

APRIL 2020

A Newsletter by Department of Tourism,
Government of Odisha

ODISHA UNRAVELLED



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Similipal Tiger Reserve



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Keynote

// For Odisha, 2020 brings both rewards and tougher challenges. On one hand Odisha Tourism reinforced its prominence on Incredible India's tourism map through watershed events such as the National Tourism Conference and achieved Konark's inclusion in the Indian Government's list of Iconic Destinations. On the other hand, 2020 has brought a disruptive pandemic such as COVID-19 which has challenged us all to innovate models for sustainability and resilience. Tourism is a sector which promises inclusive and sustainable prosperity, while also being vulnerable to disruption due to events which limit people to people exchange. Let us all make the best of this time to collectively devise models which help us stay one step ahead. Niche sectors such as rural tourism and entrepreneurial initiatives in homestay aggregation can work wonders to revive the tourism economy. We in Odisha are striving to encourage drive-in tourism through which travellers can experience the best of Odisha on the road through long duration road trip itineraries. Let us resolve to speed up progress on the vision for inter-state cooperation in tourism development. With the blessings of Lord Jagannath, we shall prevail."



Shri. Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi
Hon'ble Minister of Tourism, Odia Language &
Literature and Culture, Government of Odisha



Vishal K. Dev IAS
Commissioner cum Secretary, Dept. of Tourism,
Sports & Youth Services

Editor's Note

// Odisha is dreaming big and aiming high when it comes to the tourism and hospitality sector. Our master plans for the development of priority destinations are on track and we will utilise our successful templates in glamping tourism to pull through these testing times. The state government will this year launch new policies and schemes with a view to incentivise the development of niche tourism and hospitality products. Our pioneering experience in disaster management has enabled us to act ahead of the COVID curve and. I am confident that Odisha Tourism will come out a winner and that we will see more tourists from India and across the world keen to explore India's best kept secret."

Weathering the pandemic



After the devastating impact of Cyclone Fani in 2019, Department of Tourism (DoT) had its task cut before the looming challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the first week of March, DoT conducted a stakeholder orientation workshop jointly with Director Public Health, during which hotel owners, tour operators and guides were familiarised with the impending challenges and guidelines for tackling the situation.

Further, the Department issues advisories to sector stakeholders on regulating operations and exercising precautions while ensuring that stranded tourists are accommodated. The advisory also included guidelines on reporting symptoms and ensuring isolation of symptomatic

individuals.

As the national lockdown took effect, the chain of OTDC Panthanivas hotels offered its facilities and services to serve stranded persons and COVID-19 management teams including health workers et al.

DoT has initiated an extensive outreach to sector stakeholders such as hotels, tour operators, guides, boatmen, photographers, transport service providers, etc. to undertake impact surveys and has conducted direct interactions to understand their requirements for sector revival. From the strategic perspective, DoT has been brainstorming on a risk pooling mechanism to ensure resilience in the face of disruptive events and disasters.

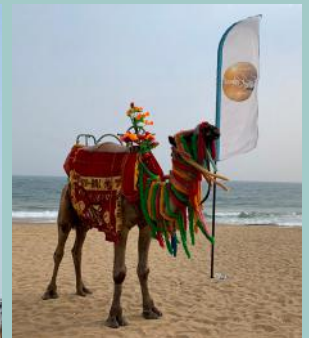
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Marine Drive Eco Retreat concludes successfully



The Marine Drive Eco Retreat, Konark 2019, Eastern India's first glamorous camping festival set on the pristine Ramchandi Beach concluded on 15 February 2020 with an overall occupancy of over 80%. The event comprised 55 luxury cottages, a music festival with 12 high profile performances, a vibrant food & beverage festival and beach markets, apart from a host of water sports, adventure activities and trails to key tourist destinations. Inaugurated on 15 December 2019 and buoyed by enthusiastic public response, the Eco Retreat was extended twice. The Marine Drive Eco



Retreat is a model in sustainable tourism, being a zero waste discharge tourism product. It also emerged to be a template in 5T implementation, with the project being developed in just 45 days, driven by teamwork and technological leverage. All approvals and procurement were conducted in a transparent manner.

