast, lunch and dinner. A smoking hot menu of delicious wood-fired pizza and the desert buffet is a must-try. The casual yet lively ambience with a panoramic city view through floor- to-ceiling glass window is accentuated by dramatic interiors which offer space for around 104 guests. Offering world class cuisine in a contemporary setting, Café Oriza has carved a niche for itself among the restaurants in

Raipur. Located within Café Oriza are Salon I and Salon II which serve as two separate private dining rooms for 12 and 24 people respectively. These are a perfect place to dine in a more intimate atmosphere. A real eye-catcher is the table in each of the private dining rooms, where guests enjoy family-style dishes and where communicative interaction is guaranteed.

The Bar

Located adjacent to Café Oriza and the banquet rooms, The Bar features a wide variety of whiskies and single malts, making it the perfect setting for a relaxed evening in a warm and inviting ambience. Explore the extensive beverage list which includes classical cocktails, beer and wine. The Bar



offers a lively ambience with a panoramic city view through floor-to-ceiling glass window creating an ideal place to get together for post-meeting drinks or prior to entertaining guests for dinner. To complement the beverages, the menu also offers a selection of all-time favourite dishes and innovative snacks.

MEETINGS & EVENTS

Meetings

Hyatt Raipur is set to take its place as one of the most sophisticated conference hotels in Raipur. With more than 930 sq m (10,000 sq ft) of meeting and event space, Hyatt Raipur offers the ultimate event experience. The Hyatt brand has long enjoyed a well-earned reputation for excellence in the field of banqueting and catering. A professional and attentive team oversee that every event is successful and that event needs meet guests' satisfaction. Their dedicated team of trained professionals will provide and maintain the highest standards of excellence and personalized service for delegates and organizers. The meeting and events spaces include the elegant 442 sq m (4,740 sq ft) Hyatt Ballroom with a clear ceiling height of 18 ft. In addition, Salon I and Salon II can be used as individual meeting rooms or as break-away rooms for conferences. Hyatt Raipur offers meeting aids and technical assistance which includes an impressive inventory of essential conferencing equipment and high speed Internet access, audio/video conferencing and state-of-the-art LED projectors.

Weddings

Looking for a wedding venue in Raipur-come celebrate

your special day and create memories that will last a lifetime at Hyatt Raipur. Hyatt Raipur is slated to be the preferred destination for an intimate or a lavish wedding. Whether one wish for a small and intimate affair or an extravagant setting, they will make your event memorable and most importantly, one-of-a-kind. Their team of specialists work closely with you and your families to develop a wedding that is uniquely yours, reflecting your personality and individual taste. They take pride in their ability to create the perfect experience, blending Indian touches with current international trends.

Events

At Hyatt Raipur every event is a special occasion and the team leaves no stone unturned to make it memorable whether





it is an intimate gathering or a gala celebration. Hyatt Raipur has strategically located functions spaces for both small and large events and an array of accommodation to suit every organizer's needs. Whether you are hosting a corporate event, a gala night or a product launch, they are committed to making every event memorable. Welcome cocktails, themed coffee



Hyatt Raipur one of the best luxury hotels in Raipur which takes care of guests with a personal touch.



breaks, working lunch for board meetings, a buffet spread for delegates are all available. Events are a showcase of you and your company, and their event experts will help you do just that. From customized menus, creating floral set-ups and handling logistics, they work with you and your team to personalize the event to the last detail. Whether your meeting or conference is for 12 people or 600, their function rooms including the pillar-free 4, 740 sq ft Hyatt Ballroom. This is an ideal venue to host product launches, themed events, fashion shows and gala nights. The Ballroom can be divided into two smaller venues and is supported by two additional meetings rooms.

Catering

Their food concepts turn your event or conference into a culinary experience. With variety of options inspire you with something that is individually customized to your needs and wishes. Their team of dedicated chefs works closely with you to bring a range of innovative and flexible catering options. The hotel offers a range of meeting packages and coffee breaks and has also created a range of set menus and buffets to suit any style of meeting or event.

