

ODISHA UNRAVELLED



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A Quarterly Newsletter by Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha



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*A Newsletter by Department of Tourism,
Government of Odisha*



FOREWORD



ASWINI KUMAR PATRA

*Minister of State (IC) for Tourism and
Odia Language, Literature & Culture*

As we step into the new year, it brings me great pleasure to share with you the strides and accomplishments within our vibrant tourism sector. Our dedication to fostering unforgettable experiences while preserving our cultural heritage continues to be at the heart of our initiatives. 2023 ended on a positive note with celebratory events and festivals welcoming the tourist season. Odisha Tourism hosted flagship events such as the Konark Festival and International Sand Art Festival.

Meanwhile, the 5th edition of Eco Retreat Odisha opened to a massive response. Eco Retreat Odisha was inaugurated at

7 exotic locations viz. Putsil in Koraput, Sonapur in Ganjam, Konark, Satkosia, Bhitarkanika, Hirakud and Daringbadi. In an effort to promote tourism globally, Odisha Tourism participated at the World Travel Market in London. Looking ahead, we are excited about the upcoming events and initiatives slated for the new year. These endeavours not only aim to attract visitors but also aim to create lasting socio-economic benefits for our local communities.

Besides, we achieved many more milestones in this final quarter of 2023 and this newsletter is celebration of the achievements made.

Happy reading and a very Happy New Year!

EDITOR'S NOTE



 **SURENDRA KUMAR, IAS**

Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism, GA and PG

2023 has brought several positive tidings to the shores of Odisha. Our plans for integrated developments are progressing well. Community-managed ecotourism – Odisha's most championed segment – is set for an aesthetic overhaul. Cuisine will be among the best aspects of travel to Odisha, with OTDC's foray into premium fine-dining in Odia Cuisine Nimantran at Rani Bakhri, Sambalpur. Holidays in Odisha promise to be unprecedented in 2023, with Odisha Tourism introducing several niche ex-

periences to be activated. We have brought a closure to 2023 in style, with Eco Retreat Odisha receiving tremendous response from tourists across all seven locations. The last two weeks of the year have witnessed almost 100% occupancy, and with two whole months to go, there's a lot in store.

On behalf of Odisha Tourism, I wish all our readers a safe and prosperous 2024. Keep exploring Odisha, India's Best Kept Secret.

MISSION SHAKTI DELEGATES SET OFF ON A DUBAI EXPEDITION



Mission Shakti delegation from Odisha undertook a three-day visit to Dubai in an effort to showcase the achievements of the initiative and provide global exposure to its leaders. The state government, through the Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) facilitated exposure visit to the SHG leaders.



The delegation comprised DLF and BLF leaders representing Angul, Balangir, Balasore, Bargarh, Boudh, Cuttack, Deogarh, Ganjam, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Jharsuguda, Kandhamal, Kendrapara, Keonjhar, Koraput, Malkangiri, Mayurbhanj, Nayagarh, Puri, and Sundargarh districts.



The delegation had the unique opportunity of meeting Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at Naveen Niwas and WCD and Mission Shakti Minister Basanti Hembram. The exposure visit to Dubai promises not only cultural exchange but also valuable learning experiences. The delegates had the chance to witness international best practices, engage in dialogues with global leaders, and explore innovative business models. The exposure to diverse markets and entrepreneurial ecosystems in Dubai will undoubtedly broaden their perspectives, fostering a deeper understanding of global trends and strategies.



Speaking about the visit, Meena Kumari Swain, President, Nayagarh BLF, said, "We are grateful to our Hon'ble Chief minister for giving us this opportunity to visit Dubai. It was an enriching experience for us to visit Dubai, and we appreciate the invaluable experiences gained during our time there."

This unique opportunity aligns with the government's commitment of continuous learning and capacity building, ensuring that the Mission Shakti leaders return with newfound knowledge and insights to further drive the empowerment of women entrepreneurs in Odisha and transform SHGs to SMEs.



ODISHA WELCOMES TOURISM SEASON WITH ITS FLAGSHIP GLAMPING EVENT

7 EXOTIC LOCATIONS INAUGURATED AT THE 5TH EDITION OF ECO RETREAT ODISHA

The 5th edition of Eco Retreat 2023-24, at 7 exotic destinations namely Konark, Sonapur, Putsil, Daringbadi, Hirakud, Satkosia and Bhitarkanika, was inaugurated virtually by Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik. Eco Retreat Putsil, Daringbadi, Hirakud and Satkosia were inaugurated on 1st November 2023 followed by the inauguration at Konark, Sonapur and Bhitarkanika on 1st December 2023.



Inaugurating the event, Chief Minister in his speech said, "After having successfully organized four editions, Odisha Government's flagship product Eco Retreat has been highly appreciated by the travel and tourism fraternity for its sustainable model incorporating best practices in waste to wealth and holistic resource management while offering tourists a more refined leisure hospitality akin to star category resorts."



"I wholeheartedly applaud Department of Tourism and all stakeholder teams for working seamlessly to bring this niche tourism experience to India and the world for the fifth time. I wish all district administrations the best for undertaking their responsibility in ensuring the smooth development and organisation of the Eco Retreats. I am sure that the Eco Retreats this year will act as a getaway for tourists to explore the best of Odisha's tourism and hospitality landscape. I call upon one and all from across India and abroad to book their stay at Eco retreat Odisha and keep exploring India's Best Kept Secret," said Hon'ble CM.



