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Indian Spectrum Round the Globe

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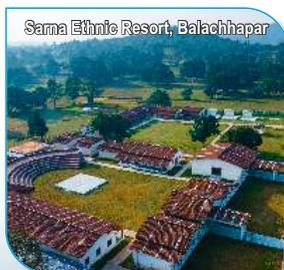
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Dear Readers

With the March 2023 edition you will get to know lot about Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh is one of the states that aesthetically define India and its rich history that's as ancient as the time known. This is the land wherein great sages have emerged, religions evolved and two great epic of India: Ramayana and Mahabharata have been inspired from. Apart from Varanasi (the spiritual capital of India) and Allahabad, the holy confluence of two major rivers- Ganga and Yamuna flowing in the subcontinent, there are many more destinations here that piques the interest of every traveller and displays every shade of Indian ethnicity. Few among them are Mathura, Vrindavan and Agra which we will explore here.

Mathura is a quaint small town on the western bank of the Yamuna River. Mathura (or Brajbhoomi) is famous as the birthplace of Lord Krishna, an important deity in the Hindu religious pantheon. It is an important pilgrim place of the Hindus and one of the seven sacred cities in India. The main pilgrim center in Mathura is the Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi temple.

Moving ahead in hospitality, we featured V hotel. Aiming to elevate the contemporary nightlife experience and become truly timeless in design, V Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton in Al Habtoor City has undergone a soft refurbishment throughout the hotel and added the enhanced funky, quirky vibe to the hotel.

The patrons can now unwind in the hotel's renovated guest rooms and relax in the newly unveiled rooms and suites with large spaces, which perfectly fit with V Hotel Dubai's theme to see and



be seen with the open layouts.

In lifestyle, we focused on Hydration. Hydrating yourself is important for maintaining your body's overall health and well-being. We came up with some tips to hydrate yourself such as Drink plenty of water, Eat hydrating foods, Avoid sugary or caffeinated drinks etc.

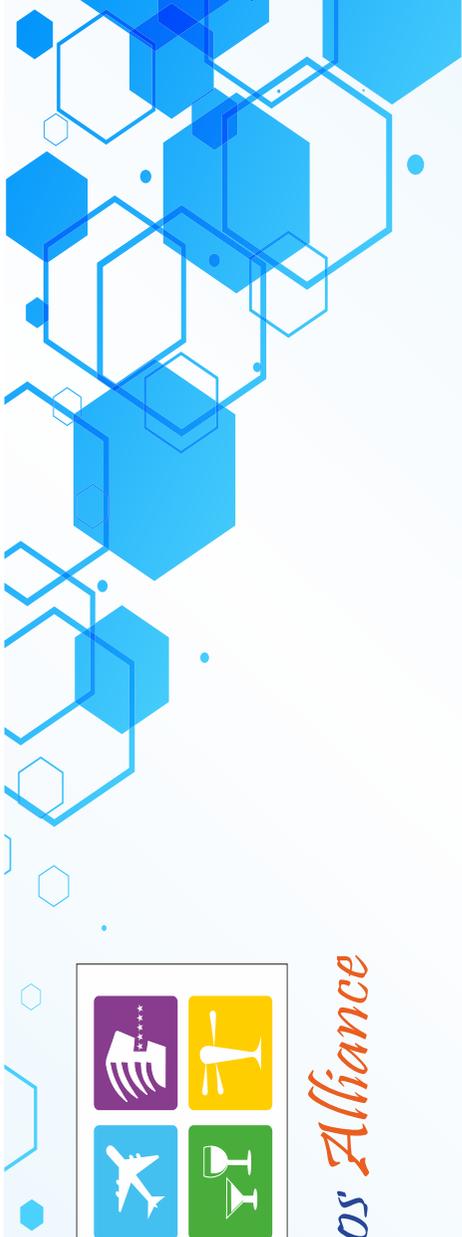
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Chhattisgarh, a state in central India, is home to several Buddhist sites of historical and cultural significance. These sites are a testament to the spread of Buddhism in India, and showcase the rich cultural heritage and artistic legacy of the region.

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A Family-Friendly Resort for Fun and Adventure

Planning a long-awaited holiday getaway is no easy feat. Planning one for the entire family? A tad more complicated. As travel bounces back with a vengeance, travelers all over the world are seeking out the best destinations to venture out to.

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Amrit Kaal: Budget of the Largest State of India "UTTAR PRADESH"

Suresh Khanna the Finance Minister, Government of Uttar Pradesh (UP) tabled the fourth consecutive budget of his tenure in the Vidhan Sabha and the seventh budget of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's tenure on 22nd February 2023.

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Indian Spectrum Round the Globe

HOLI

Holi is a Hindu festival that is primarily celebrated in India and Nepal. However, due to migration and globalization, the festival is now celebrated in many other parts of the world as well.

• Tarsh Sharma

Holi is celebrated in India and other parts of the world, typically in late February or early March. It is also known as the "festival of colors" or the "festival of love". The festival is celebrated over two days and is a celebration of the arrival of spring, the victory of good over evil, and the strengthening of relationships.

During Holi, people throw colored powder

and water at each other, sing and dance to traditional music, and indulge in festive foods. It is a time when people come together, forget their differences, and celebrate life.

The origins of Holi can be traced back to Hindu mythology. According to one legend, the festival commemorates the victory of the god Vishnu over the demon Holika. Another legend tells the story of the love between the god Krishna

and the goddess Radha, and how they used to play with colored powder and water during the spring season.

Today, Holi is celebrated by people of all religions and backgrounds in India and around the world. It is a time of joy, happiness, and renewal, and is enjoyed by millions of people each year.

Here are some examples of how Holi is celebrated in different parts of the globe:



India

vibrant colored powders, dance to music, and enjoy festive foods. In some parts of the country, people also use water guns and balloons filled with colored water to play with each other.

Holi is a time when people come together, forget their differences, and celebrate life. It is a festival of love and friendship, and people use this occasion to strengthen their relationships and make new friends. It is also a time for forgiveness and letting go of past grievances.

Different regions in India have their unique way of celebrating Holi. For example, in Mathura and Vrindavan, the birthplace of Lord Krishna, Holi is celebrated in a traditional and colorful way with music and dance performances. In the state of Punjab, people celebrate Holi with a unique tradition called "Holla Mohalla", which involves martial arts displays, mock battles, and other cultural performances.

Overall, Holi is a vibrant and colorful festival that brings people together in a spirit of joy and celebration.

Holi is celebrated with great enthusiasm and energy across the country. On the first day of Holi, people light bonfires to symbolize the burning of the demon Holika. This day is known as Holika Dahan or Chhoti Holi. People gather around

the fire, sing and dance, and perform prayers to ward off evil.

On the second day of Holi, known as Rangwali Holi or Dhulandi, people play with colored powder and water. They smear each other with

Nepal

Holi is a popular festival in Nepal, where it is known as "Fagu Purnima" or the festival of colors. The festival is celebrated by people of all religions and backgrounds, but it holds special significance for the Hindu community.

In Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, the festivities of Holi usually begin a week before the actual festival. The streets and squares of the city are decorated with colorful flags and lights, and people gather to sing and dance to traditional music.

Apart from the colorful celebrations, Holi is also a time for forgiveness and reconciliation. People use this occasion to mend their broken relationships and forgive past grievances. Overall, Holi is a festival that brings people together is enjoyed by people of all ages and backgrounds in Nepal.



United States of America



Holi is celebrated by the Indian and South Asian communities in the United States of America, and the festival has gained popularity among people of other backgrounds as well. The festival is typically celebrated in cities with large Indian communities, such as New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Houston.

In the United States, Holi celebrations are similar to those in India, with people playing with colored

powder and water, singing and dancing to music, and enjoying festive foods. The celebrations also include cultural performances, such as dance and music shows, and other activities such as rangoli competitions, and henna art.

In recent years, Holi celebrations in the United States have become more mainstream, with many non-Indians participating in the festivities. Universities and colleges often hold Holi events

on their campuses, and public parks in major cities host Holi festivals, which are open to the general public.

The Holi festival in the United States has also become an occasion for community building and social engagement. Many Indian and South Asian organizations, as well as community groups, hold Holi events to promote cultural exchange and understanding among different communities.

United Kingdom



Holi is celebrated in several cities across the UK, including London, Birmingham, and Manchester. Celebrations typically include music, dance, and the throwing of colored powder. Hindus settled in UK do not miss out the excitement of Holi celebrations and enjoy to the hilt. Zeal for the festival is particularly marked in this country as Indians constitute the second largest ethnic

minority. Celebrating festivals help them to feel close to their families and cultural roots.

The celebration of Holi is noticeable at places that witness a large congregation of Indians. The British city of Leicester is particularly known for its love for celebrating Indian festivals. Excitement reaches its peak when the occasion is that of

celebrating a joyous festival like Holi.

Children love to use their spray cans and colour each other. Holi parades are also carried and in the evening people visit their friends and relatives to exchange greetings and sweets. They hug each other and also apply the tilak as the meet Holi in a traditional manner.

Australia



Holi is celebrated in several cities across Australia, including Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane. Festivities include the throwing of colored powder, music performances, and Indian food stalls. Several events are organized all over in Australia where people play with non-toxic colours. Most of the people on this day dress

themselves up in white traditional clothes and attend the party or events where they hurl colours on each other. Melbourne specifically organizes for the Holi festival event which is the best way for the Indians to quench their desire to be drenched in multi colours. The festival here in Australia is an opportunity for the people of

Australia to deepen their understanding of the Hindu religion which is a way of giving a warm welcome to the season of spring and saying good bye to the darkness of the winters. The festival is an opportunity for Australians to promise to themselves to always be successful over the evil with their own good.

Mauritius



Holi is a national holiday in Mauritius, and is celebrated by both the Hindu and non-Hindu communities. Just as the many other major Hindu festivals, the large Indian majority, (about 63 per cent) celebrate Holi with a lot of enthusiasm in the island of Mauritius.

People get all the time to make merry and drench

themselves in the spirit of Holi and of course, colour water.

Hindus, here duly perform the tradition of Holika Dahan or lighting of bonfire on the eve of Holi and celebrate the victory of good over evil. Next day people revel and play with colours and drench everybody with water jets called pichkaris. While

in the evening they greet each other with tilak and exchange sweets.

These are just a few examples of how Holi is celebrated in different parts of the world. The festival is a celebration of love, friendship, and the arrival of spring, and is enjoyed by people of all ages and backgrounds.



Uttar Pradesh Amazing Heritage, Grand Experiences

Uttar Pradesh is one of the states that aesthetically define India and its rich history that's as ancient as the time known. This is the land wherein great sages have emerged, religions evolved and two great epic of India: Ramayana and Mahabharata have been inspired from.

• Vedika Sharma

Apart from Varanasi (the spiritual capital of India) and Allahabad, the holy confluence of two major rivers- Ganga and Yamuna flowing in the subcontinent, there are many more destinations here that piques the interest of every traveler and displays every shade of Indian ethnicity. Few among them are Mathura, Vrindavan and Agra which we will explore here.

Mathura

Mathura is a quaint small town on the western bank of the Yamuna River. Mathura (or Brajbhoomi) is famous as the birthplace of Lord Krishna, an important deity in the Hindu religious pantheon. It is an important pilgrim place of the Hindus and one of the seven sacred cities in India. The main pilgrim center in Mathura is the Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi temple.

Mathura has a rich cultural heritage, which is deeply rooted in Hindu mythology and religion. The city is known for its colorful festivals, music, dance, and art.

One of the most popular festivals celebrated



in Mathura is Holi, also known as the "Festival of Colors". During this festival, people throw colored powder and water at each other, dance, and sing songs.

Mathura is also known for its traditional folk music and dance forms, including the Raslila, a dance drama that depicts the life and exploits

of Lord Krishna. The Raasleela is performed in many temples in Mathura, and is a major attraction for tourists and pilgrims.

The city is also famous for its handicrafts, which include handloom textiles, pottery, and woodwork. The traditional costumes of Mathura are vibrant and colorful, with women wearing



brightly colored saris and men wearing dhotis and kurtas.

The cuisine of Mathura is also unique and flavorful, with a variety of vegetarian dishes made using locally grown vegetables, lentils, and dairy products. Some of the popular dishes of Mathura include peda, a sweet made from condensed milk, and chaat, a savory snack made with potatoes, chickpeas, and chutney.

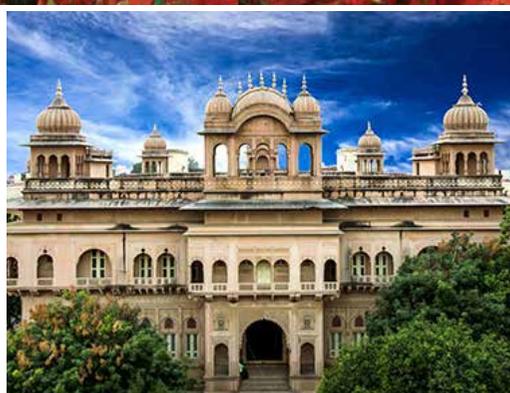
Overall, Mathura's culture is a blend of traditional and modern influences, and continues to attract visitors from all over the world.

Culture

Mathura culture occupies a distinguished place in the Indian history and culture. Mathura is an active center of Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism for several decades in Uttar Pradesh. The art, religion, festivals comprise the culture of Mathura, which is famous worldwide. The culture in Mathura has culminated with all the major aspects such as history, society, epigraphy, religion, archeology, iconography, numismatics, art and sculpture. There are some cultural traditions in Mathura like the Sanjhee, which is the colorful art of decorating the ground with flowers. Raaslila is another predominant form of Mathura culture. The Bhagwat Purana says that Shri Krishna along with the gopis danced the Raas on the river bank of the Yamuna at Vrindavan.

Since then this dance is famous as Raaslila, only young Brahmin boys of 13 to 14 years of age can perform the Raaslila. The traditional folk dance of Braj is performed on the Dooj of Holi. A female dancer balances a row of lighted deepikas on her head while dancing. Usually the number of lamps ranges from 51 to 108 in each performance. The Rasiya songs are the love songs of the divine couple Radha and Shri Krishna. These songs are compulsorily sung in Holi celebrations and all other festive occasions at Braj.