Hyatt Raipur is a part of a mixed-use complex Magneto The Mall. The Mall houses a four screen state-of-the-art multiplex, lifestyle stores and a commercial office hub. Hyatt Raipur comes with a team of professional and passionate associates to deliver authentic hospitality making guest stay pleasant and memorable. The hotel is perfect for discerning travellers both on business trip or leisure. ■

A BOLD MOVE FOR TOMORROW

UNIFORMS UNLIMITED is celebrating on winning the Best Uniform Company-Hospitality at INDIA HOSPITALITY AWARDS held on 4th August 2016 at Novotel,Pune.

The award recognizes excellence in Uniform Design, Quality & Services. The judging panel had also praised the breadth of choice within the collection as well as its innovative use of fabrics & color.

Our Director Ms.Zia delightedly praised Team UU stating “This award is a wonderful achievement for Uniforms Unlimited. It is testament to the hard work and commitment shown by everyone involved with Team Uniforms Unlimited.”

“We put our clients first whilst providing exceptional design solutions and outstanding service management.”

“Success in these awards brings Uniforms Unlimited the recognition it deserves,”

“Together, We DO Grow and Prosper!” ”



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Expertise Challenges and Innovations of F&B Head



Mr. Parvez Sheikh - F&B Manager -Hotel Marine Plaza

Being in the industry for almost 25 years, my career started from a grass root level to a position which I hold today is just because of my temptation and love to my profession which give me a strength of attitude, pride, enjoyment and respect to my fellow colleagues and of course the biggest strength for me is my knowledge about my industry.

Having an experience from entry level as a trainee and successfully growing with each level has made me stronger and confident with a touch and feel of each level experience on pros and cons. When I see myself today in a position of F&B Head with experience of years and years with daily learning something new have made me mature to execute my well accepted decision and strategies towards my profile.

Today my expertise is not focused to one field, but I have a soft corner which will always remain towards F&B service since it was the stepping stones of my career. If anyone wants to know me then, I am an institution with multi skill ability of all the departments.

I enjoy minute to minute of my working hours in terms of learning something new, implementing standard and hunger for earning revenue to the company and training my people to gain knowledge and execute them. When result comes the phenomenon enjoyment in returns gives me happiness.

Being head of the F&B there are lot of challenges which needs to successfully encounter. These challenges are mainly categorized into operational, business and guest relations.

Taking this further the challenges in operations is attrition, less experience employees and training the staff who are weak and developing them.

Since the level of competition is high, to achieve the targets and make sure the profit and loss and GOP of the department is maintained. Toughest part is the competition pricing and marketing strategy to encounter competition and attract our guest and retain them.

In today's scenario guest relations is a key point to get

our regular guest back by incentivizing and offering services from start to end since our guest are more knowledgeable and cautious about pricing, experience and better options available to them in the market hence this becomes the important role of my position to handle and achieve.

Pressure of increasing sale also maintaining bottom line, increasing foot fall, changing concepts and involving in innovative and creative ideas last and not the least staff attrition has been encountered with best practices and experience of me.

The best way to strengthen team is to have one to one development program and informal session to know their difficulties and challenges. The best tool is to have a task done by team rather than individuals this helps the team to showcase their ability, adaptability, passion and commitment towards their duty which they need to deliver to their outlets. Few activities like get togethers, birthday celebrations, picnics and informal sessions has a share of pie to strengthen the team.

Being F&B Head my mantra is to enjoy work and filter as much pressure is there and encounter them with solutions and create the atmosphere of smooth operations with deadlines and maintain the standard. More so over to be patient and have perfect coordination and communications delivered for successful target oriented department.

Since F&B is a challenge oriented operation, ideas plays a very important role. To ease operations ideas like identifying potential staff and working on their strength, changing concepts, organizing festivals and promotions, implementing marketing strategy on daily basis and creating brand image



with social media are few ideas in a macro level. Further to this ideas to improve customer service is recognizing guest, recalling and after service feed backs are few path towards maintaining guest relationship and retaining them. Of course offers and discounts, referrals and personal care are few successful ideas which is running down the corner for hotel at micro level.

As the journey continuous from morning to evening from challenges to pressure my priority is based more towards achieving budget, maintain standards and follow ups, which are short term or long term. The decision to allocate the top priority based issues and low priority issues are depending on the deadline and the importance of the particular task.

Priority to maintain and sustain the footfall due to various options and competition available in the industry to stand out my restaurant the only thing that works is offering value added services and doing something different from smaller to bigger level. Few of them are customized menu, lower price menu, set menus, various beverage promotions. Customize take away menu for home delivery and tie up with marketing websites and mobile apps. Social media, in house offers & discounts, PR activities, promotions and festivals. Partnering with theater based programs and sports events are few creating good results.