Notably, the Eco Retreats in Odisha are committed for being a zero-waste discharge tourism initiative, ensuring that the environment remains unharmed. These retreats are strategically positioned in ecologically sensitive areas, and Odisha Tourism has taken measures to ensure that the tourism activities in these destinations have a minimal impact on the natural environment. Eco Retreat Konark has 70 cottages whereas Bhitarkanika (Pentha), Putsil (Koraput), Sonapur, Hirakud, Satkosia and Daringbadi has 25 cottages each along with exciting experiences and activities.

Tourists visiting these destinations this winter can experience 5-star facilities through glamorous camps amidst the lap of nature. Various activities like guided tours, adventure activities like water sports, paragliding are included to make their stay memorable.



34TH EDITION OF KONARK FESTIVAL & 13TH INTERNATIONAL SAND ART FESTIVAL INAUGURATED

With the launch of flagship events - Konark Festival and International Sand Art Festival, Odisha welcomed the tourism season on 1 December 2023. Held every year from 1st to 5th December since 1986 at the open-air auditorium in Konark with the iconic Konark Sun Temple at its backdrop, the Konark Festival 2023 showcased India's cultural depth through various classical dance forms including Odissi, Kathak, Mohiniattam, Mohiniyattam, Bharatanatyam, and Kuchipudi among others. Simultaneously during these five days, the pristine Chandrabhaga Beach witnessed renowned sand artists competing to sculpt unique creations during the International Sand Art Festival.



Renowned as a platform that showcases India's cultural depth through various classical dance forms, the inaugural show witnessed Odissi performance by Soor Mandir - Jyotsnarani Sahoo & Group, Cuttack. This maiden performance of the evening showcased Odissi dance recitals on NAAD NINAAD, a dance that started with an invocation to Lord Jagannath and Lord Surya with the Surya Mantra followed by SARANAM, a dance that signified the power of surrendering to the Lord.



This was followed by an ethereal Bharatnatyam performance by Praveen Kumar and group of Chithkala School of Academy from Bengaluru. They showcased dance recitals named JATHISWARAM, SHIVANJALI & THILLANA. Jathiswaram was an ex-

ample of a pure dance or Nritya sequence in which the performer wove several patterns on a basic musical composition. In the beginning a shloka on Sun God was evoked as he is the dispeller of darkness. SHIVANJALI was a composition on Lord Nataraja that described the sheer magnificence of his cosmic dance. THILLANA showcased the fitting finale to any Bharatnatyam dance, which comprised of intricate footwork, graceful poses and was followed by a benediction to Lord Krishna.



Guru Jayarama Rao & Group from Kuchipudi Dance Academy, Ranjana Gauhar and Group from Utsav Educational and Cultural Society, Rojalin Mohapatra and group of Debadasi, by Guru Anwesha Mahanta and Group from Kalpavriksha Dance Ensemble, Pallavi Krishnan & Group of Lasya Academy of Mohiniyattam, Daksha Mashruwala and Group of Kaishiki Dance Academy, Kumkum Mohanty and Group from Geeta Govinda Charitable Trust and Luna Poddar & Group of Prerna Centre of Performing Arts participated in the 5-day long festival.



Simultaneously during these five days, the pristine Chandrabhaga Beach will witness thematic sand arts by 114 renowned sand artists from across the globe which includes 6 international artists from Australia, Czech Republic, Russia, Belarus, USA and Sri Lanka apart from national artists from Odisha and 7 other Indian states including West Bengal, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Gujrat, Telangana, Assam and

Andhra Pradesh. The 13th International Sand Art Festival 2023 was graced by Hon'ble Minister of Electronics & IT, Sports & Youth Services and Home Shri Tusharkanti Behera.

The live streaming of the dance festival was made available on the social media handles of Odisha Tourism apart from telecasting it live on DD Bharati in a bid to reach wider audience from 1st - 5th December. The festivals were attended by Hon'ble MP Jagatsinghpur Dr. Rajashree Mallik, Chairman OTDC Dr. Lenin Mohanty, Director Tourism Shri Sachin R. Jadhav and Advisor BNTYY Shri Durga Prasad Samantray among other government officials.



ODISHA TOURISM PARTICIPATED IN INDIAN INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL MART, PUNE AND HYDERABAD 2023

Odisha is known for its ancient heritage, vibrant culture, mesmerizing wildlife, untouched beaches, and exhilarating adventure opportunities. The Odisha Tourism stall enthralled attendees at Indian International Travel Mart, Pune and Hyderabad 2023. The event served as a remarkable platform for Odisha Tourism to promote its heritage and wildlife. The success of Odisha's participation at IITM underscores its capacity to entice travellers not only from Odisha but also from regions beyond, further solidifying its status as a premier tourist destination.



ODISHA TOURISM PARTICIPATED IN THE 38TH IATO ANNUAL CONVENTION IN AURANGABAD

Odisha Tourism participated in the 38th Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) Annual Convention which was inaugurated in Aurangabad. The 4-day long programme was attended by Tourism Ministers from different States as well as Central Ministries, Tourism & Hospitality Associations, media etc. to deliberate on tourism development and growth and to create a direct dialogue with the States on Schemes, policies and steps being taken at a national level for overall tourism improvement in India.