The Mathura culture is famous throughout India, particularly in the places, which consider Hinduism to be the main religion. Their rich



tradition of folk songs are famous even in foreign lands.

Different types of Holi in Mathura

Mathura is known for its vibrant and unique way of celebrating Holi, the festival of colors. There are several different types of Holi celebrations that take place in Mathura, each with its own significance and traditions. Here are a few of the most popular types of Holi in Mathura:

Lathmar Holi in Barsana and NandGaon

This is a unique and playful form of Holi which is quite violent that takes place in the nearby town of Barsana, where women playfully beat men with sticks (known as lathis) as a symbolic gesture of defiance. The men try to protect themselves using shields, but they often end up getting drenched in color.

Story behind celebration of Lathmar Holi started when Lord Krishna visited Barsana to meet Radha for Holi and teased her and her friends a lot. The ladies got a little offended and decided to teach Krishna a lesson and chased him away by beating him with sticks. So now men from Krishna's village Nandgaon visit Barsana on this day and get beaten up and chased by the women here.



Phoolon wali Holi in Vrindavan

This is a type of Holi where flowers are used instead of colors. On Ekadashi prior to Holi, It takes place at the Banke Bihari Temple in Mathura, where the idol of Lord Krishna is showered with flowers by devotees.

Rangeeli Holi

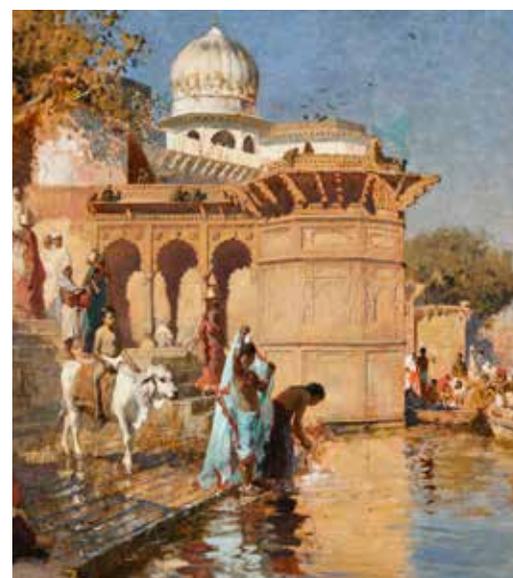
This is a type of Holi that is celebrated in the streets of Mathura, where people throw colored powder and water at each other. This is a lively and boisterous form of Holi that is enjoyed by locals and tourists alike.

Widow's Holi

This is a unique and heartwarming type of Holi that is celebrated at the Meera Sahabagini Ashram in Mathura, where widows are allowed to participate in the celebrations. This celebration is a way to empower widow's and give them a sense of belonging.

Huranga Holi

Huranga Holi is a game where women from the family which established the temple, playfully tear off the mens shirts and beat them up with strips of their own clothes, in the temple courtyard. Men retaliate drenching women with buckets of liquid colours. After some hours the temple is awash with coloured water.



Holika Dahan in Mathura, Vrindavan and nearby areas

On this day, people practice to worship the burning fire on roads in their houses taking children along with dry fruit garlands around their necks. This day is marked to remember how Holika sat in fire.

Dhulandi Holi in Mathura and Vrindavan

Almost ten vehicles decorated with flowers, and some even with kids dressed up as Radha-Krishna, participate in it. Everyone plays Holi with everyone else and it's futile to resist.

Holi in Mathura is a vibrant and colorful celebration that is deeply rooted in Hindu mythology and culture. Each type of Holi has its own significance and traditions, but they all come together to create a festive and joyous atmosphere.

Art of Mathura

The art of Mathura refers to the artistic traditions that flourished in the ancient city of Mathura, located in present-day Uttar Pradesh, India, from the 2nd century BCE to the 12th century CE. Mathura was an important center of art and culture during this period, and its artistic traditions had a significant impact on the development of Indian art.

The art of Mathura is best known for its

sculpture, which was produced in a variety of mediums, including stone, terracotta, and bronze. The sculptures were primarily religious in nature, and depicted figures from the Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain pantheons. Some of the most famous examples of Mathura sculpture include the standing Buddha from the 2nd century CE, the seated Bodhisattva from the 3rd century CE, and the Jain tirthankara figures from the 6th century CE.

One of the distinctive features of Mathura art is its naturalism and realism, which was a departure from the more stylized and idealized forms of earlier Indian art. The sculptures were also known for their intricate details, such as the drapery of clothing, jewelry, and facial expressions. Another notable aspect of Mathura art is its syncretism, which blended elements from different religious traditions and cultural influences.

In addition to sculpture, Mathura was also known for its painting, which was produced on walls, pottery, and cloth. However, very few examples of Mathura painting have survived to the present day.

The art of Mathura had a significant impact on the development of Indian art, and its influence can be seen in later artistic traditions, such as the Gupta and Pala styles. Today, Mathura remains an important center of art and culture, and its artistic traditions continue to inspire contemporary artists and designers.

Handicraft of Mathura

Mathura is also known for its rich handicraft traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. Some of the popular handicrafts of Mathura are:

Terracotta work: Terracotta work is a popular handicraft in Mathura, where skilled artisans create various figurines, pots, and decorative items using locally sourced clay. The terracotta work of Mathura is known for its intricate detailing and unique designs.

Brassware: Brassware is another popular handicraft in Mathura, where artisans create beautiful and intricate brass items such as statues of deities, lamps, and home decor items. The brassware of Mathura is known for its intricate designs and high quality.





Stone carving: Stone carving is a traditional handicraft of Mathura where skilled artisans carve intricate designs on marble and other types of stone. The stone carvings of Mathura are known for their intricate detailing and religious significance.

Wooden handicrafts: Mathura is also known for its wooden handicrafts, including carved wooden doors, wall hangings, and decorative items. The wooden handicrafts of Mathura are known for their unique designs and high quality.

Handmade paper: Mathura is also known for its handmade paper, which is made using traditional techniques. The handmade paper of Mathura is known for its unique texture and quality.

These handicrafts of Mathura are not only popular in India but also have a global market. The government of India has also taken initiatives to promote these handicrafts and support the local artisans.



Cuisine of Mathura

Mathura is known for its rich culture and history, as well as its delicious cuisine. The food of Mathura is primarily vegetarian, with a focus on dairy products, such as milk, yogurt, and ghee. The city is famous for its sweets, which are made using milk and sugar, and its chaat, a savory snack that is popular throughout India. If you are a traveler visiting Mathura, the city's unique cuisine is something that you must experience.

Sweets:

The sweets of Mathura are famous all over India and are a must-try for anyone visiting the city. Some of the most popular sweets include:

Peda: Made from khoya (dried milk), sugar, and cardamom, peda is a soft and sweet dessert that is a specialty of Mathura.

Mathura ka Petha: Petha is a sweet made from ash gourd and sugar syrup. Mathura ka Petha is a variation of this sweet that is flavored with saffron and is famous all over India.

Gulab Jamun: A deep-fried ball made from khoya and soaked in sugar syrup, Gulab Jamun is a popular dessert in Mathura as well as the rest of India.



Chaat:

Chaat is a savory snack that is popular all over India. In Mathura, chaat is made with a unique twist. Some of the popular chaat items in Mathura include:

Aloo Tikki: A popular chaat item in Mathura, aloo tikki is a fried potato patty that is served with a variety of toppings, including yogurt, tamarind chutney, and cilantro chutney.

Papdi Chaat: Papdi chaat is made with crispy fried dough wafers, topped with boiled potatoes, chickpeas, yogurt, and a variety of chutneys.

Dahi Bhalla: Dahi Bhalla is made with fried lentil balls that are soaked in yogurt and topped with a variety of chutneys and spices.

Rich Curries:

The main course of Mathura is also primarily vegetarian, with a focus on lentils, vegetables, and dairy products. Some of the popular dishes include:



Dal Makhani: A rich and creamy lentil dish made with black lentils, kidney beans, and a variety of spices.

Chana Masala: A spicy chickpea dish that is served with rice or bread.

Paneer Butter Masala: A rich and creamy curry made with paneer (cottage cheese), tomato, and butter.

Beverages:

Mathura is famous for its lassi, a yogurt-based drink that is flavored with a variety of fruits and spices. Some of the popular lassi flavors in Mathura include:

Mango Lassi: A sweet and creamy lassi made with fresh mango pulp and yogurt.

Kesar Lassi: A lassi that is flavored with saffron, cardamom, and sugar.

Banana Lassi: A lassi made with fresh bananas, yogurt, and sugar.

The cuisine of Mathura is a delightful blend of sweet and savory flavors. From its famous sweets to its unique chaat and rich curries, the food of Mathura is sure to tantalize your taste buds. So if you're ever in the city, make sure to indulge in some of its delicious cuisine.



Eco Tourism in Mathura

Kosi Kalan Wildlife Sanctuary

Located about 15 km from Mathura, the Kosi Kalan Wildlife Sanctuary is a haven for wildlife enthusiasts. The sanctuary is home to several species of animals, including blackbuck, chital, sambar, and nilgai. Visitors can take guided safaris through the sanctuary to spot these animals in their natural habitat.



Soor Sarovar Bird Sanctuary

Spread over an area of 7.2 sq km, the Sur Sarovar Bird Sanctuary is a popular destination for birdwatchers. The sanctuary is home to over 165 species of birds, including migratory birds that visit the region during the winter months. Visitors can take a boat ride on the lake to spot the birds and enjoy the peaceful surroundings.



Govardhan Hill

Located about 23 km from Mathura, Govardhan Hill is a sacred spot for Hindus. The hill is believed to be the site where Lord Krishna lifted the entire hill on his little finger to protect the people from a storm. Visitors can trek to the top of the hill and enjoy the panoramic views of the surrounding countryside.



Chambal Wildlife Sanctuary

Located about 110 km from Mathura, the Chambal Wildlife Sanctuary is a must-visit destination for wildlife enthusiasts. The sanctuary is home to several rare and endangered species, including gharials, river dolphins, and Indian skimmers. Visitors can take boat rides on the Chambal River to spot these animals in their natural habitat.



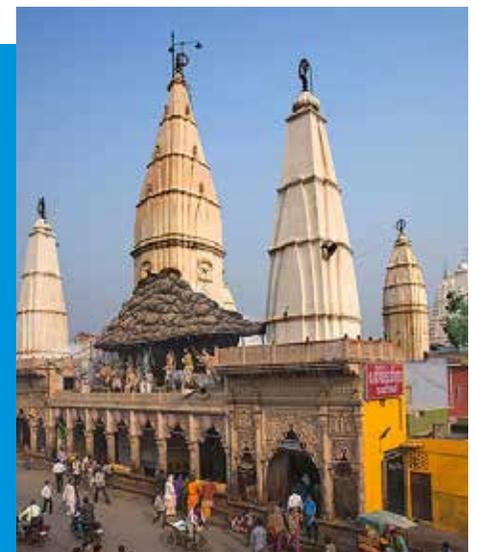
Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary

Located about 55 km from Mathura, the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary is one of the most popular birdwatching destinations in India. The sanctuary is home to over 230 species of birds, including several migratory birds that visit the region during the winter months. Visitors can take a guided tour of the sanctuary to spot these birds and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.

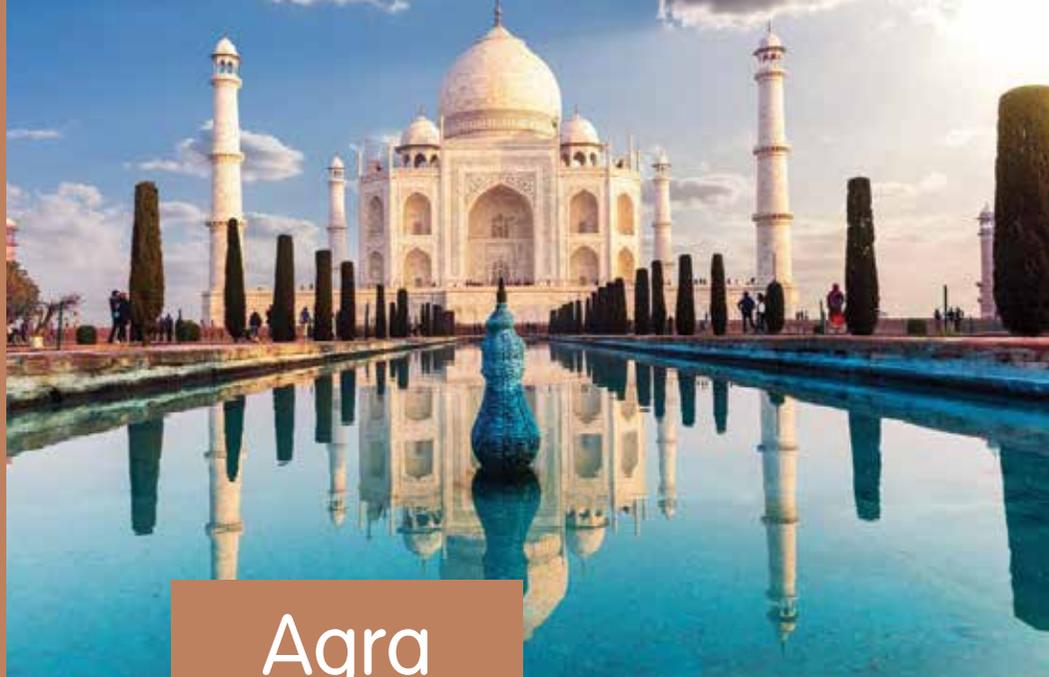


How to Reach Mathura

Visitors can board a flight from any Indian or international city till Delhi and then hire a bus, taxi or train to reach Mathura. Mathura Junction is a major railhead on Central and Western Railways.



When in Mathura, you can also explore other near-by cities with full of tourist attractions



Agra

Agra is an ancient city on the banks of the River Yamuna. It finds mention in the Mahabharata but gained importance as the capital of the Mughal Empire from 1556 - 1658. It is on the Golden Triangle tourist circuit with Delhi and Jaipur. It is famous for its Mughal architecture and for being home to one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Taj Mahal - a monument of incredible elegance and architectural perfection. Agra has many other famous archeological sites and is famous for its marble inlay work and its leather industry that manufactures shoe uppers for some of the best shoe companies in the world.