Website marketing tie up with Zomato, Time out, Wow table, Near buy, Burrup, Little it, Evening Flavors, Easy dinners, are some of the reservation based websites which are contributing and helping to create a good reputations.

We are not planning to expand however we are enhancing our products by renovations and changing the concepts since it's a 20 year hotel and have a good bench mark and brand image in the vicinity. A few touch ups are important for changes however the philosophy of rational look is widely accepted by our guests.

When it comes to business in terms of contribution and utilization of F&B share in hotel like ours has a 50% share pie in terms of overall revenue of the hotels as compare to other vicinity hotels.

If we talk about food and beverage industry in our country the growth is going a way ahead due to international brands inflow with the quality, standard and best practices.

In my opinion the contribution of F&B industry in next 5 years will be remarkable more so over it will be neck to neck with room's requirement. This will be only because of the government FDI policy, ease tourism policy and various foreign exchange schemes to get international guests to travel in our country which leads to their country food and beverage with bench mark brands is the future trend and saga of the food and beverage. ■

Chhattisgarh

An Interesting Blend Of Tribal Tourism, History Nature And Wildlife

Chhattisgarh is the 10th largest state in India and 17th most-populated state of the nation. It is a source of electricity and steel for India, accounting for 15% of the total steel produced in the country. Chhattisgarh is one of the fastest-developing states in India.

In ancient times, this region was known as Dakshina Kosala. This area also finds mention in Ramayana and Mahabharata. Between the sixth and twelfth centuries, Sarabhpurias, Panduavanshi, Somvanshi, Kalachuri and Nagvanshi rulers dominated this region. Kalachuris ruled in Chhattisgarh from 980 to 1741 AD. The Bastar region of Chhattisgarh was invaded by Rajendra Chola I and Kulothunga Chola I of the Chola dynasty in the 11th century. Chhattisgarh was under Maratha rule from 1741 to 1845 AD. It came under British rule from 1845 to 1947 as the Chhattisgarh Division of the Central Provinces. Raipur gained prominence over the capital Ratanpur with the advent of the British in 1845. In 1905, the Sambalpur district was transferred to Odisha and the estates of Surguja were transferred from Bengal to Chhattisgarh.

The area constituting the new state merged on 1 November 1956, under the States Re-organization Act, 1956 and remained a part of that state for 44 years. Prior to its becoming a part of the new state of Madhya Pradesh, the region was part of old Madhya Pradesh State. Before this the region was part of the Central Provinces and Berar under the British rule. Some areas constituting the Chhattisgarh state were princely states under the British rule, but later on were merged into Madhya Pradesh.

The state was formed on 1 November 2000 by partitioning 16 Chhattisgarhi-speaking southeastern districts of Madhya Pradesh. Raipur was made its capital city. Chhattisgarh borders the states of Madhya Pradesh in the northwest, Maharashtra in the southwest, Andhra Pradesh (East Godavari District) in the south, Telangana (which includes eastern parts of old Bhadrachalam constituency which was part of East Godavari District prior to 1956 and later added to Khammam district and most of which was retained by Telangana after Andhra Pradesh's bifurcation in 2014) in the south, Odisha in the east, Jharkhand in the northeast and Uttar Pradesh in the north.

Chhattisgarh comprises 27 districts, including Balod, Baloda Bazar, Balrampur, Bastar, Bemetara, Bijapur, Bilaspur, Dantewada, Dhamtari, Durg, Gariaband, Janjgir-

Champa, Jashpur, Kanker, Kabirdham, Kondagaon, Korba, Koriya, Mahasamund, Mungeli, Narayanpur, Raigarh, Raipur, Rajnandgaon, Surguja, Sukma, and Surajpur.

The tourist attractions in Chhattisgarh cater to a large tourist taste and has infinite prospect of harboring a flourishing tourism industry. The small town of Kawardha offers breathtaking views of nature and a rich tribal life. The royal palace at Kawardha is one of the major tourist attractions in Chhattisgarh. The village of Bastar, apart from offering a vivid glimpse of the tribal life, offers a wide array of metal crafted handicrafts. These molded iron objects are original tribal products of Bastar and is quite popular among tourists.