ODISHA TOURISM ASSOCIATED AS STATE PARTNER IN ODISHA NIRMAN CONCLAVE 2023

In a bid to promote the tourism sector, Odisha Tourism associated with Eastern Media (Kanak News) for Odisha Nirman Conclave 2023. Director Tourism Shri Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav participated in a panel discussion "How Odisha can become the favourite choice in tourism destination for tourists?" Shri Jadhav spoke about how the tourism sector of Odisha has made a great come back after being severely hit by the pandemic. He spoke about the plethora of initiatives that contributed to this resurgence. He asserted on how the international roadshows have helped to showcase the beauty of Odisha globally. Shri Jadhav also highlighted the recently conducted international roadshows at Singapore, Vietnam and Thailand and regular interactions with the key stakeholders which have helped Odisha to position itself as a premier tourist-friendly destination. He asserted on the fact that post the success and wide publicity of the 'Odisha by Road' campaign of Tourism Department, the Department intends to promote Caravan Tourism across the State.



ODISHA TOURISM PARTICIPATED IN 42ND INDIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR 2023

The Department of Tourism participated at the 42nd India International Trade Fair 2023 under the Odisha Pavilion stall. The design space showcased the various tourism products like Eco Retreat Odisha, Konark Festival, Odisha by Road and other niche tourism products like Water-Sports.



OTDC ADOPTS 5T PRINCIPLE AND ELEVATES TOURIST EXPERIENCE.

RECORD PROFIT AND WITH HISTORIC FOOT FALL OF TOURISTS, ODISHA MAKES A GIANT LEAP IN TOURISM SECTOR

Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) announced the inauguration of 10 nos. of new vehicles at its Head Office, marking a significant enhancement in the travel experience for tourists. The inauguration ceremony was graced by the esteemed presence of OTDC Chairman, Dr. Lenin Mohanty, Managing Director OTDC Shri Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav, General Manager OTDC Dr. Lalatendu Sahoo and all officials of OTDC.



The new fleet included 4 nos. of Innova Crysta vehicles, 4 nos. of Swift Dzire sedans and 2 nos. of spacious Tempo Travellers. In addition to these, OTDC has exciting plans for the upcoming month with the acquisition of 2 more nos. of Volvo buses and 2 nos. of Luxury Coaches reinforcing its commitment to elevating the travel standards in the region.



Beyond the promise of enhanced tourism experiences, OTDC is delighted to share the impressive financial growth of its transport fleet. The Government of Odisha is putting more thrust on transport network expansion for the convenience of public and tourists as well. As a part of initiatives OTDC has added 10 nos. more vehicles to present fleet of different segment of vehicles. In the financial year 22-23, the total profit for the transport unit stood at 1.94 crore. With the addition of these new vehicles in 23-24, this figure is expected to rise to a remarkable 3.10 crore, a testament to the success and support from the Odisha government.

With the inclusion of these new vehicles, the total number of commercial vehicles in the OTDC fleet now stands at 32, a testament to the corporation's continuous efforts to meet the growing demands of the tourism sector.



We are excited to introduce these new vehicles as part of our ongoing commitment to providing top-notch services to tourists visiting Odisha," stated Dr. Lenin Mohanty, Chairman of OTDC. "This expansion aligns with our vision to enhance the overall travel experience and promote tourism in the region.



Incorporating eco-friendly and state-of-the-art features, the new Volvo buses and Luxury Coaches align with OTDC's commitment to sustainable tourism practices. The corporation remains focused on providing not just transportation but a memorable journey through Odisha's scenic landscapes and cultural treasures.

The addition of these vehicles underscores OTDC dedication to meeting the evolving needs of tourists while maintaining the highest standards of safety and comfort. The corporation remains focused on bolstering Odisha's position as a premier tourist destination.

ODISHA TOURISM PARTICIPATES IN WORLD TRAVEL MARKET, LONDON 2023

TOURISM INDUSTRY LEADERS CONVENED IN LONDON FOR THE WORLD TRAVEL MARKET TRADE EVENT TO DISCUSS THE LATEST TRENDS SHAPING THE SECTOR.



For 42 years, WTM London has been the most influential 3 days in the world of travel industry. Odisha Tourism participated in the World Travel Market 2023. A delegation of Odisha Tourism comprising Chief Secretary Shri Pradeep Kumar Jena, Director Tourism Shri Sachin R. Jadhav, ADT Puri Shri Saroj Pradhan and Shri Lokesh Kumar, Team Leader (PMU), Department of Tourism participated in the three-day event from 7th to 9th November 2023.

World Travel Market London is a market leading international travel event unlocking business opportunity for inbound and outbound tourism professionals. Odisha has been participating in this annual event regularly with its last presence being in 2022. Post covid, the WTM has become a sought-after event among the travel & tourism industry stakeholders.

A promotional stall was curated and set up at the exhibition venue where the delegates interacted with tourism fraternity and investors from across the world. The Odisha Tourism stand garnered rave reviews with its focus on promoting eco-tourism and flagship events like Eco Retreat. The Incredible India pavilion at World Travel Market London 2023 was inaugurated on 7th November by lighting the ceremonial lamp in presence of esteemed dignitaries from India. Chief Secretary Shri Pradeep Kumar Jena and Tourism Direc-

tor Shri Sachin R Jadhav held business-to-government (B2G) meetings with stakeholders, including government officials, tour operators, hoteliers, airlines, travel writers and other professionals from different countries. Odisha Tourism delegation initiated talks with IATO India Vice President Mr. Ravi Gosain at WTM London 2023. The discussions focused on ways to increase the international networking with professional bodies for better facilitation to the international travellers visiting Odisha.