The corporate offering received a tremendous response, hosting offsite events of prime PSUs viz. ONGC, SBI and GAIL, Corporate groups such as Godrej and a delegation of the National Defence College (NDC).

Brand Eco Retreat also soared high with the Uttarayana Kite Festival organised in association with CII Young Indians. The festival witnessed a tremendous response, with all the inventory sold out. The State Government plans to replicate this successful template at diverse locations and times of the year.

National Tourism Conference



Government of Odisha in association with Government of India and FICCI organised a two-day National Tourism Conference at the Marine Drive Eco Retreat in Konark. The objective of the conference was to explore avenues for centre-state and inter-state cooperation in scaling up tourism and hospitality. The key themes of deliberation were digital tourism, last-mile connectivity, experiential tourism, reform of regulatory and taxation systems, air transit infrastructure, development of interstate circuits, community managed tourism and sustainable hospitality through



recycling and conservation. The conference witnessed the participation of government delegations from Gujarat, NCT

of Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Jharkhand. Hon'ble Minister of Tourism, Govt. of India Shri. P.S. Patel endorsed the proposal to organise Tourism Ministers' conferences semi-annually. *"We wholeheartedly agreed to participate when Govt. of Odisha took this initiative. All stakeholders including governments and private sector players must put our best foot forward in cooperation."*

Among the highlights of the conference was the MoU signed by Government of Gujarat with Government of Odisha for cooperation in tourism development.



Odisha aims to soar higher



Government of Odisha, led by Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri. Naveen Patnaik, initiated a bold outreach to the domestic and global aviation sector to promote the viability of increasing air connectivity to the state, which has been exhibiting consistent development and economic performance and gradually enhancing its tourism brand as 'India's Best Kept Secret'.

Civil Aviation Secretary Shri. Pradeep Singh Kharola IAS, representing the Govt. of India, applauded Odisha for achieving exponential growth of 29% in passenger traffic against the national growth rate of 17 per cent, during the last three years. Recently initiated sectors such

as Bhubaneswar – Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar – Varanasi and Jharsuguda – Bengaluru have buoyed the prospects of the state.

During a meeting held in January 2020, which was attended by C-suite representatives of over 15 airlines, the government articulated its regional and global aspiration for direct air connectivity. Nationally, the state aims to boost direct connectivity to Chennai, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Surat, etc. while initiating new connections with Kochi, Jaipur, Lucknow, Prayagraj, Pune, etc.

Internationally Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Colombo, Bangkok, Hong Kong and Singapore are being vied for as key markets.

Weekends in Wilderness

Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC), in collaboration with Ecotour Odisha, launched exciting day-long nature trails from Bhubaneswar to Satkosia, Bhitarkanika and Chilika's Mangalajodi and Rajhans Island. Each itinerary is

competitively priced at under INR 2,000/- per pax and includes breakfast, lunch, entry fees, boating and guide services. The offering received an enthusiastic response from both tourists as well as locals, with initial weeks witnessing 100% bookings.

EXPLORE ODISHA'S WILDERNESS IN A DAY WITH OTDC

SATKOSIA
EVERY SATURDAY & SUNDAY
(7.00 A.M. – 6.00 P.M.)

**INR 1490/-
PER PERSON**

BHITARKANIKA
EVERY SATURDAY & SUNDAY
(5.30 A.M. – 10.00 P.M.)

**INR 1700/-
PER PERSON**

MANGALAJODI (CHILIKA)
EVERY SATURDAY & SUNDAY
(8.00 A.M. – 4.00 P.M.)

**INR 1270/-
PER PERSON**

RAJHANS ISLAND (CHILIKA)
EVERY SATURDAY & SUNDAY
(6.00 A.M. – 06.00 P.M.)

**INR 1490/-
PER PERSON**

BARKUL (CHILIKA)
EVERY SATURDAY & SUNDAY
(7.00 A.M. – 7.00 P.M.)