Attractions

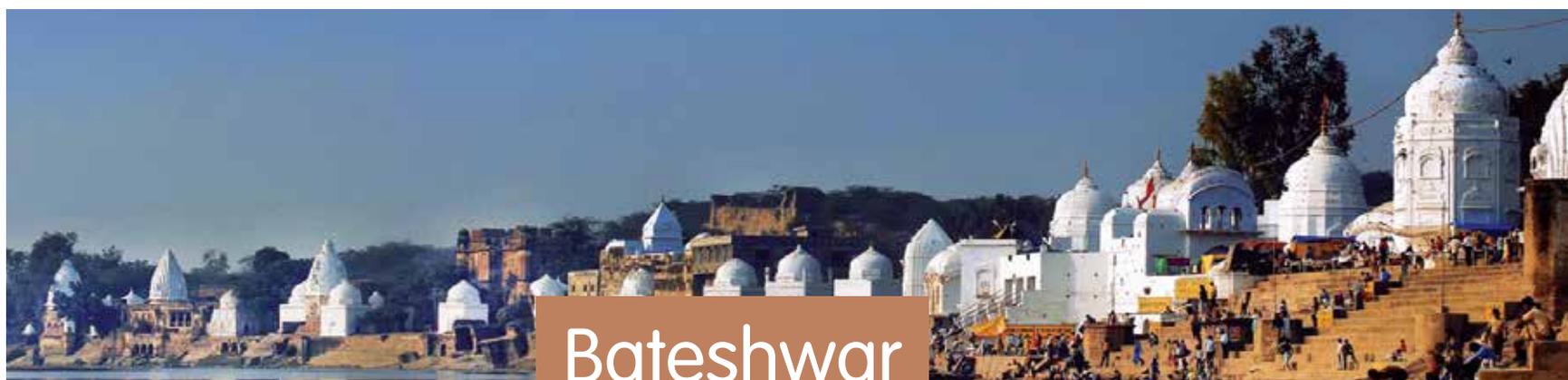
Taj Mahal: The Taj Mahal is one of the most famous and iconic monuments in the world, and it is located in Agra. Built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal, the Taj Mahal is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a must-visit attraction for anyone visiting Agra.

Agra Fort: Agra Fort, another UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a massive fort built by the Mughal Emperor Akbar in the 16th century. The fort is made of red sandstone and marble and is home to several palaces and buildings, including the Jahangir Palace and the Khas Mahal.

Fatehpur Sikri: Located about 40 km from Agra, Fatehpur Sikri is a well-preserved ghost city that was built by Emperor Akbar in the 16th century. The city was abandoned after just 14 years due to a lack of water, but it remains an impressive example of Mughal architecture.

Mehtab Bagh: Mehtab Bagh is a beautiful garden located on the banks of the Yamuna River. It is a popular spot for tourists to watch the sunset and take in the views of the Taj Mahal.

Food: Agra is known for its delicious food, including the famous Agra petha (a sweet made from pumpkin), Mughlai cuisine, and street food like chaat and samosas.



Bateshwar

70 km away from Agra and 35 km from Gwalior, Bateshwar is essentially a temple town, situated on the banks of the Yamuna. The presiding deity of this pilgrim town is Bateshwarnathji, one of the many names of Lord Shiva. The beauty of this pilgrim town is its long line of Ghats dotted with a series of temples, of which some still retain their beautiful original frescos. Bateshwar finds reference in old scriptures like Ramayan, Mahabharat, Matsya Puran etc. From 8th century to 17th century, it remained an important town under the Gurjar, Chandela and Bhadawar kings. Jain scriptures too contain descriptions of Bateshwar. According to legend, the 22nd Tirthankar, Lord Neminathji, was born here. Presently, there are several beautiful Jain temples here. Bateshwar is also famous for its annual Cattle Fair, representing the colourful rural life in India. It is held between Bateshwar and Mai, at the same site which was earmarked

by King Badan Singh for the fair almost four centuries ago. The famous annual Cattle Fair is held at Bateshwar, which is a great occasion to experience the rural colours and life of rural India. The best time Bateshwar is during the Cattle Fair, held in the month of Karthik (Oct/Nov)

Attractions

Temples: Bateshwar is home to over 100 temples, many of which date back to the 8th century. The temples are dedicated to Lord Shiva and are known for their intricate carvings and beautiful architecture.

Festivals: Bateshwar is famous for its annual cattle fair, which takes place in October or November each year. During the fair, thousands of cattle are brought to the town for trade, and the

town comes alive with music, dancing, and other cultural activities.

Wildlife: Bateshwar is located near the Chambal River, which is home to a variety of wildlife, including crocodiles, dolphins, and several species of birds. Visitors can take boat rides on the river to spot wildlife and enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Rural tourism: Bateshwar is a great place to experience rural life in India. Visitors can stay in homestays and interact with the locals, learning about their culture and way of life.

Photography: Bateshwar is a photographer's paradise, with beautiful temples, stunning landscapes, and colorful cultural events. The town's vibrant colors and lively atmosphere make it a great place for photography enthusiasts.

Relish the beauty of wonderful Gujarat

Gujarat, a state located in the western part of India, is known for its rich cultural heritage, diverse wildlife, and beautiful beaches.

• Vedika Sharma

In this story, we will explore the fascinating world of Gujarat's wildlife and beaches. These are just a few of the many wildlife and beach destinations in Gujarat. Make sure to visit these places to experience the natural beauty of the state.



Wildlife

Gir National Park

Gir National Park, a place located in Gir Somnath district of Gujarat at a distance of 347 km from Ahmedabad. It is a unique park and one of its kind. The forest covers total of 1412 km of area. The park was used as a hunting ground of lions by the Britishers during their reign and by the Nawabs of Junagadh until 1960 when the Government of India had to put a ban on hunting due to huge decrease in the number of Asiatic Lions. However, the park is not only known for its Asiatic lions, but also for its plentiful avifauna population which has more than 310 species of birds. Most of which are resident birds and others migrating from many parts of the world. You can find birds from Malabar whistling thrush to painted storks. Famous ornithologist Lt. Dr. Salim Ali once said that if there were no lions here. Gir would be well-known as one of the best bird sanctuaries in western India.

Gir is home to birds like crested serpent eagle, endangered Bonelli's eagle, crested hawk-eagle, brown fish owl, Indian eagle-owl, rock bush-quail, Indian peafowl, brown-capped pygmy woodpecker, black-headed oriole, crested treeswift, Indian pitta and many more.





How to get there

By Road: Junagadh (60 km) and Veraval (45 km) have bus connectivity to national park.

By Train: Junagadh (71km) and Veraval (42 km) are the major rail heads from the national park. Sasan Railway Station(Meter Gauge Train) on Junagadh to Delvada Route

By Air: The closest airport to Gir National Park is Keshod, nearly 54 km away.

Velavadar Blackbuck National Park

This beautiful, 34-sq-km park that is an hour's drive north of Bhavnagar, encompasses large areas of pale, custard-coloured grassland stretching between two seasonal rivers and is famous for its blackbucks – beautiful, fast antelope that sport elegant spiraling horns as long as 65cm in mature males. Some 1800 inhabit the park, alongside blue bulls (India's largest antelope) and birds such as wintering harriers from Siberia (about 2000 of them most years). There are over 120 species of birds that can be found in the park and around. If you're lucky, you may even spot wolves! The best time to visit the sanctuary is early in the morning when chances of seeing the wolves are a lot more. In the day, the blackbucks are easy to spot but the wolves are elusive. The pale gold

grassland is dotted with clusters of blackbucks. They move around in gendered groups – the males together, and the females and fawns in their own groups. It is good that hiring a guide is mandatory as anecdotes about the animals and life in the village are always fun to know more about.

How to get there

By Road: Velavadar Blackbuck National Park is located 47km from Bhavnagar.

By Train: Velavadar Blackbuck National Park is located 47km from Bhavnagar which is nearest railway station.

By Air: Velavadar Blackbuck National Park is located 47km from Bhavnagar airport.

Marine National Park

The tide is high. Your boat sets off from the jetty and you are moved across the salt water that covers seventy percent of the planet. Your stars align, and in the crossing, you see a pod of dolphins surface for air. If you come during winter, above you spreads a V of impossible length, several thousand migratory birds. Out of the corner of your eye you see something drop out of the sky, a kingfisher swooping down on breakfast. As you near the islands, you see a curious tree, with roots that stick out of the water, mangroves. There are birds wading among the

roots, and more packed in the branches.

Later, as the water recedes, revealing a vibrant and unique, but terribly fragile eco-system, you step tenderly towards it, finding a veritable underwater forest with creatures of fantastic colors and patterns and textures that you used to want to draw as a child. As the tide turns, the beach floods with more birds than you've seen for months, feeding on the bodies of creatures left behind by the waters.

The ocean invites you to meet its family. Go, make friends. Ferry to the islands

Just the ride from Jamnagar to the islands, even before exploring them on foot, is spectacular. Be sure to look out for different kinds of birds in each habitat, as described in the general information section. You might also be able to tour some of the other islands by boat if you inquire.

You must ask permission to enter the islands, and we suggest you request a guide, both for the richness of your own experience and for the protection of the sanctuary, since the impact of visitors can be heavy.

How to Get There

By Road: Narala is best reached from Jamnagar, which is 56 km away; hiring a car to get you there and back is a good option.



Beaches

Boasting a 1600 km stretch, Gujarat's shoreline is the longest among India's nine seaside states' shores. If you have only been a witness to the intricate and historic landmarks of Gujarat, you are yet to explore the best through the expanse of Arabian Sea in the state.

The ideal time to visit them is between November to February. Not to miss are the yellow and white shades of sand by these beaches, and the adventurous experiences of Water Scooting, Para Sailing that stays with you long after you visit these.

Shivrajpur Beach

Shivrajpur Beach, which just received Blue Flag beach accreditation, is situated 12 kilometers from Dwarka (Gujarat) along the Dwarka-Okha Highway Shivrajpur Beach, one of Gujarat's most well-known beaches, is the ideal place to spend the weekend with family and children. You might be fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of dolphins or other lovely birds. Immerse yourself in a variety of adventure activities with friends and family like snorkeling, scuba diving, island tours, sea bathing, or sit by the silent sea and watch the sun bid adieu to the day!

How to get there

By Road: The Shivrajpur Beach is well connected with major cities of Gujarat state such as Jamnagar (142 Km), Rajkot (236 Km) and Ahmedabad (462 Km) through road network.

By Train: The nearest Railway station is Dwarka, which is around 14 km from Shivrajpur Beach and it takes about 25 Minutes to reach.

By Air: The nearest Airport is at Jamnagar, which is well connected to the major cities of the countries like Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad. Jamnagar Airport is located at a distance of approximately 138 km from Shivrajpur Beach and it takes about 2.75 hours to reach.

Madhavpur Beach

One of Gujarat's most well-known beaches, Madhavpur Beach, is only 58 kilometers from Porbandar. When travelling from Porbandar to Somnath by car, Madhavpur, known for its extensive



coastal route, offers beautiful views. On Gujarat's Arabian Sea coast, Madhavpur Beach is a fantastic beach. The ocean is crystal pure, and the shoreline is lined with coconut trees.

How to get there

By Road: The Madhavpur Beach is well connected with major cities of Gujarat state such as Porbandar (55 Km), Somnath (73 Km) and Rajkot (191 Km) through road network.

By Train: The nearest major Railway station is Porbandar, which is around 55 km from Madhavpur Beach and it takes about 1 Hour to reach.

By Air: The nearest Airport is at Porbandar, which has reasonable connectivity to cities in India. Porbandar Airport is located at a distance of approximately 58 km from Madhavpur Beach and it takes about 1 hour to reach.

Tithal Beach

4 kilometers to the west of Valsad town is the beach along the Arabian Sea known as Tithal Beach. The black sand on this beach is well-known. It is a well-liked tourist spot in Valsad. In addition to the beach, Tithal is home to two significant temples: the Shri Sai Baba temple, which is 1.5 km south of the main beach, and the Shri Swami Narayan temple, which is 1.6 km north of the main beach.

How to get there

By Road: The Tithal Beach is well connected with major cities such as Surat (95 Km), Mumbai (196 Km) and Ahmedabad (336 Km) through road network.

By Train: The nearest Railway station is Valsad, which is around 5 km from Tithal Beach and it takes about 12 Minutes to reach.

By Air: The nearest Airport is at Surat, which is well connected to the rest of the country by regular flights. Surat Airport is located at a distance of approximately 93 km from Tithal Beach and it takes about 2.5 hours to reach.

Mandvi beach

The Mandvi beach is a stretch of golden-brown sand located at the southernmost point of Gujarat's Kutch district. It is located south of the main intersection, Bhuj. The beach is located in the same town as its name, which historically had a busy port serving India. The historic part of the town still has the fort wall from the former trading centre. The serene beach is a welcome addition for visitors to the area. Evenings are especially wonderful because of the sunset and all the activity from snack vendors to balloon vendors.

How to get there

By Road: 58 kilometres to the southwest of Bhuj is Mandvi. Public and private buses connect the city with all the main Gujarati cities.

By Train: Bhuj is well linked by train. The railroad station is a part of the western railroad system.

By Air: Bhuj is well linked by air. There are numerous domestic flights from popular Indian cities from the Bhuj airport, which is located 4 km from the city.

Pingleshwar Beach

Near to Mandvi Kutch, Pingleshwar Beach is a fantastic tourist destination. This Kutch beach's golden sands are worth visiting, to fully savour special times with your loved ones. It is located close to the Nalia bird sanctuary, around 17 kilometres from the coastal NH 8A. The beach is well known for being a wetland that welcomes migratory birds every year and for featuring stunning wind farms.

How to get there

By Road: Driving time from Bhuj to Ahmedabad is approximately 7 hours. Bhuj is located about 85 kilometres from Rann of Kutch.

By Train: At 85 kilometres, Bhuj is the nearest aviation and train hub to Rann of Kutch.



By Air Mumbai and Bhuj are connected by the small but bustling Rudra Mata airport in Bhuj.

Dumas Beach

The Dumas Beach is in Gujarat, a state in Western India, 13 miles southwest of Surat, along the Arabian Sea. It is without a doubt one of the most picturesque and gorgeous beaches, with black sand all around it.