Mr. Paul Lyngdoh, Hon'ble Tourism Minister Meghalaya also visited Odisha Tourism stall at WTM London 2023 and tried the Oculus VR to get a visual treat of Odisha's glamping getaway Eco Retreat.



ODISHA TOURISM PARTICIPATES IN GREEN TOURISM CONCLAVE CONDUCTED BY THE MEGHALAYA TOURISM

A green tourism conclave was held in Shillong, a ground-breaking initiative of Indian Express Online Media, focused on the promotion of green and responsible tourism in India, with a particular emphasis on the North-eastern region and Odisha.



The Green Tourism India conclave, which was held on October 19 in Shillong's state convention centre, saw the partnership of Meghalaya Tourism, Incredible India, Odisha Tourism and Arunachal Tourism. It also witnessed guests, delegates and participants engaging in discussions and presentations, followed by a cultural performance.



To promote the Ecotourism initiatives in Odisha, Shri Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav, Director of Tourism, Government of Odisha, participated in the event and presented Odisha's ecotourism initiatives and how they could be adapted in the Northeast. "This association of Odisha Tourism with the Northeast will pave the way to a fruitful and meaningful cooperation and coexistence and trade between Odisha and Northeast India as far as the tourism sector is concerned," Shri Jadhav said. "Tourism is an investor-led field and the government's role is behind the scenes," he added.



Director Tourism Sachin R Jadhav interacted with Hon'ble Minister Tourism Meghalaya Mr. Paul Langdoh, Director Tourism Meghalaya Cyril Diengdoh, and CEO of Indian Express.

HON'BLE CM FLAGS OFF THE PILGRIMAGE TRAIN OF 'BARISTHA NAGARIKA TIRTHA YATRA YOJANA'



The Special Trains under, 'Baristha Nagarika Tirtha Yatra Yojana', were flagged off by Hon'ourable Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik. Four trips have been completed from October to December. The first trip consisted of 970 senior citizens from Ganjam, Gajapati, Boudh, Nayagarh and Kandhamal districts of the State along with 30 escort officers. The train flagged off from Berham-



pur and covered the pilgrimage centres of Kanyakumari and Trivandrum. The second trip consisted of 970 senior citizens from Puri, Khordha, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Dhenkanal and Kendrapada districts of the State along with 30 escort officers. The train flagged off from Bhubaneswar on 23rd No-



vember 2023 and covered the pilgrimage centres of Haridwar and Rishikesh. The third trip consisted of 970 senior citizens from Sambalpur, Bargarh, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Bolangir, Subarnapur and Angul districts of the State along with 30 escort officers. The train flagged off from Sambalpur on 6th December 2023 and covered the pilgrimage centres of Kolkata and Kamakhya. The fourth trip consisted of 970 senior citizens from Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Malkangiri, Kalahandi and Nuapada districts of the State along with 30 escort officers. The train flagged off from Sambalpur on 19th December 2023 and covered the pilgrimage centres of Shirdi and Nashik.



This is the 5th year of Baristha Nagarika Tirtha Yatra Yojana from its inception in the year 2016-17. The scheme was launched by State Government to enable the poor and deprived Senior Citizens of the State for realization of their lifelong dream of having one Tirtha Yatra (Pilgrimage) to fulfilment of their spiritual aspirations with the support of the State Government. So far, 24 such trips have organized in collaboration with IRCTC under this Yojana benefiting more than 19,644 Senior Citizens having age group of 60 to 75 years of the State.

ODISHA WALKS SEASON 2 OPENS DOORS TO HERITAGE ENTHUSIASTS

OTDC CONDUCTS GUIDED WALKING TOURS AROUND VARIOUS HERITAGE SITES IN BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Walks, a guided heritage walking tour to various heritage sites across Temple-City returned after a seven-month long hiatus at Ekamra on 7th November 2023.



These guided tours curated along the identified heritage circuits will help reveal the city's rich architectural treasures, its culture, traditions, rituals, and customs. Apart from well-known architectural marvels such as Mukteswar Temple, Lingaraj Temple, Dhauili, etc., the itinerary encompass lesser-known heritage monuments as well. This is an initiative to not only promote Odisha's ancient architecture as part of heritage tourism but also educate and aware the local populace about Odisha's rich cultural legacy. These walks were conducted by Sarna Educational Trust and had story telling sessions to help the audience get engaged and explore the beauty of history, culture and heritage of Odisha. Every Sunday renowned Odissi dancer Ileana Citaristi and group perform Odissi and gave a walkthrough of Odissi culture at Art Vision for the heritage enthusiasts.



Odisha Walk 1: Romance Etched in Stones
Odisha Walk 2: Architectural Splendors of Ekamra
Odisha Walk 3: The Global Bhubaneswar in Early Centuries – Khandagiri and Udayagiri Caves
Odisha Walk 4: Dhauili – On the Path of Compassion
Odisha Walk 5: Tosali to Ekamra – The Cosmopolitan Bhubaneswar

Odisha Walks is currently being organized from Friday to Sunday every week from 6:30 am to 8:30 am. A minimal registration charge of INR 50 has been kept for participation in Odisha Walk. The tickets for the tour can be booked on the website www.bookodisha.com or Book Odisha mobile app. Similar such guided walking tours across different heritage destinations of the State shall be curated and organized in a phased manner.



HON'BLE CM INAUGURATES NIMANTRAN RESTAURANT AT RANI BAKHRI, SAMBALPUR

Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik inaugurated Nimantran, an authentic Odia cuisine fine dine restaurant, in Sambalpur, virtually.