The Chitrakote Falls also called the Niagra of India located deep in the heart of Bastar forest, plunges down from a height of 100 feet. The Chhattisgarh tourism department offers camp sites near the falls for the lovers of adventure. Apart from the tribal villages, waterfalls and springs, the state of Chhattisgarh has a wide plethora wildlife wealth to offer. The state has 11 wildlife sanctuaries and 3 national parks within its bounds. The Indrawati National Park, Kanger Ghati National Park and Achanakmar Sanctuary are important Tourist Attractions in Chhattisgarh.

Bastar



Chhattisgarh, a rather recent state in the map of India, is one of the interesting and rare tourist options in the world which connects historical as well as picturesque importance to its tourism aspects. Predominated for the major part of the history by different tribes at different points of time, the structures and Monuments in Bastar are out of the ordinary and happen to be some of the major places of interest here. Among these the Bastar Palace stands out to be the most popular.

A mesmerizing town replete with thick green forests

of teak, sal and seesam, the bushes of bamboos and rare plants, the flowing streams and ranges of mountains, crystal waterfalls and spread-out dales, it will make every bit of your Tour to Bastar a memorable one.

The Bastar Palace



One of the splendid creations by the tribal's of yesteryears draws prime interest. Erected around an era when the Bastars moved their capital from Bursur to Jagdalpur. It houses several manifestations of superior art and architecture from the days gone by. The radiant white construction has seen the gallantry and heroism of the then kings and rulers. This particular tourist destination can be reached via good road and rail conveyance options.

Your trip to Bastar should certainly then, include the Bastar Palace apart from the monuments, like, the Kutumsar Caves and Kailash Gufa as part of the tourism trips.

Bilaspur



The entire region of Chhattisgarh is known as 'Dhan Ka Katora' or 'Bowl of Rice' for which the credit is given to Bilaspur which has made major contribution in this. The unique features of this district are refined quality of rice, Kosa Industry and of course its cultural background. Around 400 years old, the city of Bilaspur attracts travelers from across the country to its attractive tourist spots that include monuments and holy places. You must visit the beautiful monuments in Bilaspur. Of them, Kutaghat Dam in Bilaspur, is widely acclaimed for its beauty and offering excellent recreational opportunities to the visitors.

Khutaghat Dam of Bilaspur

Bilaspur's Kutaghat Dam is famous with every tourist. It is



around 10 km from Ratanpur, the city famous for ruins of forts and served as the capital of Chhattisgarh once. Kutaghat Dam is constructed on the serene banks of Kharoon River and helps in the irrigation process of the entire region. One will be enchanted by the impeccable beauty of the Kutaghat Dam. Surrounding forest and hills lend this dam an extra charm. You can stay on this site for a long time as it is an idyllic picnic spot too. There is a beautiful and comfortable rest house near Kutaghat Dam. So if you want to spend long time here then don't be worried. It is a perfect retreat to put up in.

Bastar



Bastar being a place primarily influenced by tribal's for decades now is a key tourist spot in the state of Chhattisgarh. The lovely streams, the meandering mountains, the green valleys and bushes and thickets of bamboos, sal, teak and bija trees create an aura of excellent charm. Apart from these captivating landscapes, the Monuments in Bastar are some of the special sightseeing sites. The Kutumsar Caves and Kailash Gufa, Bastar are of prime interest shrouded by a peculiar sense of mystery.

Kutumsar Caves and Kailash Gufa Bastar



Kutumsar Caves and Kailash Gufa in Bastar are sure to mesmerize you with their charm. Both situated in the Kanger Valley National Park, stand at 38 km and 40 km from

Jagdarpur respectively. The Kutumsar Caves which are 1327 meters long display magnificent formations of stalactites and stalagmites and are probably the darkest of their sort, 35 meters below the ground level. These are possibly the world's second largest caves formed naturally and house five natural chambers and quite a few blind wells.

The Kailash Gufa is situated on a small hillock and looks similar to the Kutumsar Caves. A 100 meters long cave, it is also pitch dark and has a narrow entrance. Discovered in 1993, the cave houses stalactites and stalagmites galore. There is a special stalagmite formation which can be seen at the end of the cave in the shape of a Shivlinga. The reverberations caused here are strangely musical. With torch lights and a guide along with you on your expedition, experience all the thrill of exploring these amazing caves.