Main attraction: The beautiful black sand that covers the beach makes it one of the unique destinations for a visit.

How to get there

By Road: urat lies 234 km from Ahmedabad, 154 km from Vadodara and 297 km from Mumbai. Bus stations, both ST and private, are on the eastern edge of the city.

By Train: The nearest Railway station is Surat Junction, which is around (22.6) km from dumas beach and it takes about 39 Minutes to reach.

By Air: The nearest Airport is at Surat, Surat Airport is located at a distance of approximately (6.9 km) from dumas beach and it takes about 12 Minutes to reach.

Suvali Beach

A tranquil and serene beach, Suvali Beach, is located 20 kilometres from Surat. The beach, which is primarily frequented by loners seekers of solitude, is steadily becoming a popular tourist destination. The spotless beach, which is outside the city centre, provides city dwellers and other tourists with the ideal escape from the shrill noise and hectic pace of the metropolis.

How to get there

By Road: Surat lies 234 km from Ahmedabad, 154 km from Vadodara and 297 km from Mumbai. Bus stations, both ST and private, are on the eastern edge of the city.

By Train: The nearest Railway station is Surat Junction, which is around (28.7 km) from Suvali beach and it takes about 54 Minutes to reach.

By Air: The nearest Airport is at Surat, which is well connected to the major cities of the country such as Ahmedabad and Mumbai by regular flights. Surat Airport is located at a distance of approximately (22.6 km) from Suvali beach and it takes about 36 Minutes to reach.

Dandi Beach

Dandi in Surat is a stunning beach destination and is well renowned for its significant historical role in India struggle for independence from British rule. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi started the Dandi March, also known as the Salt March, which was an act of civil disobedience in colonial India. You can take a seat and unwind in the arms of nature, or you can investigate the surroundings and feed your inner historian some ideas. When in Surat, make sure to visit the Dandi beach, which is great for a relaxing weekend break!

How to get there

By Road: Surat lies 234 km from Ahmedabad, 154 km from Vadodara and 297 km from Mumbai. Bus stations, both ST and private, are on the eastern edge of the city.

By Train: The nearest Railway station is Navsari Junction, which is around (16.9 km) from Dandi beach and it takes about 27 Minutes to reach.

By Air: The nearest Airport is at Surat, which is well

connected to the major cities of the country such as Ahmedabad and Mumbai by regular flights. Surat Airport is located at a distance of approximately (55.9 km) from Dandi beach and it takes about 1 hr 21 Minutes to reach.

Okha-Madhi Beach

Okha-Madhi Beach is a popular destination for holiday retreat vacation tours and water sports in Gujarat and along its shorelines. Okha-Madhi Beach is the best destination because of the beautiful sunrise and sunset views and the clean sand there. Okha-Madhi Beach, which has a beautiful shoreline, takes the top spot. With crystal-clear waters that are perfect for snorkelling, the spotless beach stretches out for miles in a warm sun.

How to get there

By Road: The city is also well connected by a robust state-run buses.

By Train: The nearest Railway station is Dwarka Junction, which is around (23.9 km) from Okhamadhi beach and it takes about 24 Minutes to reach.

By Air: The nearest Airport is at Porbandar, which is well connected to the major cities of the country such as Ahmedabad and Mumbai by regular flights. Porbandar Airport is located at a distance of approximately (83.5 km) from Okha mandi beach and it takes about 1 hr 12 Minutes to reach.

Mahuva Beach

Mahuva is frequently referred to as the Kashmir of Saurashtra because of its temperate climate and verdant environs. The towns beach is where most visitors are drawn. The calm seas and stunning scenery of Mahuva Beach are well known. Because of the historic Bhavani Mata Temple that is perched atop a dune in its sandy borders, the beach is also known as Bhavani Beach. The region surrounding the village and the beach is extraordinarily lush, and the landscape is studded with coconut and palm trees, providing guests with the ideal environment for relaxation. To completely revive oneself, one can take a dip in the cool Arabian Sea and take a stroll down the shore.

How to get there

By Road: Bhavnagar is 100 kilometres away from Mahuva. You can get there via several public or private buses.

By Train: The nearest Railway station is Mahuva Junction, which is around (1.8 km) from Mahuva beach and it takes about 8 Minutes to reach.

By Air: The nearest Airport is at Bhavnagar, Airport is located at a distance of approximately (100.0 km) from Mahuva beach and it takes about 2 hr 9 Minutes to reach.



Discover the Ancient Buddhist Sites of Chhattisgarh: A Journey through History and Culture



Chhattisgarh, a state in central India, is home to several Buddhist sites of historical and cultural significance. These sites are a testament to the spread of Buddhism in India, and showcase the rich cultural heritage and artistic legacy of the region.

• Tarsh Sharma

Chhattisgarh is a state that is rich in Buddhist history and culture. Its many Buddhist sites, temples, and monasteries are a testament to the spread of Buddhism in India, and are a must-visit for anyone interested in Buddhism, Indian

history, or architecture. The state's many festivals and events also provide a glimpse into the vibrant and diverse cultural traditions of the region. The Buddhist sites in Chhattisgarh provide visitors with a unique opportunity to explore the rich cultural

and religious heritage of India and to learn about the history of Buddhism in the region. From the serene and picturesque Mainpat to the grand and majestic sites of Sirpur, the Chhattisgarh Buddhist sites have something to offer to the discerning traveler.

Sirpur

Almost everything we know about this amazing archaeological site has been reconstructed tentatively from inscriptions and carvings. The ruins here will challenge your imagination, and walking through the streets will transport you back in time.

Getting There:

The nearest major city to Sirpur is Raipur, which is well connected by air, rail, and road. From Raipur, you can take a taxi or a bus to reach Sirpur. The journey takes around 2 hours by road, and the route is scenic and beautiful.

Exploring the Site:

Sirpur is an important centre of Buddhism during 6th to 10th century BC. Situated at a distance of 78 km from Raipur, the Buddhist monastery here is one of the largest in India.

The site comprises the remains of 100 Buddha viharas, four Jain viharas, 200 mounds and more than 100 Lord Shiva temples.

In the seventh century CE, famous Chinese traveller Huien Tsang visited Sirpur. He described the city in his accounts as a pillar of Buddhism in the central region. The excavations here have

yielded extensive ruins of ancient structures scattered over a vast area which is supposed to be four times bigger than that of Nalanda. Among the numerous temples and Buddhist monasteries (viharas), the most notable are the Lakshman Temple, Gandheshwar Temple, Anandprabhu Kutir Vihara, Swastika Vihara and enchanting SurangTila. The 7th century Laxman Temple known for its intricate carvings

and beautiful architecture, is one of the finest of examples of brick temples in India.

Huien Tsang also writes that great Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna spent time at the Chand Dai Cave in the Singhadhurva forests of Sirpur. It is fitting that the Dalai Lama on his visit in 2013 meditated here and in Anand Prabhu Kuti Vihara that houses the six-feet tall image of meditating Buddha in bhumisparsh mudra.



What to Bring:

When visiting Sirpur, it's a good idea to wear comfortable clothes and shoes as there is a lot of walking involved. You should also bring sunscreen, a hat, and plenty of water as the site can get quite hot and dry during the day. Don't forget to bring your camera as well to capture the beautiful architecture and scenery.



Sirpur is a must-visit destination for anyone interested in history and culture. With its beautiful temples, viharas, and pristine beauty, the site provides a glimpse into the rich cultural and religious heritage of India. So, plan a visit to Sirpur and experience the beauty and tranquility of this ancient site.



Pragyagiri

Pragyagiri, the well known Buddhist destination of Chhattisgarh is located at a distance of 36kms from the temple town of Dongargarh. The site surrounded by beautiful forests and scenic landscapes, making it an ideal destination for tourists interested in history and nature. Here is a guide to help you plan your visit to the Pragyagiri Buddhist site.

Getting There:

The nearest major city to Pragyagiri is Raipur which is well connected by air, rail, and road. From Raipur, you can take a taxi or a bus to reach the site. The journey takes around 2-3 hours by road, and the route is scenic and beautiful.

Exploring the Site:

Pragyagiri is a hilltop site that is home to modern Buddhist structures. The site is spread over a large area, and it is recommended to hire a guide to help you navigate the site and provide you with information about the history and significance of the various structures.

Pragyagiri is at a hilltop located at a height 650 m above the ground level. Pragyagiri gets its name from the 30 feet high statue of Buddha installed there in 1998. One has to climb 225 steps to the top to reach the temple but it is well worth the experience. One of the main attractions of the site is the beautiful

Pragyagiri Stupa, which is a tall, white structure that can be seen from miles away. It is surrounded by beautiful gardens and offers stunning views of the surrounding landscapes. Sunrise and sunsets are worth witnessing.

What to Bring:

When visiting Pragyagiri (Dongargarh), it's a good idea to wear comfortable clothes and shoes as there is a lot of walking involved. You should also bring sunscreen, a hat, and plenty of water as the site can get quite hot and dry during the day. Don't forget to bring your camera as well to capture the beautiful architecture and scenery.



Pragyagiri is an important destination for anyone interested in Buddhism, history, and nature. With its beautiful stupas, rock-cut caves, and stunning landscapes, the site provides a glimpse into the rich cultural and religious heritage of India. So, plan a visit to Pragyagiri Dongargarh and experience the beauty and tranquility of this ancient site.

Mainpat



If you're a tourist interested in exploring the rich cultural and religious heritage of India, a visit to Mainpat Buddhist Site in the state of Chhattisgarh is highly recommended. The site, which is located in the small town of Mainpat, is a significant Buddhist pilgrimage site that is home to several natural attractions, stupas, and temples. Here's a brief guide to help you plan your visit to the Mainpat Buddhist Site.

Getting There:

The nearest major city to Mainpat is Ambikapur, which is well connected by rail and road. From Raipur, you can take a taxi, bus or train to reach Mainpat. The scenery along the way is beautiful.

Exploring the Site:

Popularly known as Shimla of Chhattisgarh, Mainpat is a plateau located at a height of 1099 m from the sea level. It is a place where Buddhism blossoms in the most spectacular natural surroundings. Mainpat has a large population of migrant Tibetans, who were settled here after 1959 when his holiness the Dalai Lama and his followers moved to India.

Based in Surguja, the people here offer a warm delight to the travellers, giving a glimpse of their

Buddhist culture that transcends all religions. The Buddhist temple in Mainpat, the only one of its kind in Chhattisgarh, is one of the area's major tourist attractions. This temple is of special interest to various tourists because it has rare confluence of Surguja's simplistic Adivasi culture and Tibetan Buddhist culture. The temple is home to several statues of Buddha and other important Buddhist figures, and it has a peaceful and serene atmosphere that is perfect for meditation.

Apart from Buddhist sites one can also enjoy camping and the adventure sports like rock climbing and rappelling at Mainpat.

The site is also home to several stupas or hemispherical structures that were used to store the relics of Buddha and other important Buddhist figures. The stupas are made of stone and are adorned with carvings and inscriptions.

What to Bring:

When visiting the Mainpat Buddhist Site, it's a good idea to wear comfortable clothes and shoes as there is a lot of walking involved. You should also bring sunscreen, a hat, and plenty of water as the site can get quite hot and dry during the day. Don't forget to bring your camera as well to capture the beautiful architecture and scenery.

The Mainpat Buddhist Site is a must-visit destination for anyone interested in Buddhism, history, art and adventure. With its stunning natural beauty and peaceful temples, the site provides a glimpse into the rich cultural and religious heritage of India. So, plan a visit to the Mainpat Buddhist Site and experience the beauty and tranquility of this ancient site.



Explore and discover the teeming wildlife of Telangana in their indigenous habitat and get truly mesmerized by the rare exotic and native species of birds, mammals, snakes, amphibians and other flora and fauna.

• Tarsh Sharma

Telangana, by virtue of its unique location in the heart of Deccan Plateau enjoys unique climatic conditions. This is considered conducive for the thriving flora and fauna. There are renowned wildlife sanctuaries all over the region. Kawal is a dense forest region, which is home to endangered tigers. It is also called as Jannaram wildlife sanctuary.

Some of the other prominent wildlife sanctuaries in Telangana are Mrugavani National Park, KBR Park, Pranahita wildlife sanctuary, Shivaram wildlife Sanctuary, Nagarjuna Sagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve, Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary, Shamirpet Deer Park, Nehru Zoological Park, Manjira Wildlife Sanctuary etc. The Deccan plateau is a region of unique and great biodiversity, reflected in the various wildlife havens of the region. There are many facilities provided, for tourists to enjoy a glimpse of the wildlife habitat.

Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary

If you want to explore one of the oldest wildlife sanctuaries of Telangana, then you just can't miss the Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary. The sanctuary is located at a distance of 110 kilometers from Warangal. The Eturnagaram Sanctuary was

declared a wildlife sanctuary in the year 1953 by the former Hyderabad Government, thanks to its rich bio-diversity. One just can't stop observing and praising the sanctuary's unique feature in the face of climbers, which are found in great quantity across the length and breadth of this marvelous natural park. The area in this wildlife park is full of steep and gentle slopes. On the top of it, the wildlife sanctuary area has some historical significance owing to the existence of tree fossils in this Sarvai area and caves.

Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary is also counted as those rare eco-regions around the globe that has various embryonic species of ephemeral elements. The natural park is spread over an area of 806 sq.kms in Warangal district. This very scenic place is a narrow band of forest formation and lose to three-fourths of this entire land is identified by rising and falling plain land surface while the remaining part of it is hilly with a superfluity of streams and springs. The perennial river Dayyam Vagu flows through this beautiful sanctuary. This Vagu separates the wildlife sanctuary into two parts. The region is covered completely with thick natural vegetation. The plethora of water in the sanctuary attributes to the presence of reptiles like the famous Mugger crocodiles and snakes like the Cobra, Python and Krait. Best season to visit the

sanctuary is from October to April.

Shivaram Wildlife Sanctuary

Located along the holy River Godavari which is the lifeline to the Sivaram wildlife Sanctuary in Karimnagar district of Telangana, the total area of this beautiful wildlife Sanctuary is approx. 36.29 sq.kms. This wildlife sanctuary is well known for Marsh Crocodiles that are seen throughout the Indo Gangetic plain.