The Chief Minister in his inaugural message said, 'Nimantran, as the name suggests, extends a warm invitation to embrace the authentic flavours and traditions deeply rooted in Odisha's culinary heritage in the heart of Sambalpur. In Sambalpur, Rani Bakhri, a 17th century historical palace located near Samaleswari Temple, has been renovated for Nimantran. Simultaneously, diners will get to experience Odisha's royal heritage along with authentic Odia cuisine. OTDC and INTAC renovated Rani Bakhri using traditional methods without tampering the original structure to give a feel of being in Western Odisha wherein the menu will have Western Odisha's signature mouth-watering delicacies amidst a royal ambience.'



The restaurant will serve Odia cuisines that are synonymous with the culture of different regions in the State especially Western Odisha. The menu has been crafted to provide the best of authentic Odia appetizers, main courses, refreshments, and desserts.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Tourism Minister Shri Aswini Kumar Patra emphasized the restaurant's role as a cultural ambassador, fostering gastronomic tourism and celebrating the culinary heritage that resonates deeply with the spirit of Western Odisha. He expressed optimism about the restaurant's contribution to the local economy, employment opportunities, and the promotion of Odia cuisine.



Dr. Lenin Mohanty Chairman OTDC said, "As Nimantran opens its doors at Rani Bakhri, Sambalpur, it invites locals and visitors alike to embark on a culinary odyssey through the flavours of Western Odisha, promising an unforgettable gastronomic journey."



In its efforts to promote Odia cuisine, Odisha Tourism inaugurated Nimantran in Bhubaneswar and Puri in 2021 and 2022, respectively. Nimantran's new venture promises to offer patrons an array of authentic Odia dishes meticulously crafted by skilled chefs using traditional recipes and locally sourced ingredients. The ambience, designed to reflect the cultural essence of Odisha, coupled with the flavoursome fare, aims to provide an immersive dining experience.

A SPECIAL FOOD STALL TO CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF DUSSHERA WAS INAUGURATED AT NIMANTRAN RESTAURANT, BHUBANESWAR

A special curated Dusshera Food Festival was inaugurated at Nimantran Restaurant Bhubaneswar to celebrate the spirit of Dusshera. This year, everyone can look forward to a unique culinary experience that complements the festive atmosphere. The stall, inaugurated by Dr. Lenin Mohanty, Chairman of OTDC (Odisha Tourism Development Corporation), promises a mouth-watering culinary experience that captures the essence of the festive season.

The Dussehra Food Stall at Nimantran Restaurant boasted a diverse menu that highlighted the rich flavours and traditions of the region. Dr. Lenin Mohanty, Chairman OTDC, inaugurated the stall with great enthusiasm. He expressed his delight at being a part of this culinary celebration and applauded Nimantran Restaurant for its commitment to promoting the cultural heritage of Odisha through food. "Our culinary team has put their hearts into curating a menu that celebrates the rich traditions of the festival," said Dr. Mohanty.



YOUNG MINDS CONDUCT AUDIT OF OTDC ON CHILDREN'S DAY

Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) conducted an audit by the bright young minds of the Aina Foundation on the occasion of Children's Day.

At the special event, held at the OTDC headquarters, the young auditors were divided into two groups. Both groups made an evaluation of OTDC in various categories including accessibility, inclusivity, activity, amenities and overall property quality.

OTDC Chairman Dr. Lenin Mohanty and divisional managers discussed the audit findings at a meeting. Addressing the gathering, Mohanty expressed his gratitude to the Aina Foundation students for their meticulous audit and insightful observations. He commended their efforts and highlighted the importance of involving the youth in shaping the future of tourism.



ODISHA TOURISM HOSTED A PANEL DISCUSSION WITH MICHELIN STAR VIKAS KHANNA AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF MILLETS 2023

Dr. Lenin Mohanty, Chairman, OTDC delivered the welcome address at International Convention of Millets 2023. Michelin Star Chef Vikas Khanna highlighted the future roadmap of millets for Odia Chefs and spoke about the diversity of Odia cuisine and how Odisha is the frontrunner in reviving millets.



Sanjoy Sarkar, Executive Chef, OTDC Nimantran spoke about ingenious ways to successfully integrate millets in Hotels & Restaurants Menu in the panel discussion at #ICMODisha2023.



Shri Mitrabhanu Choudhury, Partner EY & Head PMU Tourism Department highlighted the direct & assured procurement of Millets by the hospitality industry from FPOs through institutional mechanisms in the panel discussion at #ICMODisha2023.



Nimantran Restaurant proudly presented its millet-infused delights at the International Millets Convention 2023. From Millet Idli 65 to Millet Chaat to Millet Puris, Nimantran exhibited at Janata Maidan for a feast that nourishes the body and delights the palate.



SPORTS & MORE...



Legendary badminton coach and Vice President of BAI Shri Pullela Gopichand accompanied Badminton Association of India officials visited the badminton HPC inside Kalinga Stadium Complex and reviewed the progress of the work.



The 14-member Para Athletics Team was given a warm welcome at the Bhubaneswar Airport by DSYS and SAI Officials for their spectacular performances in the recent Khe- lo India Para games and World Ability Sports Games.



Odisha signs an MoU with Tata Steel to establish HPCs in Archery & Sports Climbing in presence of Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik. Sports Secretary Shri R Vineel Krishna signed the MOU for the state government while Tata Steel was represented by Mr. Chanakya Chaudhary, Vice President, Corporate Services Tata Steel Ltd. and Chairman Tata Steel Adventure Foundation.