Ratanpur Fort- Bilaspur



Situated at a distance of about 25 kms from Bilaspur, Ratanpur enjoys a considerable importance from the point of view of tourism. Tourists visiting Bilaspur make it a point to pay visits to the nearby tourist highlights as well and Ratanpur Fort in Bilaspur is counted among one of the significant places of tourist importance.

Ratanpur Fort in Bilaspur, is an old fort whose exact date of construction is shrouded in mystery. There is no historical evidence to dispel the haze that blurs the construction of this once impressive fort. There is also not enough information that makes it clear as to who commissioned the construction of this fort. Here you can marvel and appreciate the exquisite stone sculpture over the frame of the Ganesh Gate. Take a close look at the idols of Ganga and Jamuna that grace the gate. At the entrance, Lord Shivji, in his Tandav Dance pose is bound to grab eyeballs. Ratanpur is also dotted with a number of temples among which mention must be made of the Mahamaya Temple, Baba Bairavnath Temple, Bhuddeshwar Shiva Temple, Ekbira Temple and Ratneswar Mahadev Temple.

Kailash Nagar Dantewada



Kailash Nagar, Dantewada is a well-known tourist spot and draws plenty of travelers. A part of the Baila Dila mountain range, Kailash Nagar, Dantewada is a peak, adventurous and beautiful in its own way. Baila Dila is basically the center for top quality mining ores and the ups and downs throughout the range give shapes of humps of an ox, hence the name in local dialect. Divided into two small towns of Bachel and Kirandul, Baila Dila is a beautiful place to be in. At a distance of 12 km from Kirandul via Ghat Road lies the Kailash Nagar, one of the peaks of the Bail Dila range.

Kailash Nagar, Dantewada is genuinely a beautiful spot, much like the highest peak, Akash Nagar, which is 22 km from Bachel, via Ghat Road. The deposits of "Blue Dust" sand like the blue iron ore is mesmerizing to any tourist whatsoever.

One of the most captivating options among the Peaks and Monuments in Dantewada, the Kailash Nagar range, is a cherishing experience. On your Tour to Dantewada, do visit the Kailash Nagar, which is undoubtedly going to be an unforgettable experience.

Maria Menhirs



Maria Menhirs in Bastar are monumental stones that are erected by the Maria tribe to show respect to the dead. These monumental stones were set up by people belonging to the Maria tribe to honor the memory of the deceased persons. The size of these stones varies which is in tune with the social status of the deceased. There are some drawings on these stones that display objects and acts treasured by that person. It is a custom to drop a bit of chewing tobacco at the base of these Menhirs as a mark of reverence to the departed soul.

Koriya

The natural beauty of Koriya is known all over India. The place is full of dense forests, mountains, rivers and waterfalls. Amrit Dhara Waterfall in Koriya is among the most famous waterfalls in Koriya. Koriya in Chhattisgarh was a princely state during the British rule in India. Koriya is also known for the rich mineral deposits. Coal is found in abundance in this part of the country. The dense forests present here have a rich wildlife too. The climate of Koriya is quite pleasant. The mild summers and cool winters make Koriya a suitable place to visit throughout the year. Koriya is situated in the northeastern part of Chhattisgarh. The place is known for the natural beauty and picturesque landscape. The rivers, mountains, hills and waterfalls comprise of the natural tourist attractions in Koriya. The waterfalls in Koriya are one of the most frequented places in Koriya.

Akuri Nala- Koriya



Akuri Nala, Koriya is known for its cascading beauty all through the country. Thousands of tourists come to visit Koriya every year from all parts of the country all round the year. Akuri Nala, Koriya is also referred to as the natural air conditioner in Koriya. Akuri Nala in Koriya is a natural waterfall which is situated at a distance of 65 kilometers from Baikunthpur. The waterfall is situated near Bansipur village in Koriya. There are many small waterfalls present nearby the Akuri Nala in Koriya in Chhattisgarh. This waterfall is covered by rocks on both the sides. People can take a bath under this waterfall. During the summer season a trip to this waterfall is a pleasant experience. The cool and pleasant atmosphere of the place gives the sweltering heat of the summer a miss. The surrounding areas are full of forests and rocks. The areas nearby are suitable to go on for a picnic with friends and families. The natural beauty, the beautiful landscape and the scenery of the place in and around attracts tourists for several reasons. Apart from the natural beauty of the place, the lifestyle of the tribal who reside here has also been an added attraction for the tourists. The handicrafts made by the tribal residing in the villages are of great artistic value. A trip to the villages nearby gives one an idea of the tribal life and their simplicity and warmth is something that impresses the tourist.

