

Transforming Tourism in Madhya Pradesh: Empowering Rural Communities and Delivering Unique Experiences

Madhya Pradesh stands as a remarkable example of India's diverse tourist attractions. With offerings ranging from wildlife encounters to historic monuments, religious pilgrimage sites, and captivating arts, Madhya Pradesh caters to a wide spectrum of interests. In 2022, the state witnessed over 3.4 crore tourists, both domestic and international, marking a remarkable 33 percent increase from the previous year.

Madhya Pradesh's Responsible Tourism Mission

Madhya Pradesh Tourism has embarked on a mission to make tourism sustainable while empowering rural communities. Simultaneously, this endeavor promises tourists a distinctive taste of village life. Under its Responsible Tourism Mission, Madhya Pradesh Tourism is slated to establish 100 tourism villages across six cultural zones: Baghelkhand, Bundelkhand, Chambal, Malwa, Nimad, and Mahakausha. These villages will offer facilities such as homestays, village stays, and farm stays for visitors.

Moreover, tourists can immerse themselves in local experiences like savoring regional cuisine, embarking on village walks, witnessing tribal art exhibitions, trying their hand at fishing, enjoying local music and dance performances, participating in farming activities, exploring pottery traditions, and much more.

Promoting Sustainable Tourism for Community Welfare

Madhya Pradesh is only the second state in India, following Kerala, to earnestly embrace responsible tourism. The essence of responsible tourism, as stated on MP Tourism's website, revolves around "making better places for people to live and better places for people to visit." Madhya Pradesh achieves this by collaborating with local communities in and around tourist destinations, ensuring that the benefits of tourism directly uplift the locals, all while making tourists more aware of the region's heritage, culture, and traditions.

Prioritizing Safety and Accessibility

The Responsible Tourism Mission (RTM) also pays special attention to enhancing tourism infrastructure in Madhya Pradesh, with a particular focus on safety and accessibility. This initiative seeks to raise awareness about women's safety and is the first tourist project sanctioned by the Ministry of Women and Child Development under the Nirbhaya Scheme. Under the "Project Humsafar," MP Tourism is diligently working to make key tourist destinations easily accessible to differently-abled visitors. Furthermore, capacity-building and sensitization programs have been conducted for the workforce at tourism destinations.

Safeguarding Clean and Sustainable Destinations

Another crucial aspect of RTM is ensuring the cleanliness and sustainability of tourist destinations. It's all too common to witness once-pristine locations deteriorate due to an influx of tourists. To prevent such degradation, Madhya Pradesh Tourism has initiated the "Clean Destination" project, aiming to maintain the environmental integrity of destinations in collaboration with local communities and visitors.

The pilot project began at Panna National Park, encompassing 30 villages around the Madla gate of the park. This concerted effort is a testament to Madhya Pradesh's commitment to preserving its natural and cultural treasures for future generations while fostering mutually beneficial relationships between tourists and local communities.