The marsh crocodiles are the fresh water crocodile which are also known as Mugger Crocodiles. These mugger crocodiles outnumber the salt water crocodiles, and can crawl for a considerable distances on land. These crocodiles that are equally mobile on land as well as in water, and this quality stands as the hot tourist attraction at Sivaram wildlife Sanctuary in Telangana.

The deciduous vegetation of this sanctuary consisting of Timan, Terminalias, Teak, Gumpena, Kodsha. It also has some Thorny Shrubs. The wildlife sanctuary attracts a lot of tourists with its wide collection of fauna which includes Sloth bear, Nilgai, Panther, Langaur, Rhesus Monkey, Cheetal, etc. The most appropriate time for a visit to this wildlife Sanctuary is winter.



Nagarjunsagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve

The Nagarjunsagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve, which is spread over Nalgonda and Mahabubnagar is the largest Tiger reserve in the country. This Tiger Reserve covers a total area of about 3,568 square kms. Srisailem's temples and reservoirs are the major attraction for thousands of tourists and pilgrims visiting the holy town.

The Nagarjunsagar-Srisailem Tiger Sanctuary was declared officially in the year 1978 and has been recognized by the Project Tiger in the year 1983. This Reserve has been renamed as the Rajiv Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary in the year 1992. The reserve is known for its breath taking scenic beauty. Situated in the deciduous Nallamala forests, the mystifying landscape of the lofty hills and echoing valleys, exciting winding roads, perennial rivers, is this most charismatic world of the wild cats. It is a true wild paradise. The mighty River Krishna which rising in Sahyadri Hills and makes its way through Maharashtra and Karnataka flows across Nallamala tiger reserve. The best time to visit the Nagarjunsagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve between the months of October to June.

Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary

The Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Khammam district of Telangana, India. This exotic wildlife sanctuary is the natural habitat of some exotic wild life and tourists visiting the sanctuary can easily spot the wide range of animals taking shelter in their natural homes. With such a a sanctuary, the government gives these animals a scope to enjoy their life and regenerate.

The Kinnerasani Wildlife Sanctuary is located at a distance of 21kilometers away from the Paloncha town which is in the district of Khammam. The wildlife sanctuary covers an area of 635.4 square kilometers and this plentiful land serves as the native land for several endangered species. This sanctuary got its name after the river Kinnerasani. This river divides the sanctuary and meets Godavari. The fauna found in this sanctuary are Panthers, Chinkara, Chousinghas, Sambar, Cheetal, Gaurs, Hyena, Jackals, Wild Boars, Tigers, Sloth Bear, and Black Bucks. Tourists can also spot a number of

birds like Jungle Fowl, Quails, Partridges, Peafowl, Nuktas, Spoonbills, Teals, and Doves.

Ujwala and Deer Parks

Ujwala Park located in Karimnagar District was created in 2001 near the Lower Manair Dam close to the outskirts of Karimnagar town. Today it has emerged as one of the famous tourist places in Karimnagar. It is situated near the NTR statue, at the entrance of Karimnagar town for those coming from Hyderabad and for tourists coming from Warangal it is located after Alugunoor Bridge.

Deer Park, also called as Rajeev Gandhi Deer Park is located on the outskirts of Karimnagar town close to the Lower Manair Dam. It is at a short distance from Ujwala Park built on a 30-acre land. It is situated at the entrance of Karimnagar town for tourists coming from Hyderabad and while those coming from Warangal can locate it after the Alugunoor Bridge. These parks have become popular destinations on the tourist circuit of North Telangana and particularly Karimnagar region.

Jannaram Wildlife Sanctuary

Thousands of tourists make it to this secluded animal kingdom for experiencing the beauty of the dense forests that houses many varieties of trees. Winter is considered as an ideal season to visit this sanctuary. Cheetal, Sambar, Nilgai, Sloth Bear, Barking Deer, Indian

Bison, Panther and Tiger are some of the animal species that are spotted here.

Tourists can even find reptiles such as Crocodile, Monitor Lizard, Python, Star Tortoise and Cobra, in Kawal wildlife sanctuary. The sanctuary offers services like jeep safaris, and bird watching trips for tourists who can enjoy their stay, spotting rare animals in the wild habitat. Situated in the midst of scenic hillocks and greenery, this is an ideal destination for those who desire to be in unison with nature. Tourists can also take up trekking here in the forests.

Kawal Wildlife Sanctuary located at Jannaram, in Adilabad district of Telangana is listed among the important wildlife sanctuaries in the country. The Kawal sanctuary is home to several varieties of flora and fauna and is a must-see place for those planning to catch a glimpse of wild animals in their most natural habitat.



India Assist: Best Solution in a Confusing Situation

“While you plan your trip through Tour Operator to avoid any travel related issues request him to add mobile based assistance for you and your family” said Mr. Harish Khatri - Founder & MD, India Assist

• Vedika Sharma

Q. Give a brief on India Assist.

India Assist, the showcase startup of GoI is the only Global player pioneering emergency travel assistance service that focuses on providing verified information and on-ground assistance to travelers. We provide assistance in order to make sure that travelers have a better travel experience with the help of a mobile-based app system. It has been developed with an aim of improving the travel experience of Indian and foreign travelers, we offer emergency assistance services to ensure safe and secure travel.

Q. Why do people need travel assistance?

Travel Assistance helps you if you are faced with an emergency during your travel. Moreover, if you are travelling to a new or unknown place for the first time, it gets extremely difficult to plan the trip. We provide emergency travel assistance in a bid to ensure complete peace of mind during your travel.

Q. Please share some features of India Assist's travel assistance?

India Assist offers services like, medical emergency support, on-ground support in theft, loss, emergency transit assistance, verified information and personal help, to give a seamless and hassle-free experience to travellers. We have dedicated on-ground teams to guide people through confusing or unwarranted situations.

- Medical emergency support: IA provides medical support to travelers and helps in connecting to the nearest hospital or medical help team during times of unfortunate accident or medical emergency.
- On-ground support in Theft, Loss, Altercation and Transit Assistance or any urgent/critical requirement: India Assist's dedicated on-ground team connect the travellers to the best solution in a confusing situation.
- Pick and drop services: India Assist offers easy pick & drop service from Airports, Railway Stations & Bus Terminals to the desired location for solo woman travellers or senior citizens in order to provide a seamless travel experience.
- Dedicated 24x7 help desk for travellers: Travelers can call India Assist to get the verified information about the food, medical supplies, and transit queries.

Q. What's the concept behind India Assist?

The concept behind India Assist is to revolutionize

the way people travel. My trip to USA few years ago was an eye opener for me. I interacted with numerous people who wanted to travel to India but were scared that they might face difficulties during their travel in India. That was when the idea of building India Assist came to my mind.

Q. What are your plans with your tie-up with IRCTC?

Recently, India Assist has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) to provide emergency travel assistance service to travellers who have bought tourism packages from IRCTC. By signing the pact with the largest travel aggregator, we aim to deliver 'On-Ground Assistance' to any traveler requiring such help. We have already been offering emergency assistance and verified information through an on-ground team system in over 100 cities in the country. With the pact with IRCTC, we expect to reach 2 million travellers.

Q. How can one avail travel assistance services?

You can avail travel assistance services with the help of our mobile-based app system. We allocate on-ground personnel in order to support and help the travelers by detecting the live location. For instance, our ground assistance teams help people file First Information Report (FIR) at the nearest police station during unforeseen situations like theft or connect them to nearest hospital at the time of medical emergency.

Q. What are your future expansion plans?

Beginning our journey by easing foreigners' travel experience, we have now recreated our services to make relevance with the new-normal domestic travel. India assist is helping travelers by providing services in more than 100 cities in India.

With the further expansion plan, we aim to cover 50 more cities in India by this financial end. Further, we are planning to launch our services in more than 10 countries by 2024.

Q. How do you intend to ease travel hassles?

India Assist had recently redesigned its services to cater to the B2B market for travel which still needs more stability when it comes to traditional B2B setup. "Various stakeholders of the travel ecosystem - travel agents, airlines, hotels or



aggregators — operate individually, and that is why in case of an unfortunate incident like theft/baggage loss, safety or security hazards — it is ultimately the traveller who suffers. It goes above and beyond the traditional protection offered by travel insurance. Where a travel insurance policy will protect against the financial loss of a stolen phone or lost bag, IA will send someone to help customers at the site of the robbery, take them to the police station to help them file a report, and drop them safely at their hotel.

Q. How do you provide assistance to passengers with medical conditions?

'India Assist' provides 'Emergency Call Assistance' to any traveler who requires assistance. To provide seamless travel, India Assist works on an app-based model. The model generates a code when a service is sold to client. Thereafter, the client can download the app using that code. In case they require assistance, they can simply press the alert buttons on the app. Apart from that, a trained India Assist service provider will be assigned and the location of the traveller will get tracked. Based on the support protocol for each situation, the assistant will provide support ease the travelers' experiences.

Q. How travel assistance will help with theft while traveling?

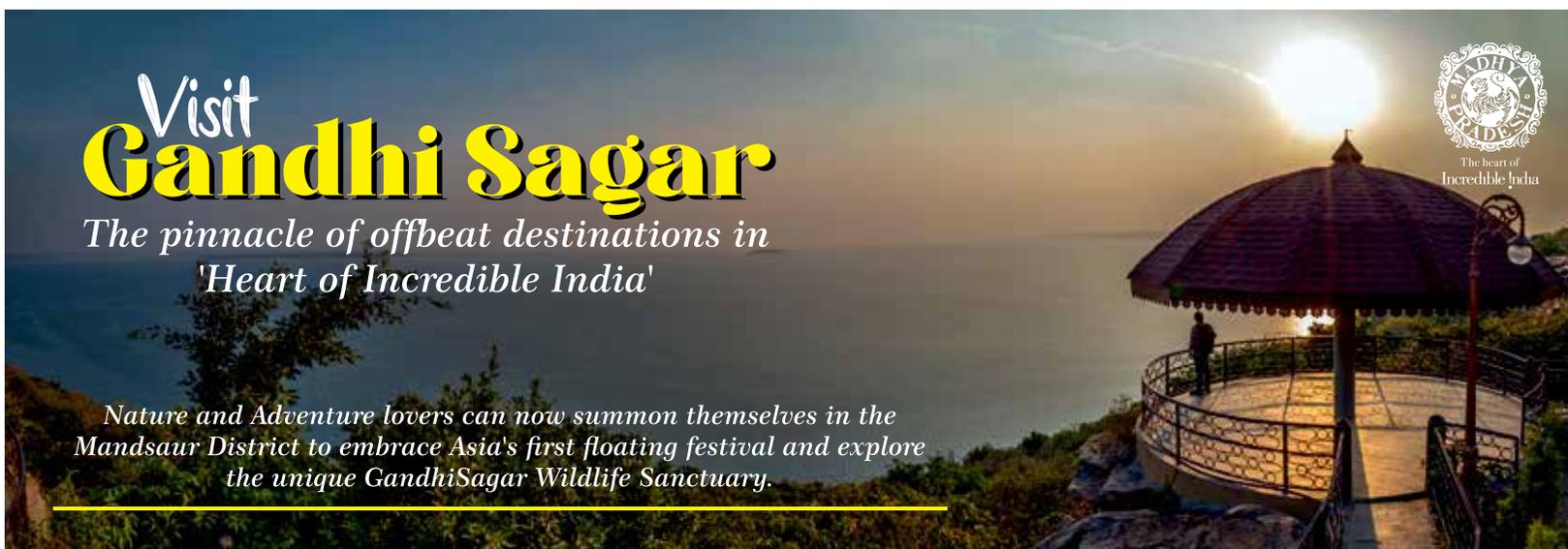
While you plan your trip through Tour Operator to avoid any travel related issues request him to add mobile based assistance for you and your family. The online travel assistance will eliminate all kind of local hassles, benefit you in assisting in any unforeseen situation, and supervise pick-up and drop-off for your convenience. This will work like a boon for both of you and definitely help in creating a better and far more enjoyable experience!



Visit Gandhi Sagar

The pinnacle of offbeat destinations in 'Heart of Incredible India'

Nature and Adventure lovers can now summon themselves in the Mandsaur District to embrace Asia's first floating festival and explore the unique GandhiSagar Wildlife Sanctuary.



Madhya Pradesh; The 'Heart of Incredible India' is a state of immense untapped tourism potential. The Gandhisagar Dam is one of the 4 major dams which are built around the famous Chambal River which houses one of the most undiscovered Wild Life Sanctuaries of Central India, the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary.

In addition to that, The Gandhi Sagar dam also hosts the newly emerged, and Asia's first floating festival, the Gandhi Sagar floating festival.

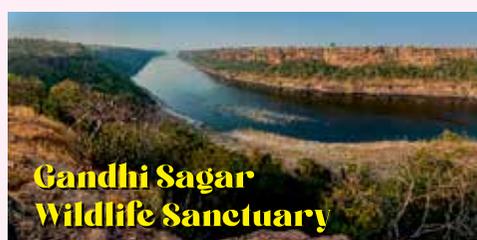


Gandhi Sagar Floating Festival

For the lovers of adventure, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board has introduced Asia's first ever floating festival in Mandsaur. A unique and first of its kind floating festival which will have land, air and water-based adventure activities.

The Floating Festival is a great opportunity for nature lovers and adventurers, allowing them to get away from all the noise of cities. The festival includes a floating stage, floating market, boat spa, boat safari and live music. Apart from these, many exciting adventure activities will be organized alongside the Gandhi Sagar reservoir.