**INR 1410/-
PER PERSON**

Package Includes

- Breakfast, Lunch, Entry Fees, Boating and Guide service
- Air conditioned Transport for all tours.

Package doesn't include

Jet Ski, Banana boat and Speed boat rides at Barkul

Pickup Point : Starting from Panthanivas Bhubaneswar.

For More Information & Booking Contact

LANDLINE : 0674 - 2431515, 2430764, 2435618 MOBILE : 7978037089, 9437206100

Stepping onto the Stage

A snapshot of Odisha Tourism's recent flagship events

Mukteswar Dance Festival, 14 – 16 January:



The festival celebrates Odissi dance, one of the oldest classical dance forms in the country, with danseuses enacting various mudras with the magnificent Mukteswar Temple in the backdrop.

Vrindaban Mahotsav, 10 March:



Bhubaneswar's Vrindaban Gurukul of Internationally acclaimed flautist Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia, in association with Odisha Tourism, organised the Vrindaban Mahotsav, during which maestros of Indian classical music grace the stage which also gives a platform to their pupils to showcase their art. The event will be part of Odisha Tourism's vibrant annual calendar.

Rajarani Music Festival, 18 – 20 January:



This celebration of India's diverse traditions of classical music on the manicured lawns of the grand Rajarani Temple, has reinforced the significance of music as the cornerstone of spirituality and has helped Bhubaneswar emerge as a top classical music destination in the country.



Dhauli Kalinga Mahotsav, 10 – 12 February:

During this festival, the Dhauli Shanti Stupa transforms itself under the star lit skies and the artistic brilliance of the performers leaves the audience with memories to savour for days to come. The festival is a collage of classical music, dance and folk dance and martial arts representing the various cultural hues of India.



An aesthetic reassertion of the Mahatma's ideals



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri. Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the Gandhi Peace Centre at Khandagiri in Bhubaneswar. Set up with the support of Aditya Birla Group, it is a digitally interactive museum designed to promote Gandhian values and principles, and houses six galleries, where memorabilia and articles used by Mahatma Gandhi are on display.

"The dedication of the Gandhi Peace Centre here today in the 150th year of Gandhi's birth anniversary assumes significance. It will provide an institutionalised platform to awaken consciousness about the life and works of Gandhiji and educate people to realise the

deeper significance of his ideals", said Shri. Patnaik.

Smt. Rajashree Birla, Chairperson of Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development said, "We felt that to set up insightful galleries in different parts of India, where Gandhiji's imprint is more than discernible would be an act of deep homage (to him). Odisha is the right choice. The Mahatma felt a kind of spiritual connect with Odisha. It was the place that he visited eight times. His tryst with Odisha began in 1921 as part of his nationwide journey to spread his ideals of Satyagraha, Swaraj and Ahimsa."





Winning big



Adding another feather to its sporting cap, Odisha successfully hosted the maiden Khelo India University Games (KIUG) 2020, which witnessed the participation of about 3,500 athletes from across India's universities in the game events having 17 disciplines namely archery, athletics, boxing, fencing, judo, swimming, weightlifting, wrestling, badminton, basketball, football, hockey, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, rugby and kabaddi.

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri. Narendra Modi congratulated the state government for

organising the spectacular event in association with KIIT University. "In the coming few days, the goal is to win medals but even more to better your own performance. Your hard work here will take you, your families and your country's dream ahead. You have torch bearers like Dutee Chand here to inspire you. This is the start of a new sports revolution in India", he said.

The event has further fuelled Odisha's brand as India's sports capital and a globally sought-after sports tourism destination.

The Odia MasterChef



An IT professional from Berhampur, **Abinas Nayak** shone bright in his mission to bring Odia cuisine into the fine dining realm. The 27-year-old made Odisha proud by winning MasterChef India Season 6, in which he presented niche recipes of *meethakhichdi*, *dahibaigana*, *aadamansa* and fusions of *annarasabali* and *chennapoda*.