Amrit Dhara Waterfall



Amrit Dhara Waterfall in Koriya is among the most famous waterfalls in Koriya. It is a natural waterfall which originates from the Hasdo River. The fall is situated at a distance of seven kilometers from Nagpur. The waterfall is ideally located on the Manendragarh-Baikunthpur road. The Amrit Dhara Waterfall falls from a height of 90 feet. The waterfall is about 10-15 feet wide. The point where the water falls, a cloudy atmosphere is formed all around.

The spot where Amrit Dhara Waterfall, Koriya is situated is also famous for a very auspicious Shiva temple. Around this spot a very famous mela is held every year. The mela was started by Ramanuj Pratap Singh Judeo, who was the King of Koriya State, in the year 1936. The fair takes place during the festive occasion of Mahashiv Ratri and lakhs of devotees come to this place during the fair. The area around is also a famous picnic spot. People go for picnic and family get together to this place. The beauty of the place enchants every visitor and lures them to visit the place on and often.

Jashpur



Jashpur located on the Northern part of Chhattisgarh is a veritable paradise for nature lovers. The whole area abounds in natural resources and tribal population. The Uraon tribals are the main inhabitants of the place. Many of them have adopted Christianity with the advent of the missionaries who were also responsible in opening a number of missionary schools in the area. In the process the literacy rate in Jashpur is quite high in comparison to the rest of Chhattisgarh. There are many Tourists Attractions in Jashpur that are apt for nature lovers and adventure travelers. The Rivers, Caves,

and Waterfalls in Jashpur provide ample opportunities for trekkers and hikers to sharpen their skills. Moreover if you are a nature photographer, let your camera do the talking in the wilderness of these places.

Kailash Gufa



Kailash Gufa is located in the dense jungle of Kangar Valley National Park. The cave seems to be out of some prehistoric era with dark and narrow entrance. This 100 meter long cave is located in a hill and came into notice in 1993. The stalactite and stalagmite formation leaves are the main features of this ancient cave. It provides ample resources for the geologist. It is probably known as Kailash Gufa because of the natural stalagmite formation of a Shivlinga. Another interesting character of the cave lies in the fact that whenever you strike the hollow walls it makes musical sound created due to the vacuum between the cave walls.

Raipur



Raipur is the capital city of the state of Chhattisgarh and is the administrative headquarters of Raipur district. It is also the largest city in Chhattisgarh. It was formerly a part of Madhya Pradesh before the state of Chhattisgarh was formed on 1 November 2000. Raipur has been in existence since the 9th century; the old site and ruins of the fort can be seen in the southern part of the city. Raipur district is important historically and as a point of interest archaeologically. This district was once part of the Dakshina Kosala Kingdom and later considered part of the Maurya Empire. Raipur has been the capital of the Haihaya Dynasty Kalchuri kings,

controlling the forts of Chhattisgarh for a considerable period. Satavahana kings ruled this part until the 2nd–3rd century. In the 4th century AD king Samudragupta conquered this region and established his domination until the fifth–sixth century when the area came under the rule of Sarabhपुरi kings. For some time in the fifth and sixth centuries, Nala kings dominated this area.

Champanan



On a tour to Raipur, one must include Champanan in their travel itinerary. Champanan is an attractive village. It was previously famous as Champajhar. It is around 60 km away from the capital city of Raipur en route from Arang. This place enjoys a religious significance and hence today it has evolved to be one of the most visited holy places in Raipur. Most of the devotees and leisure tourists come to Raipur's Champanan village to visit the temple of Saint Vallabhacharya, who is supposed to be the reformer and pioneer of the Vallabh Sect. The best time to visit Saint Vallabhacharya Temple in Raipur's Champanan is the eleventh day of Baisakh when the anniversary of the birth of Saint Vallabhacharya is celebrated here. The followers of Vallabh Sect assemble at the temple to pay tribute to him. Besides, other interesting event of this place is The Annual Fair of Champanan. It is organized every year in the month of Magh. During this time, you will witness unrestrained revelries and festivities.