- ✓ The festival was organized for 5 days from 1st till 5th February 2023
- ✓ The tent city for tourists will continue till 30th April 2023
- ✓ Adventure activities will continue till 30th July 2023

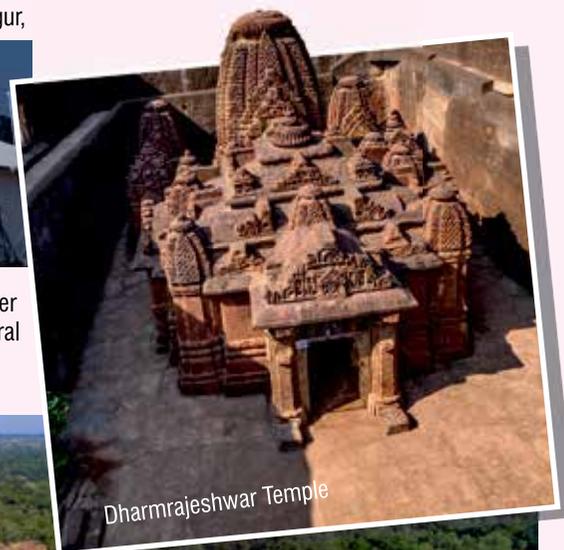


Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary

Gandhi Sagar has a wildlife sanctuary situated on the northern boundary of Mandsaur and Neemuch in Madhya Pradesh. The wildlife sanctuary is spread over an area of more than 300 square kilometres adjoining Rajasthan. The Chambal River passes through the sanctuary dividing it into two parts; The western part, which is in the Neemuch district and eastern part is in the Mandsaur district.

The Sanctuary is open to visit throughout the year except monsoon months, and offers a varied terrain of wooded hills – the forest being dry, mixed and deciduous- and flat grasslands around Gandhi sagar dam submergence, it offers abundant opportunities of sighting a variety of wildlife. The range of tree species found in the Sanctuary are Salai, Kardhai, Dhawda, Tendu, Khair, Palash etc. The predominant species of animals which inhabit the sanctuary are the deer, of which the most easily sighted are the chinkara or Indian Gazelle, Nilgai and Sambar. In addition, the Indian leopard, Langur,

- ✓ Bhanpura Museum is located in Bhanpura, about 30.0 km from Gandhi Sagar dam and around 120kms from Mandsaur in north-east direction. The museum depicts the popular art forms of Mandsaur
- ✓ Dharmrajeshwar is an ancient Buddhist and Hindu cave temple site of Mandsaur which was established in the 4th-5th Century. Dharmrajeshwar Temple signifies brilliant example of Indian rock-cut architecture.



Dharmrajeshwar Temple



Point of Interest

Hinglaj Fort

Gandhisagar has many places of historical, archaeological and religious importance including Chaurasigarh, Chaturbhujnath temple, Bhadrakaji rock paintings, Narsinghjar, Hinglajgarh Fort, Taxakeshwar temple etc.

- ✓ Chaturbhujnath temple, which is dedicated to Lord Vishnu, is situated around 8 km from GandhiSagar dam site.
- ✓ Hinglajgarh or Hinglaj Fort is an ancient fort situated near Navali village of Bhanpura tehsil in the Mandsaur district in Madhya Pradesh. It is a symbol Paramara period and it was established in the 18th century AD.
- ✓ Taxakeshwar temple or Takhaji is a place of significant religious and historical importance in Mandsaur

Connectivity

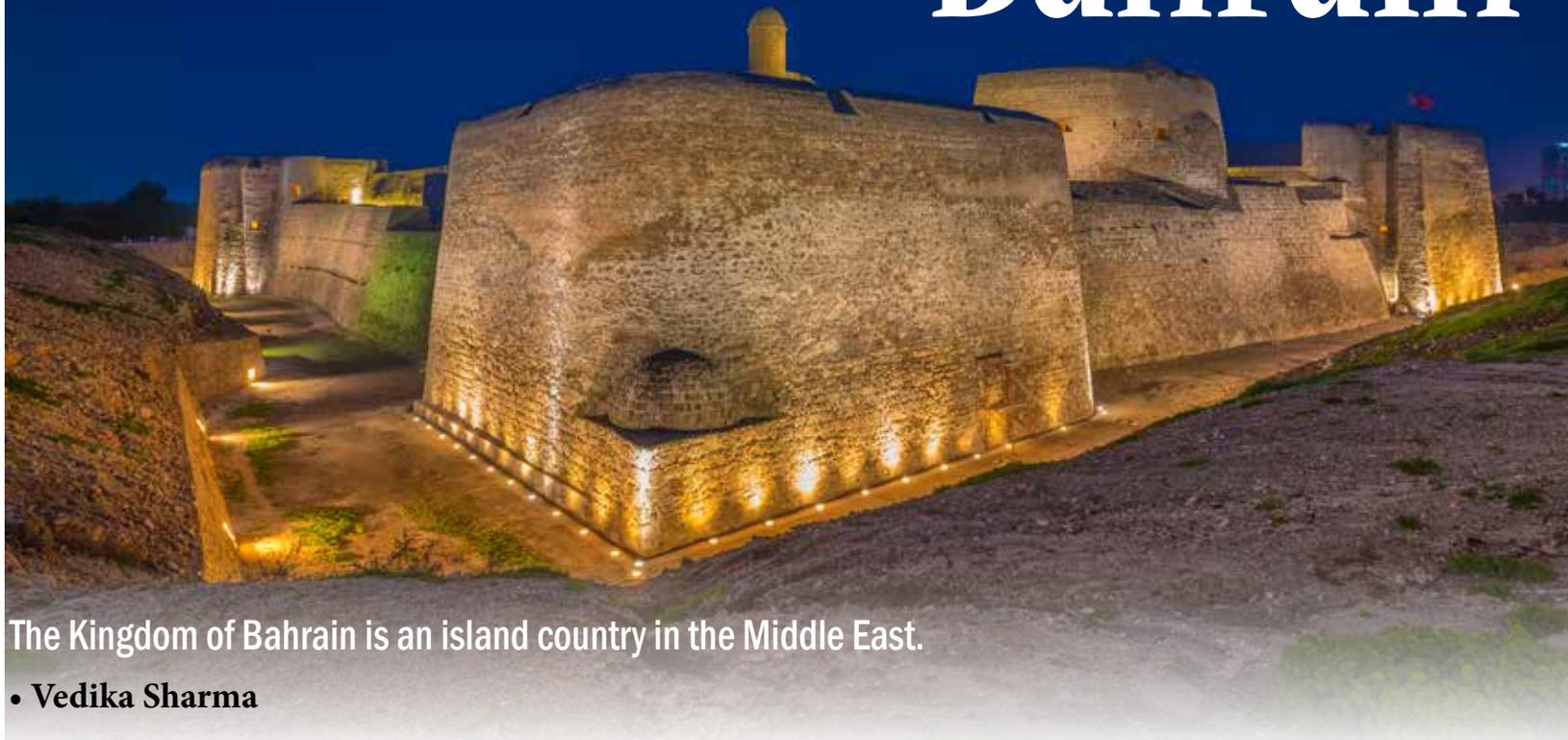
Roadways- Regular buses run to Mandsaur from all the major cities including Neemuch, Ratlam, Ujjain, Indore and Bhopal.

Railways- One can reach Mandsaur very easily as the town has a railway station (Ajmer- Ratlam line and Bhawani Mandi) States like Uttarakhand, Rajasthan and Gujrat are also very well connected by train.

Airways- The nearest airports to Mandsaur are in Indore and Udaipur.

For more details, visit : www.gandhisagarfest.com

Live the experience in Bahrain



The Kingdom of Bahrain is an island country in the Middle East.

• **Vedika Sharma**

This breath-taking island nation is ruled by an Arab royal family in the Arabian Gulf. With an area of approximately 780 square kilometres, it is Asia's third-smallest country after Singapore and the Maldives. Bahrain is one of the top cosmopolitan destinations in the region. Bahrain ought to be your upcoming vacation spot if you desire a location with beautiful landscapes, extravagant accommodations, and adventure activities to do.

Here are some suggestions:

Indoor Skydiving at Gravity

The first indoor skydiving experience in Bahrain offers a thrilling sense of freefall in one of the tallest wind tunnels in the world, with an overall height of 12 meters and tempered glass construction. Jump in as if you were about to jump from a plane, but without the parachute and even without getting on the plane in the first place. Except for those unwilling to embark on a life-altering expedition, anyone can enjoy this body-flight experience. An exceptional and unforgettable experience is assured. Even if you are a first-time flyer, don't worry you will first have a specialized training session after arriving and checking in before getting ready to fly. Your instructor will teach you to fly your body during your flights. With other inexperienced fliers, you alternate taking turns at each manoeuvre. A jumpsuit, helmet, goggles, and earplugs are included in the kit. Gravity records every moment of your "flying" on camera or video so you can have a souvenir to take home. A framed photograph of you "flying" in the tunnel is also offered.

Karting Circuit

Bahrain International Karting Circuit is a world-class

karting track that was the first to accommodate a world championship-level race at night. It is more than just a racetrack for die-hard racers. It also serves as a location for those starting in racing at the local level, as well as those searching to get their first sensory characteristics of the fast-paced existence in motorsport. From championship games, and Mini Grands Prix, as well as track sessions to off-track operations and driving lessons, BIKC has it all, and a visit here will be remembered. This karting venue has over ten different track configurations. The circuit was built to the highest of international standards, permitting it to annex world championship events. Due to the cutting-edge floodlighting system, BIKC exists as the only operating location in the world that can accommodate international tournaments at night. This activity is open to all, adults, and children above the age of 7 years, making it the ideal attraction for millennials, family travelers, and even solo travelers.

Bahrain International Circuit

Bahrain is home to the Bahrain International Circuit, a venue for motorsports. It hired Woodroffe Bassett Design to develop a new, very effective visual design for the tower, with a focus on Bahrain's F1 race at night. The venue for the Formula One Bahrain Grand Prix. This year the race is set to take place from 3rd to 5th March 2023 with international DJ Snake to perform as well.

Al Fateh Grand Mosque

Al Fateh Grand Mosque is another magnificent attraction that you should add to your itinerary. It is the most famous mosque in the Kingdom, and one of the world's largest. It cannot be missed when you

are in Juffair. The enormous dome atop the main prayer structure is built completely out of fiberglass. The building can comfortably hold 7,000 worshippers at any time and is also the site of Bahrain's National Library. The library houses over 50,000 volumes of books in English and Arabic.

Bahrain National Museum

The Bahrain National Museum is the largest and oldest public museum in Bahrain. It is situated in Manama, adjacent to the National Theatre of Bahrain. Considered one of the Kingdom's cultural landmarks, the Bahrain National Museum, was officially inaugurated by the late Amir H.H. Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa on 15th December 1988 and was considered one of the finest museums of its kind in the Gulf region. It is the crowning achievement of the Kingdom of Bahrain's ongoing efforts to preserve the nation's heritage and history. Visitors will be taken on a 6,000-year journey through time as they pass through the museum's halls.

Jarada Island

The disappearing island is famous for the fact that it floats to the surface during certain times of the day based on the tide schedules. As Jarada Island only appears at specific times of the day and then vanishes owing to tidal forces, it is known as a hidden or disappearing island.

The Island has become one of Bahrain's most popular hotspots, drawing both local and international visitors to take advantage of its natural beauty and its many water sports and activities. It is renowned for its clear seas, in which you may swim and dive, and its fine golden sand.

Boat Trip

Surrounded by water, Bahrain offers many sea and beach attractions – though one of the most impressive outings available must be a trip to Jarada Island.

Pearl diving and shucking

Opening the oyster and searching for pearls within is known as pearl shucking. You should try Pearl Shucking i.e. hunting for pearls in Oysters collected by the crew – you will be surprised at just how many pearls you can find! If you're a keen diver, you can also extend your trip and go pearl diving – there is no better place than Bahrain for this!

Al Areen Wildlife

Bahrain's Al Areen Wildlife Park is home to both a zoo and a wildlife reserve. It is one of five declared protected areas in the nation making it the sole protected area on land. The park was created in 1976 and has a total square footage of 7 km. The zoological park contains both plant and animal species that are local to Bahrain as well as species from Africa and south Asia.

In addition to the planted plants and trees, the park is home to various animal species, bird species, plant species as well as falconry. The Arabian oryx, which is extinct in the wild, as well as the South African cheetah, lion, Savannah monitor, African rock python, Persian gazelle, springbok, African wild dog, spotted hyena, Saluki dogs, impala, fallow deer, Chapman's zebra, Honey badger, and desert hares are among the animals that roam the nature reserve area of the park. The scimitar-horned oryx, addax, dama gazelle, giraffes, Nubian ibex, wild goat, barbary sheep, and Asiatic onager are among the Arabian and North African species that can be found there. Additionally, the park practices captive breeding of endangered species. Tour buses departing from the main entrance give visitors access to the park's animals. The park is close to Bahrain International Circuit and can be reached from Manama by car in about 40 minutes.

Dining

Block 338

Block 338, has long been considered one of Bahrain's most well-liked neighbourhoods. With its variety of bars and restaurants, pedestrianized streets, outdoor eating options, and lively ambiance, the region in the northeast of the island can be seen as a counterbalance to the high-rise hotels seen in other parts of the nation.



Shopping

The Avenue

The Avenues – Bahrain, with a unique seafront location stretching 1.5 km is strategically located in the heart of Manama.

What's amazing about this mall is that after a day of shopping, one can just relax by taking a stroll along the waterfront or by enjoying a boat ride around the breath-taking Bahrain Bay. If you still have time, then you can also check out Dragon City.

City Centre Mall

The Bahrain City mall is located in Manama's Seef neighbourhood. This upscale mall, which is also the biggest in Bahrain, includes everything from budget-friendly boutiques to expensive luxury labels. More than 340 stores, including Saks Avenue, Debenhams, Centre Point, Pottery Barn, and Home Centre, as well as 60 restaurants and the largest Carrefour hypermarket, are here to make your shopping experience spectacular. If you still have some time afterward.

The Moda Mall inside the iconic Bahrain World Trade Centre houses over 80 fashion luxury high-end brands like Louis Vuitton, Emporio Armani, Dior, Fendi, Versace, Bottega Veneta, and Gucci. It has the largest luxury brand portfolio of international designers. Of course, when you go to Bahrain, you will definitely want to shop for jewelry and the jewelry court in the mall is just spectacular with brands like Piaget, Chopard, Cartier, etc. The designs and glittery jewels will just leave you astonished.

Luxury Stay

JAW Resort

Built to blend in seamlessly with the nearby Sea and Sand the Jaw Resort & Spa has a beachfront and a lengthy 200-meter stretch of white sand beach that overlooks the alluring crystal blue waters and provides a full range of seaside activities.

This resort brings you handy sights and fascinating dining alternatives as it is conveniently located in the Manama City Centre area of Manama. There is a tonne of on-site amenities at this 4-star hotel to make your stay more enjoyable and high-quality.