Odia excellence in culinary arts was further reinforced by Angul's 26-year-old **Smrutisree Singh** who also came close to the finale of the competitive reality show.



Look Who Visited



H.E. Japanese Ambassador to India, Mr. Satoshi Suzuki led a business delegation to Odisha and held discussions with Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri. Naveen Patnaik in presence of Hon'ble Union Minister of Steel and Petroleum & Natural Gas Shri. Dharmendra Pradhan to explore investment in the state's steel and tourism sectors.



H.E. British Dy. High Commissioner to India (Andhra Pradesh & Telangana) toured Odisha's key tourist destinations - Gopalpur, Chilika, Raghurajpur and Pipili and concluded his tour with visits to the iconic Konark Sun Temple and Puri's Jagannath Temple. He likened his holiday to a pilgrimage.



Evergreen star Anil Kapoor visited Bhubaneswar and was all praise for the clean and green smart city.

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Raghurajpur, Odisha

Home to Pattachitra Artisans, a tourist's favorite!

By Sameet Pattnaik



Raghurajpur is a small village near Puri. It is nearly 40 kms away from Bhubaneswar, as you drive towards Puri. If you are on your way to Puri, it's a stop worth taking. I bet you will take away memories of some unbelievable, classy art work. So please don't miss it.

Raghurajpur is home to world famous Pattachitra Artisans. Pattachitra is the one of the oldest and the rarest of the art-forms exclusive to Odisha. It goes without a hint of doubt that "Pattachitra and the artisans are truly India's best-kept secret".

The model village- Raghurajpur

Every house in the village belongs to an artist. Every house is a gallery of handicrafts. Every house has a lot of color and creativity.



Every house is place to shop. Every house has a story to tell!

So when you reach Raghurajpur, make sure you don't hurry; make sure you carry a lot of stamina to move from one artist to the other. Each one is brilliant with their art and creativity. Every door has something unique to show and sell.

The Pattachitra artists!

The people of Raghurajpur (mostly artists) are very warm and welcoming. They are very passionate about their work and this ancient rare art form. They normally request

show you the process of creating an art piece, thereby drawing it in front of you. They might teach you the ancient style of painting.

Note: *Pattachitra is a sanskrit word derived from 'patta' meaning cloth and 'chitra' meaning art. The art is usually represented by mythological stories. The stories are mostly connected to the cult of Lord Jagannath and Hindu mythology.*

How much for these beautiful art works?

These artists need more encouragement and appreciation. These artists need more tourists to visit and see their work.

You need to realize that only when you buy, the pattachitra art-form gets promoted. So be generous. You may negotiate, but don't bargain to your sweat. I feel that's an insult to their dedication to this rare and complicated art form.

The gallery has pattachitra and many other handicrafts. They may range from INR 100 to some thousand rupees. They get a lot of overseas orders from art lovers and from MNCs world wide.

Well, I bought the kettle for 500/-. It is placed on my dining table. This piece always kick starts a discussion about Raghurajpur, Pattachitra and the artisans amongst guests at home. I am glad it's mine.



tourists and visitors to have a look at their work, without forcing them to buy. They are very tourist friendly.

There is one more reason to hold on to your patience at Raghurajpur. That's because, if the artists find you keen, they can also

About Odisha Tourism

Established as Department of Tourism & Culture in 1973, the Department of Tourism (DoT) strives to:

1. Promote diverse and sustainable tourism with a view to enhancing the national and global visibility and favourability of Odisha as a prime tourist destination
2. Create employment opportunities to bring socio-economic benefits to the community and boosting community participation in tourism
3. Preserve, enrich and promote Odisha's unique cultural heritage and ecological diversity through sustainable development

Apart from undertaking various initiatives for the development of tourism infrastructure and services in the state under the Odisha Tourism Policy 2016, DoT aims to establish its brand globally and enhance the favourability of Odisha as a prime tourist destination through the twin strategies of event based promotion and destination experience promotion, through innovative advertising and multimedia based outreach to national and global markets.



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