Kanker



The picturesque and historical city of Kanker is located in the southern region of Chhattisgarh. Kanker District was a part of old Bastar district in the old times. It was in the year 1999

that Kanker received its identity as an independent district. Kanker is the Mecca for people who have a religious bent of mind. There are numerous temples and other Holy Places in Kanker. The economy of the district is mainly based and dependent on agriculture. Rice is the main crop of the area. The other important crops in the area are Kodo, wheat, chana, Tilli, bhutta, Moong and sugar cane. Five rivers flow through the district, that include Sindur River, Mahanadi River, Turu River, Doodh River and Hatkul River. The district is mainly composed of small pockets of hills. There are quite a large number of monuments, mountains, waterfalls, historical places and Holy Places in Kanker. Every year thousands of tourists from each and every corner of the world and from all over India visit these holy places in Kanker. The Charre-Marre Water fall, Gadiya Mountain, Tank on mountain, Malanjhkudum Water fall and Shivani Maa Temple are some of the popular Holy Places in Kanker.

Shiva Bhoramdeo Temples- Kawardha



Kawardha in Chhattisgarh is not only liked by its visitors for its own attractions but also for those that are provided in the form of Excursions from Kawardha. One of such places that must be visited from Kawardha is the Shiva Bhoramdeo Temples.

The Shiva Bhoramdeo Temples in Kawardha are said to have been established in the 11th century A.D. The chief attractions of the Temples are the minute carvings on stone that depict various deities of the region. Among these Temples in Kawardha, the Bhoramdeo Temple is situated in the midst of a mango grove. The curves and the angular projections of the structures represent the local style of architecture which is a fusion of the retreating 'mountain-range' style that is found in the Shikhara (top) of the temples in Khajuraho and the short-blocked curvilinear form that can be witnessed in the temples of Orissa. The facade of these Shiva Bhoramdeo Temples near Kawardha exhibit magnificent sculptures. The Temples of Shiva and Bhoramdeo in Kawardha are situated at a distance of 18 kilometers from the city. The place is situated to the North of Raipur, which is the capital city of Chhattisgarh. Hence the place is indirectly accessible from various parts of India. Thus, with all such transport facilities,

a visit to the Shiva Bhoramdeo Temples, Kawardha would certainly make your Tour to Kawardha, an unforgettable one.



Wildlife in Chhattisgarh

The newly formed state of Chhattisgarh situated in central India, is one of the most naturally rich states of India. It abounds in eco diversity and supports a wide variety of wildlife population. The dense jungle, grasslands, hilly terrain and sprawling water bodies shelters the wide wildlife species of the region. 44% of the land in Chhattisgarh has been declared as forest zone. Wildlife tourism is rampant in Chhattisgarh. From warmth loving mammals to a rich population of avian life can be found in this bio diversity rich state. Wildlife in Chhattisgarh constitutes a major portion of the tourism in Chhattisgarh. If you are an animal enthusiast Chhattisgarh is the perfect destination for you. Moreover the Government of Chhattisgarh has initiated the construction of many guest houses and lodges beside these National parks and wildlife sanctuaries in order to raise the tourism factor in the state.

Wildlife in Chhattisgarh is a study of different colors, of the prey and the predator. There are at least 3 National Parks and as many as 11 wildlife sanctuaries in Chhattisgarh. If you are planning a Tour to Chhattisgarh don't miss out on the three National Parks - Indravati National Park, Kanger Ghati National Park, and Guru Ghasidas National Park. The most commonly sighted animals here are Chinkara, the Indian Gazelle and Chital or Spotted Deer. If you are lucky enough you might catch a glimpse of the rare hill Mynah.

Wildlife in Chhattisgarh are infused with a sense of romance and adventure. The best way to move about these parks and sanctuaries is by taking a Jeep safari.

The newly formed state of Chhattisgarh is an interesting tourist destination considering the blend of tribal tourism, history, nature and wildlife that it offers. The bulk of tourist attractions in Chhattisgarh however lie virtually unexplored. The virgin forests, dotted with picturesque waterfalls, scenic plateaus and winding rivers offer a feast to eyes and the lens of your camera. The forests of Chhattisgarh incidentally occupy 42% of the state's land surface. The natural beauty of Chhattisgarh is literally stunning; so it has an ample future for tourism in the coming years. ■



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