The Jaw Resort & Spa offers lodging with a restaurant, a garden, a fitness center, and free private parking. This four-star resort provides complimentary WiFi, room service, and a kids' club. There is a 24-hour front desk, a sauna, and entertainment personnel on the site. Visitors staying at the resort can expect air-conditioned rooms with a desk, a coffee maker, a fridge, a microwave, a safety deposit box, a flat-screen TV, a patio, and a private bathroom with a bidet.

Some of the accommodations at Jaw Resort & Spa have sea views, and every room has a patio. The hotel is beachfront and offers a variety of thrilling water sports. There are alternatives for continental, American, or halal breakfast every day. The resort offers a magnificent experience while guaranteeing our visitors complete privacy and a serene getaway, making it the ideal destination for you and your family. Indulge in pure leisure and relaxation for a pleasant and comfortable stay.

Swan Executive Suites

In Bahrain, Swan Executive Suites is the top choice for both business and vacation guests. Swan Executive Suites, which are in the center of the Seef business sector, have elegant interior design and beautiful architecture.

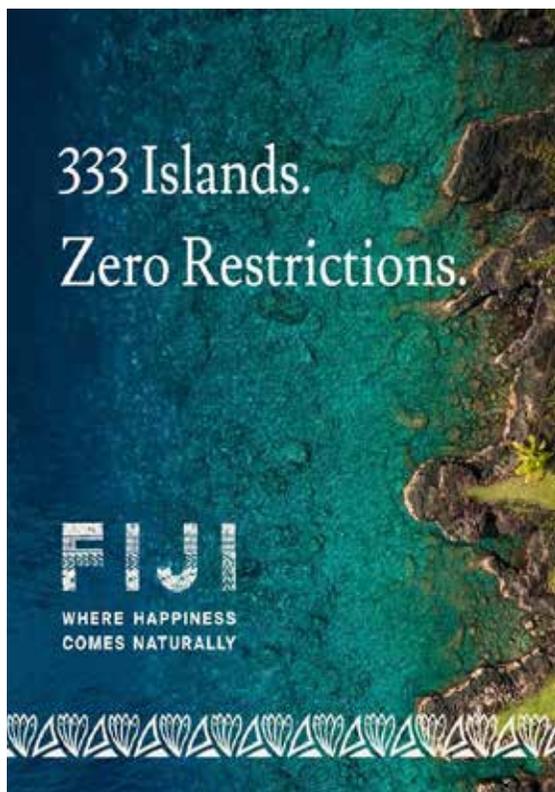
Bedroom Deluxe Suites, Two Bedroom Deluxe Suites, and Two Bedroom Executive Suites are available at Swan Executive Suites. Modern conveniences, a roomy living area with expansive city views, and a fully functional kitchenette are included in every apartment. Outdoor pools with steam and sauna rooms are designed with inspiration from nature and tradition.

Visitors may experience the diverse side of Middle Eastern food, which features mouth-watering dishes with Asian and Western influences. The hotel also provides balance with its rooftop fitness facility, outdoor pool, steam room, and sauna for people to unwind.



No Restrictions for Entry into Fiji

The Fijian Government announced, effective 14 February 2023, international travellers to Fiji will no longer be required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination and travel insurance.



One of the first countries to open its borders in December 2021, Fiji welcomed 636,312 visitors in 2022, a strong recovery surpassing its expected targets. This latest move comes following careful consideration of the global and national COVID-19 situation by the COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Taskforce (CRMT) and applies to both arrivals from air and sea. As the country evolved towards treating COVID-19 as an endemic, the last set of entry requirements were removed last night (14 February 2023).

Previously, all travellers 16 years and above were required to produce proof of full vaccination and travel insurance covering COVID-19.

As reported by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS), Fiji's hospitalisation is low, owed to our community-wide immunisation and in-country surveillance capacity. Notably, the focus remains on implementing COVID safe measures around those vulnerable to the severe effects of COVID-19.

The MHMS also reports 95 percent of Fiji's estimated adult population are vaccinated, with booster shots continuing to be administered to eligible people across the islands.

Therefore, consistent with the experience in other countries with high vaccination rates, Fiji will no longer have any COVID-19 related border health measures.

Fiji's Border Authorities will continue to review border health measures and maintain community surveillance for early warning of future threats while fostering socio-economic recovery.

Brent Hill, Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Fiji



The industry welcomes the decision - no protocols, restrictions, vaccination requirements or COVID-19 tests and invites the world to come experience Fiji: where happiness comes naturally. We still strongly encourage travellers to have travel insurance and take the necessary precautions we all know well to stay healthy and maximize their fun in Fiji!



The Seaport Welcomes the Beginning of Spring with Holi

Spring has sprung! To celebrate, the Seaport, in partnership with The Culture Tree and South Street Seaport Museum, is hosting its annual Holi event on Saturday, March 18.

Holi, the festival of colors that pays tribute to spring, originated in the Indian Subcontinent, and is now acknowledged around the world as a way to welcome the turn of season, embrace inclusivity, and get messy with color.

"The Seaport would not be the same without the people and events that nurture inclusivity, promote creativity and deepen cultural understanding," says Ellie Chamberland, Vice President of Marketing at the Howard Hughes Corporation. "We are grateful for our relationship with The Culture Tree and the opportunity to host an annual Holi

celebration with our neighbors."

Holi festivities will end with powder play, the quintessential part of the holiday when everyone may joyfully toss the vibrant traditional colors throughout the Seaport (Holi Hai!!). The color throwing will begin at 1 p.m. on Fulton and Front streets and the colors may be purchased from vendors at the event. Visitors can also sample traditional Indian cuisine enjoyed during this annual holiday, and shop at the outdoor Indian market on Front Street featuring nearly a dozen Indian-owned businesses, including Tagmo, the Seaport's own Indian restaurant.





Saudi receives more than 2 million visitors from India

In line with Saudi's Vision 2030 and to welcome more than 2 million Indian visitors this year, Saudi Tourism Authority (STA) has strengthened its commitments to driving awareness about tourism and hospitality in its region.

As part of the delegation visit to India earlier this month, this mission program featured a range of meetings, industry round-tables and networking events including participation at the One World Travel Market in Mumbai (OTM) and the South Asian Travel and Tourism Exchange (SATTE) in Delhi. This was followed up with two roadshows in Mumbai and Ahmedabad. Saudi Tourism Authority (STA) has also commenced an official partnership with the world's preeminent Twenty 20 cricket league, the TATA Indian Premier League (IPL) at an event held in Mumbai last week.

India is a key source market for Saudi. As part of Saudi's ambition to achieve 100 million visits annually by 2030, India represents immense potential as it is expected to be one of Saudi's largest tourism source markets by then. During the course of these engagements, STA held 3,000 plus meetings with leading trade partners and travel buyers to promote Saudi as a holiday destination. They also shared insights around the growing trends of MICE tourism and budget travel.

On his recent visit to India, Alhasan Aldabbagh, APAC President at Saudi Tourism Authority, said, "We are delighted to showcase the beauty of Saudi and its diverse tourism offerings all across India. We have received an overwhelmingly positive response from our partners here and STA is

committed to investing, learning and working closely with them to ensure our product offerings are attractive for the Indian market. These engagements are important in helping us achieve ambitious goals and drive visitation numbers from India to Saudi. Last year, we saw 1 million visitors, which has encouraged us to become ambitious about doubling the figures from this region this year. India, we believe, will be the number one tourism source market for us in 2030 as we aim to welcome more than 12 million visitors by then."

"Saudi is a great holiday destination with rich cultural, historical and spiritual sites. It is home to 6 UNESCO world heritage sites and more than 10,000 archaeological sites that are unexplored and that we are waiting to be explored. This includes historical places like Al Balad in Jeddah and Turaif in Diriyah - the birthplace of Saudi.

We also offer a variety of tourism experiences such as the Boulevard World in Riyadh city, Bujairi Terrace home to over 20 retail and lifestyle brands including four Michelin-starred restaurants, Red Sea Project and much more. Apart from our tourism product offerings, we are also working on many exciting partnership and sponsorship opportunities like the IPL. We believe that the partnership with IPL is one of the first steps in strengthening a culture for the game of cricket in Saudi." Alhasan Aldabbagh added.



WeddingSutra has Partnered with the Singapore Tourism Board

With an eye on capturing the wedding tourism market in India, officials from Singapore Tourism Board and Singapore stakeholders hosted a networking session in partnership with WeddingSutra on February 7 and 8, in Mumbai and Delhi respectively.

The networking session, which saw the attendance of India's leading wedding and event planners, was led by Mr. GB Srithar Regional Director India, Middle East & South Asia Singapore Tourism Board, and Mr. Parthip Thyagarajan, Co-founder & CEO, of WeddingSutra.

*The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) re-introduced Singapore as a premium wedding destination at a lively and collaborative 'SingapoReimagine' event. The networking session included an insightful panel discussion with renowned names of the Indian wedding industry along with key Singapore stakeholders such as Sentosa Development Corporation, Gardens by the Bay and Singapore Airlines. The conversation focused on sharing insights on the Indian wedding landscape, changing consumer sentiment during this pandemic and establishing Singapore's right to win in this space.

The networking sessions facilitated one-on-one interactions between the Singapore stakeholders such as Singapore Airlines, Changi Airport Group, Sentosa Development Corporation, Gardens by the Bay, Far East Hospitality and wedding planners highlighting unique venue options, exclusive beach resorts, and private yet luxurious environs.

India has always been a key source market for Singapore. The country ranked second in terms of visitor arrivals in 2022 as travel rebounded after an easing of COVID-19 restrictions. This momentum is only set to continue, with Singapore doing away with travel restrictions altogether and Bhubaneswar set to become the 17th Indian city to be connected to Singapore via a direct flight.

Having traditionally welcomed families, MICE visitors and cruise holiday-goers, Singapore is keen to capitalize on this momentum in visitor arrivals by broadening its appeal as a destination to the wedding category.

The city-state, with its range of attractions and competitive pricing in the premium wedding category is ideally poised to cater to the entire wedding universe, from the pre-wedding photoshoot to the honeymoon.

Moving forward, STB India will continue to facilitate networking between stakeholders from India and Singapore to establish a strong ecosystem and seek ideas and input from industry leaders to map out suitable support efforts required from the STB and the industry to further entrench Singapore's positioning as a destination for weddings.

South African Tourism receives 64% forward bookings from Mumbai

South Africa emerged as one of the leading travel destinations for Indians in 2022. Owing to its robust recovery efforts and aim to promote diverse, authentic destination offerings through the More&More campaign, an increasing number of Indian tourists are choosing South Africa as their next adventure destination.

To propel the momentum further, South African Tourism organised Roadshows in key Indian cities – Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Mumbai between 13th and 16th February along with its 35-member trade delegation showcasing innovative and one-of-a-kind offerings for Indian consumers and trade partners. Participating exhibitors represented key regions such as Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Limpopo, and Eastern Cape aspiring for fruitful partnerships. The Roadshow held in Mumbai resulted in reinforcement of existing business deals between

key Indian and South African trade partners and South African Tourism as well as paved the way towards building many such meaningful partnerships in the near future.

In 2022, India moved up two spots to become the 6th largest international source market for driving tourism in South Africa. Providing guidance on its strategic roadmap for 2023, its tourism board is aiming to achieve a substantial increase of 72%, in Indian travellers over their previous year's target. Keeping in mind the current demand, the tourism board is also eyeing an overall increase of 35% in MICE travellers from India.



**Neliswa Nkani,
Hub Head,
MEISEA,
South African
Tourism**

This is the 19th edition of our annual India Roadshow, and each time we are humbled by the warmth destination South Africa receives from travellers across the country. India continues to remain one of our key focus markets globally and it is encouraging to see upward growth from emerging cities like Kolkata, Chennai, and

Hyderabad, while traditional markets like Mumbai and Delhi continue to flourish. Building on this momentum further, we recently launched the second leg of our More & More campaign to engage with the audience from our target regions within India through desi and localized content. Through our customized engagement models we hope to further build aspiration and intent to travel.



Tourism Australia and Singapore Airlines have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Tourism Australia and Singapore Airlines (SIA) have signed a new three-year marketing agreement aimed at promoting business events travel to Australia.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Tourism Australia and Singapore Airlines will jointly deliver a range of marketing and promotional trade activities within Asia and the United Kingdom to promote Australia as the ideal destination for business events. The activities will highlight Australia's strengths as a world class business events destination including its iconic and diverse landscapes, award winning venues, unique experiences and friendly people with fresh perspectives.

Tourism Australia's Executive General Manager of Eastern Markets and Aviation, Andrew Hogg said, "Singapore Airlines is one of our longest standing airline partners and I am thrilled we are working together once again to promote why there's nothing like Australia for business events. Business events are incredibly valuable to Australia's visitor economy and strategic partnerships such as this, help to secure

future business for Australia".

Prior to the pandemic business events was a strong performing sector for Australia with 1.04 million arrivals, spending A\$4.5 billion for the year to 31 December 2019.

Ms JoAnn Tan, Senior Vice President Marketing Planning, Singapore Airlines, said, "Australia has always been an attractive and popular destination for both leisure and corporate travellers, and Singapore Airlines remains firmly committed to keep Australia connected to the world. With our 111 weekly services between Singapore and seven points in Australia, coupled with our extensive passenger network, we are pleased to support efforts in promoting business events travel to Australia."





Food Trails in New Zealand for a Gastronomic Indulgence

Every traveller's checklist may not be the same. Some may want to indulge more in thrilling activities while others may want to relax in tranquillity. But there is something that stays constant no matter what your travel persona may be. Food is something that connects with all of us! Good food paired with great surroundings can never go wrong - nothing can beat savouring local cuisines while exploring a new city or country.

New Zealand has a lot to offer to every food and wine enthusiast. Beautiful vineyards with cellar doors, unique restaurants with friendly locals, and picturesque cafes with tantalizing brew - one is spoiled with choices. We bring to you 4 food experiences fused with tours - a great way to discover the sights and food of a region.

Food and Spice Odyssey:

Discover Wellington, the capital of New Zealand, on the ultimate Walking Tour and take in the distinctive food and beverage explosion that has made Wellington one of the trendiest little capitals in the world. You'll have the chance to go on an extraordinary adventure throughout Wellington where you'll discover hidden jewels and eat and drink the magic of regional flavour sensations. Through this tour, get to explore the sites and discover the capital's fascinating history.