The Odisha Masters 2023 kicked off at the JN Indoor Stadium in Cuttack from 12th - 17th December 2023. Recognized as one of Asia's premier competitions, the tournament boasted a substantial prize pool of USD 100,000 and is also categorized as a BWF Tour Super 100 event.

DSYS in association with 'Aspire for Her', unveiled an initiative, "Her Sport Ki Champion", dedicated to empowering & supporting women in sports, post their athletic careers. Present at the momentous occasion were Hon'ble Sports Minister, Shri Tusharkanti Behera, Sports Secretary Shri Vineel Krishna and Sports Director Siddhartha Das along with President Rugby India Shri Rahul Bose, Ms Rica Roy, Lead Aspire For Her and Ms. Madhura Dasgupta Sinha, Founder and CEO of Aspire For Her.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik inaugurated India's largest Sports Science Centre in Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar, established in partnership with India's 1st Olympic Gold medalist, Shri Abhinav Bindra. The Centre features specialized labs including Para-Athlete Performance Lab, Biomechanics Lab, Altitude Training Chamber, Cryotherapy and flotation therapy etc.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik inaugurated AIFF-FIFA Talent Academy in the presence of Chief of Global Football Development at FIFA Mr. Arsene Wenger, Sports Minister Shri Tusharkanti Behera, President of Indian Football Shri Kalyan Chaubey. 50 talented football players in the U 14 category will be selected for the academy from across the country, including 15 from Odisha. The Academy will be headed by a FIFA appointed coach.



Govt of Odisha signed an MOU with Indian Football for establishment of AIFF-FIFA talent academy in Bhubaneswar. Chief of Global Football Development FIFA Mr. Arsene Wenger, President of Indian Football Shri Kalyan Chaubey, Hon'ble Sports Minister Shri Tusharkanti Behera and Sports Secretary Shri Vineel Krishna were present during the ceremony.

Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the Odisha Table Tennis Academy in Bhubaneswar. He also declared open the 29th State Table Tennis Championship 2023. The Odisha Table Tennis Academy features a spacious table tennis arena with sixteen TT tables, a well-equipped gymnasium, a weightlifting room, and a chess area.



To nurture Kho Kho talent in Odisha, State Govt has inked a MoU with Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel India in the presence of Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik to establish a High-Performance Centre in Kho Kho. Chairman 5T and Nabin Odisha Shri V K Pandian, Sports Minister Shri Tusharkanti Behera, Sports Secretary Shri Vineel Krishna along with AM/NS officials Mr Keiji Kubota and Ms Suparna Nanda were present in the ceremony.

AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS AND MORE.....



Odisha Tourism bagged the Best Spiritual Destination in India (Silver category) for Sri Jagannath Temple Puri, Odisha by Outlook Traveller. The sacred ambience, annual Rath Yatra, and vibrant traditions make Puri a cherished pilgrimage site in India.



Odisha Tourism bagged the Best Beach Destination in India (Silver Category) for the Golden Beach Puri, Odisha, by Outlook Traveller. Golden Beach in Puri, Odisha, provides the perfect blend of spirituality and natural beauty.



Here's another Excellence Award that comes as a cheer for Odisha. Odisha Tourism was awarded with the 'Innovative Tourism Experience' Award at IITM, Hyderabad held from 1st-3rd December 2023.

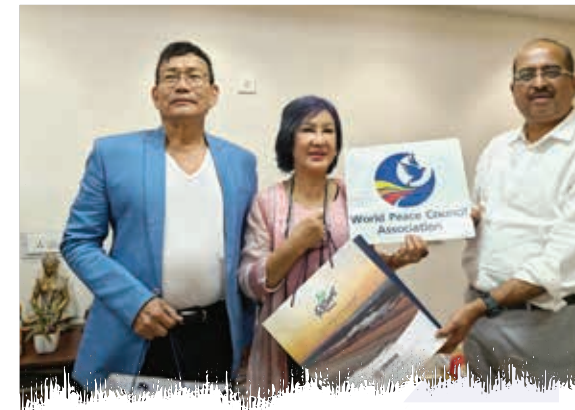


Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik met the international sand artists from the USA, Belarus, Russia, Sri Lanka, Czech Republic and Australia who participated at the International Sand Art Festival 2023. He thanked them for their appreciation for Odisha's rich art and culture and discussed the significant contribution of Odisha's artists to this unique type of art form and scope of promoting Sand Art further.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik inaugurated a vintage and classic car exhibition - Odisha Concours D' Elegance in Bhubaneswar. Odisha Tourism partnered as the State Partner. Hon'ble CM expressed his happiness at the diverse collection on display and said such events foster a deeper appreciation for the automobile legacy. CM also appreciated efforts of organisers in preserving & showcasing the heritage associated with vintage & classic automobiles.

LOOK WHO VISITED



An insightful discussion was held between Director Tourism and Orawan Ponjulsakdi, President WPCA on unlocking the treasures of Buddhism in Odisha for foreign tourists and providing them with avenues to explore Odisha's rich Buddhist heritage.



Dr. Suresh Kumar Eknath, Principal at SIHM, Odisha presented a copy of his book Koshali Cuisine - A Traditional Art to Director Tourism Shri Sachin R Jadhav at Paryatan Bhawan. Dept of Tourism congratulated him on this flavorful tribute to Western Odisha's culinary heritage.



The Hiraikud Wildlife Division presented a Coffee table book on Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary. Shri Rebat Raman Joshi, Hiraikud Wildlife Division and other officials presented a copy to Director Tourism Shri Sachin R Jadhav.



Colonel Satyabrata Swain, Group Commander, NCC engaged in an insightful conversation today with Director Tourism Shri Sachin R Jadhav. This fruitful discussion paved the way for the collaboration of NCC units in diverse initiatives undertaken by the Department of Tourism.

IGNITING ADVENTURE: ODISHA OFF-ROADERS COMMUNITY KICKS OFF A HEART-POUNING EXPEDITION

Odisha Off-Roaders Community kicked off their heart-racing expedition on 21st December in Bhubaneswar. The starting point at Big Cup Cafe marked the beginning of an ex-



hilarating journey, steering through the adrenaline-charged terrain of Dunes Cross 4.0 Desert Rally, ultimately concluding in Bikaner. As the off-roading enthusiasts revved their engines, the convoy embarked on a thrilling adventure, aiming to conquer challenging dunes and rough landscapes. This journey, teeming with excitement and thrill, promises to showcase the spirit of exploration and camaraderie among the off-road enthusiasts. Setting the stage for this exhilarating adventure, Odisha Tourism has joined hands with the Off-Roaders Community, demonstrating their support by branding the convoy's vehicles with vibrant Odisha Tourism materials. This collaborative effort not only showcases the unity between adventure seekers and tourism but also highlights the diverse cultural tapestry that Odisha embodies.



The expedition, which commences on 5th January 2024, is set to traverse through challenging ter-

rains, rugged trails, and awe-inspiring vistas, embodying the essence of exploration that defines the off-road experience. Each vehicle proudly bore the mark of Odisha Tourism, representing a fusion of adventure and the promotion of the State's rich heritage and natural beauty. "This expedition symbolizes the adventurous spirit of Odisha Off-Roaders and the synergy between adventure and tourism. Social media updates, live feeds, and blogs will document this thrilling escapade, offering glimpses of the off-road adventure and the adorned vehicles, serving as moving ambassadors for Odisha's tourism," expressed Director Tourism Shri Sachin R Jadhav.



The Odisha Off-Roaders Community remains committed to promoting responsible tourism while embracing the spirit of adventure and discovery. Through this collaboration with Odisha Tourism, they aspire to inspire fellow adventure enthusiasts to explore the uncharted and celebrate the diversity that India has to offer.



The Odisha Off-Roaders Community is a passionate collective of adventure enthusiasts dedicated to exploring uncharted territories and fostering a love for off-road experiences.



SHREETA DAS

THE SACRED EPIPHANY: IN THE HEART OF ODISHA, AND AMIDST THE GRANDEUR OF KONARK TEMPLE

The sun had dipped below the horizon, casting an ethereal glow over the Black Pagoda. It was that time of the year when the echoes of tradition and artistry harmonized in a celebration that transcended time – the Konark Festival of Odisha. As I stepped into the Open Air Amphitheatre, the air buzzed with anticipation, a palpable energy that spoke of the imminent magic about to unfold.



The stage stood regally beneath the starlit sky, adorned with intricate motifs reminiscent of the famed Sun Temple, a fitting backdrop for the cultural extravaganza. Renowned dancers and budding talents mingled backstage, a mosaic of vibrant costumes and eager smiles, each poised to weave a tale through their graceful movements.

But what really moved me was the narration of Draupadi Vastraharan - the most heart-wrenching moment from the Mahabharata where Draupadi, the epitome of strength and resilience, faces humiliation in the royal court. With every graceful gesture and emotive expression, the dancers brought forth the agony and valour of Draupadi, her unwavering spirit resonating through the subtle nuances of Odissi. Each movement seemed to echo the cries of injustice and honour, drawing the audience into the poignant drama unfolding before their eyes.

The performance culminated with the camera's focus shifted to the idols of Lord Jagannath - a reincarnation of Shri Krishna, making this moment a sublime revelation of their profound unity. There's

a common mythological belief associated that Lord Krishna's heart still beats within Lord Jagannath. And at that the very moment, every belief made sense.



The Vashtra Haran narrative, told through the finesse of Odissi, left an indelible mark on every heart present, evoking admiration for the artistry and the profound depth of the ancient epic. As I left the festival, the echoes of the Vashtra Haran lingered in my mind, a testament to the festival's ability to weave history, mythology, and art into an unforgettable tapestry.



I realized that the Konark Festival wasn't merely a gathering of dancers and musicians; it was a reminder of the enduring magic of the Konark Festival – an experience etched forever in my soul.

Shreeta Das
is a Content Writer and Communications Specialist



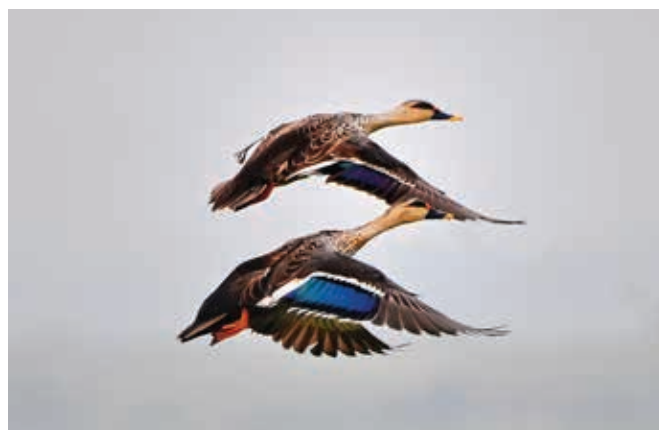
ARIJEET PALIT

MANGALAJODI: NATURE'S SYMPHONY AND SUSTAINABLE HARMONY

Mangalajodi an otherwise quaint village, located approximately 70 KM from Bhubaneswar and, nestled on the northern shores of Chilika, erupts with a cacophony of chirps and cricks every winter as the marshy wetlands welcomes its beloved avian guests. The village, aptly dubbed the "Bird Paradise of Asia", is a testament to the success of community driven conservation model and an ecotourism marvel.



Mangalajodi's magic lies in its vibrant biodiversity. During winter, lakhs of winged guests from across the globe flock to this birding haven, drawn by the lush wetlands teeming with life. Mangalajodi is a living example of how conservation can banish the menace of poaching and generate revenue. Today the poachers have been replaced by birding guides, the income generated flows back into the village, nurturing livelihoods and other infrastructure developments.



Mangalajodi's wetlands, replete with lush vegetation and network of canals provide a sanctuary for numerous species of residents birds, fish and other wildlife. This unique ecosystem is a photographer's dream come true. Unlike any other birding destination in India, Mangalajodi gives you the opportunity to get eye-level close-ups, capture action shots from up close, and witness the sheer magic of migratory birds from Siberia, Central Asia, and Europe apart from of course the resident avian species.



With the 4th National Chilika Bird Festival on the horizon, prepare to be awestruck by lakhs of avian visitors wintering in these marshy havens. Mangalajodi beckons you to experience the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature, where every chirp and flutter tells a story of conservation and community thriving together.

Arijeet Palit
is a content writer & a photographer

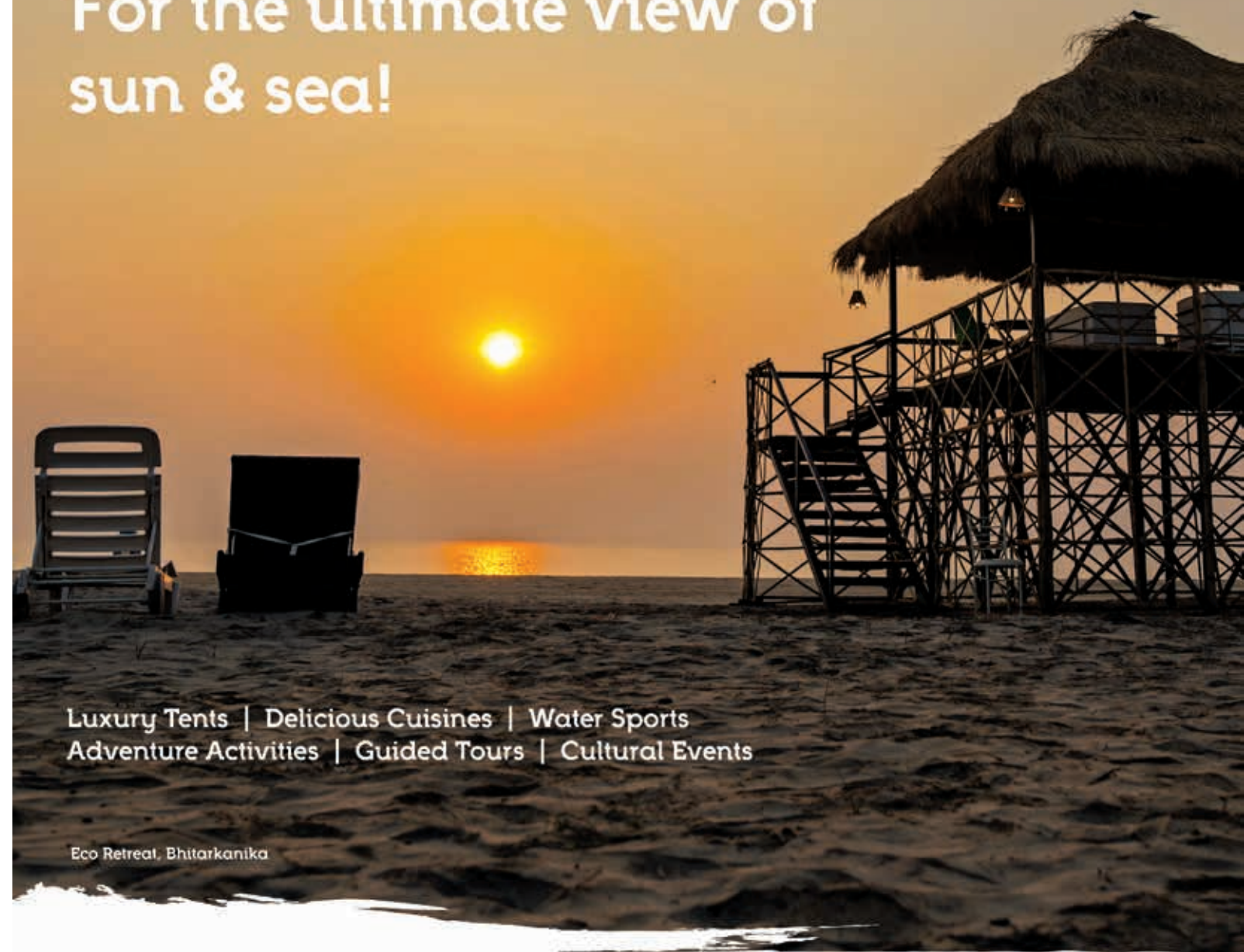


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