Āmiki Tours

The tours are based in Christchurch and offer cultural food tours of the city led by guide, Riwai Grace. The tours are about sharing the

ancestors' cultural stories, and the narrative of diverse people which now call Ōtautahi Christchurch home. It's about getting out and walking to your destinations, discovering Māori and settler heritage, and connecting you with the exquisite, hard-to-find local establishments that have unique stories to tell. During the tour, you will visit 3-5 whānau/family-owned eating establishments in the city that are eager for you to try their delectable creations and enjoy the relaxed Kiwi atmosphere.

Nomad Safaris

The Nomad Safaris E-bike Wine Tour is a great way to combine adventure and relaxation. Cruise over suspension bridges and along scenic cycle paths with views of the Southern Alps in the distance before stopping at Kinross Cellar Door for a series of six local wine tastings. Your wine is included in the price and you can also order a platter or plate here. You can also go to the world-famous home of bungy jumping and watch some daring jumpers. Finally, you can unwind as they drive you back to Queenstown in their luxurious vehicle. This is an excellent way to discover Queenstown's



scenic cycleways and boutique wines!

Aroha Tours

Go on a 14-day gourmet tour with Aroha tours if indulging in regional cuisine and wine is something you must do. New Zealand won't let you down if fine dining and a glass of wine or craft beer are top priorities for you. Whether you're a wine enthusiast or a foodie, you'll enjoy the variety of flavours found in both the North and South Island on this tour. At one of the many vineyards spanning every area, savour a fine winery lunch. Learn about Māori (Native) cooking methods and ingredients with a contemporary twist. Eat at one of Rick Stein's favourite eateries along the ocean where you can get the freshest catch. Kiwis adore their fresh, varied, and delectable food, and chefs creatively reinterpret gourmet dining with amusing regional touches.

Leave full to the brim with food and local advice as New Zealand is a Pacific-rim foodie paradise.

Air India to add over 4200 cabin crew and 900 pilots through 2023

Air India, India's leading airline and a Star Alliance member, announced plans to hire over 4200 cabin crew trainees and 900 pilots in 2023 as the airline adds new aircraft and rapidly expands its domestic and international operations.

Earlier this month, Air India announced a mega order to purchase 470 aircraft from Boeing and Airbus to support its growth plans. It has already announced plans to lease 36 aircraft of which two

B 777-200 LR have already joined the fleet.

The cabin crew, who will be recruited from around the country, will undergo a 15-week programme imparting safety and service skills, and will be coached to exemplify the best of Indian hospitality and Tata group culture. The training program will include extensive classroom and in-flight training at the airline's training facility in Mumbai as well as familiarization flights.

Notably, between May 2022-February 2023, Air India has hired over

1900 cabin crew. Over 1,100 cabin crew have been trained in the last seven months (between July'22-January'23), and in the past three months, approximately 500 cabin crew have been released for flying by the airline.

Commenting on the hiring plans, Sandeep Verma, Head - Inflight Services said, "With a sizeable aircraft order that was announced earlier in the month, more flights on international and domestic networks, and re-alignment of domestic routes with AIX connect, cabin crew will play a decisive role in shaping the present and future of the Air India group. Addition of fresh talent will also accelerate the pace of cultural transformation at Air India, which is an integral part of our Vihaan.AI transformation program. We are also looking to step up hiring of more pilots and maintenance engineers."

AirAsia India commences operations from Terminal 2 at BLR Airport

AirAsia India commenced operations from the newly launched Terminal 2 at BLR Airport in Bengaluru from 15th February. Bengaluru is the largest hub for the airline, with 43 scheduled daily departures connecting Bengaluru to Delhi, Goa, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Guwahati, Pune, Bagdogra, Lucknow, Ranchi, Kochi, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Jaipur, and Surat. The airline also operates connecting flights from Bengaluru to Imphal and Srinagar.

Flydubai has increased its network in Africa to 11 destinations

flydubai, the Dubai-based airline, announced the launch of a daily service to Mogadishu Aden Adde International Airport (MGQ) from 09 March 2023. The carrier will double the frequency of flights from 01 June 2023, making it the first carrier to connect Somalia directly with Dubai and the United Arab Emirates.

With the start of flights to Mogadishu from 09 March 2023, flydubai expands its network in Africa to 11 destinations, providing passengers from the

UAE and the region with more convenient options for travel. This includes Addis Ababa, Alexandria, Asmara, Dar esSalaam, Djibouti, Entebbe, Hargeisa, Khartoum, Juba and Zanzibar.

Hamad Obaidalla, Chief Commercial Officer at flydubai



We continue to look for opportunities to grow our network in East Africa and open up underserved markets. This region has seen significant economic growth and development in recent years, our direct flights will further stimulate the economy and help create free flows of travel and trade.

Sudhir Sreedharan, Senior Vice President of Commercial Operations (UAE, GCC, Africa and the Indian Subcontinent) at flydubai



Flydubai will offer convenient and reliable travel services between both countries. This route will be operated by our fleet of Boeing 737 MAX aircraft, offering customers the comfort of our Business Class cabin or a more customised experience in Economy Class. We are looking forward to doubling our frequency to Somalia from 01 June 2023 and further connecting the market to Dubai and beyond.



Etihad Introduces new Flights to Thrilling Summer Destinations

Etihad Airways is expanding its European network this summer with the introduction of a new direct service between Abu Dhabi and Lisbon, effective from 2 July 2023.

The airline will be connecting Abu Dhabi to Portugal's capital city right in time for the summer holidays, with three weekly flights scheduled to be operated on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Sundays.

Summer flights to Malaga and Mykonos

As well as introducing flights to Lisbon, Etihad Airways will be returning to Málaga on the Spanish Costa del Sol and the popular Greek island of Mykonos this summer. Etihad Airways will be flying to Málaga twice-per-week, on Wednesdays and Sundays, from 18 June 2023. Lying on a wide bay with stunning views of the Mediterranean Sea and one of the most visited coastal cities in Spain,

Málaga is famous for its miles-long sandy beaches, culture and food.

Travellers can also look forward to Etihad Airways launching flights to Mykonos, lying in the deep blue waters of the Aegean sea, with twice-per-week services on Mondays and Fridays from 16 June 2023. With world-class beaches, restaurants and entertainment, as well as plenty of opportunities to discover ancient Greek history, the island is one of the hottest summer spots in Europe.

With the addition of new routes to Lisbon, Malaga and Mykonos, Etihad Airways will be offering travellers nearly 160 weekly flights to 21 destinations in Europe this summer, with 20% more seats available than in 2022.

Antonoaldo Neves, Chief Executive Officer of Etihad Airways



We're excited to introduce flights to Portugal for the first time and provide our guests with convenient travel options to one of the most popular summer destinations for 2023.

As one of the oldest cities in Western Europe, the coastal city of Lisbon is a great entry-point to exploring the rest of the country, with perfect beaches, historic castles, fantastic nightlife and a warm and welcoming people. Our new

direct connection will enhance the trade and tourism ties between the UAE and Portugal, and we are grateful for the support of the Portuguese authorities in establishing our new air link.

SAUDIA: Your Ticket Your Visa Service

SAUDIA, the national flag carrier of Saudi Arabia, has announced the launch of "Your Ticket Your Visa". The first-of-its-kind service provides guests with even easier access to the Kingdom through a digital integration system that links transit visas with flight tickets.



Your "Ticket Your Visa" service is introduced in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, the Pilgrims Service Program, and the Saudi Tourism Authority.

The new service, which covers all international airports in the Kingdom, will allow guests to stay in the Kingdom for up to 96 hours, during which they can travel around the Kingdom and perform Umrah. The digital integration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs facilitates the issuing of the transit visa and links it to the flight ticket within three minutes.

The launch of the new service comes

in line with SAUDIA's commitment to promote King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah and strengthen its role in the region by configuring SAUDIA's flights coming from the east and departing to the west, facilitating travel procedures by collaborating with the Jeddah Airports Company, and coordinating with the Saudi Tourism Authority to provide incentive packages for those wishing to benefit from "Your Ticket Your Visa" service.

The "Your Ticket Your Visa" service is part of the digital services provided by SAUDIA via its website and smart applications, which are constantly evolving to facilitate and simplify travel procedures and make a shift in the after-sales services.

Captain Ibrahim Koshy, CEO of SAUDIA



The launch of this innovative and seamless Stopover Visa is the first of its kind in the aviation industry and a significant milestone in our digital transformation program. It is a testament to SAUDIA's commitment to supporting the Kingdom's strategic goal of reaching 100 million visits by 2030 and we are confident it will positively impact the growing number of transit passengers while enhancing our position as a hub that connects East and West. The new service will also encourage passengers to perform Umrah, visit key destinations and attend events and Saudi seasons.



New Choice of New India

“As a leading private jet and charter company in India, we believe that the government's initiative to promote domestic tourism will definitely benefit our business.” said Kanika Tekriwal, CEO, JetSetGo.

Give us some insights about your family and background?

I come from a Marwari family, all my family members are involved in various businesses in some form or other.

Did you think about starting JetSetGo-Aviation before you were diagnosed with Cancer?

Since the age of four, I had aspired to become a pilot, but coming from a traditional Marwadi business family, it was tough for girls to pursue such a career. During an internship at a design company, I shared my passion for aviation with my boss who invited me to help set up his aviation business. After some time, I moved to London to pursue my dreams but had to return to India when I was diagnosed with cancer at 22. Following a successful battle against the disease, I was inspired to start JetSetGo & will always be grateful as life gave me another chance.

How did you get the idea of launching India's first marketplace for private jets and helicopter charters in India?

When you belong to a typical Marwari family, you know that entrepreneurship is in your blood. I always knew, from a very young age, that I would be running a business of my own at some point in my life. Though my parents were all prepared to pack me off into a 'nice Marwari family,' which would have put my chances of doing business near zero, they have been incredibly supportive since JetSetGo was founded.

Did you ever feel any gender discrimination as a woman who decided to launch India's first marketplace for private jets?

At the onset of my entrepreneurial journey, I did receive varied advice such as I should set up a bakery and start baking cupcakes. People

told me that aviation was not my cup of tea and I should instead take up a business that is into making clothes. Someone during the inception days of JetSetGo told me that I should rethink my decision of venturing into the aviation space as it would be difficult to continue once I get married and have kids. People told me a host of things girls do not become pilots and I shouldn't waste my time pursuing my dream coming from a traditional Marwari family.

How much investment did you make to launch your company? What is your staff strength, the number and type of aircraft and helicopters, turnover, business module, future plans, and targets?

I started my business with a modest investment of Rs 5,600 without owning any aircraft. Despite facing numerous obstacles in the early years, such as being ignored or dismissed in meetings where questions about my business were directed toward my male colleagues, my company has made significant strides. Today, we have expanded to employ around 200 people and have established offices in major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and Hyderabad with a total fleet of 28+ aircraft.

Any latest developments/ future plans?

We will continually evolve our business model with a focus on fleet development, model innovation & the application of technology. We have plans to introduce eVTOLs (electric vertical take-off and landing aircraft) in the near future, with the aim of transforming urban air mobility by providing a novel mode of transportation for passengers & to be carbon neutral by 2025.

In the recent budget, the govt. has announced that it will promote domestic tourism. How do you think it will benefit your business?

As a leading private jet and charter company

in India, we believe that the government's initiative to promote domestic tourism will definitely benefit our business. The increased focus on domestic travel is likely to create more demand for air travel, especially for those looking for a luxurious and hassle-free travel experience. JetSetGo offers well placed to address the premium and luxury end of this market.



The govt. has also announced 50 additional airports, aerodromes, helipads, and water routes will be built to spur greater connectivity across the country. What are your thoughts on this?

This would be a good move in tackling the increasing passenger traffic volume and at the same time decongest the main airports. This infrastructure improvement will also give further impetus to business travel and tourism. With the increasing disposable income at the middle-class level, execution of these plans would further boost the air travel potential for them.

However, the sector was expecting much more from the Budget especially on the fuel price. Bringing aviation fuel under GST would have been a major step forward in reducing costs for operators like us. But the Budget has not touched upon this issue at all, in fact there is an increase by 4 percent in the jet fuel price which will further increase the operational cost for us.

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A Step into the DIVINE World

“As per our marketing strategies, we focus on showcasing unique qualities and highlighting the things that make Divine Resort and Spa special.” said Anil Gosain, Director of Sales and Marketing, Divine Resort and Spa.

Please share about your journey so far.

I have been working in the hospitality industry for over 20 years, with a focus on sales and marketing. I started my career as a sales representative for a hotel chain, and over time, I worked my way up the ranks to become a Director of Sales at one of the well-known resorts. During this time, I gained valuable experience in sales, marketing, and revenue management, which prepared me well for my current role as the Director of Sales and Marketing at Divine Resort and Spa.

What sets Divine Resort and Spa stand apart from other hotels and resorts, and what are your marketing strategies?

I think what sets Divine Resort and Spa stand apart is our commitment to delivering exceptional experiences for our guests. From our luxurious accommodations to our world-class amenities and activities, we strive to provide an unforgettable experience that keeps our guests coming back year after year.

As per our marketing strategies, we focus on showcasing these unique qualities and highlighting the things that make Divine Resort and Spa special. Whether it's through social media, email campaigns, or targeted advertising, our goal is to create a strong brand identity that resonates with our target audience.

Can you describe the unique features and amenities that Divine Resort and Spa offers to its guests?

Divine Resort and Spa is a luxury resort that offers a wide range of unique features and amenities designed to provide our guests with an unforgettable experience. One of the things that set us apart is our location - we are situated on a beautiful, secluded beach that provides our guests with a sense of peace and tranquillity. Lying amidst the foothills of the Himalayas, Laxman Jhula Divine Resort in Rishikesh, India overlooks the holy Ganges thus presenting a completely

mesmerizing spectacle to its visitors.

Giving the view of the screen, Turquoise Ganga. The awesome beauty of breathtaking, sun-washed river complements the resort to provide you a real freshness cool and fresh air originating from mesmerizing Ganga refreshing your body and soul. Ravishing view of sunsets and an enchanting sound of water of the holy Ganga refresh the surroundings with its melody. Divine Resort and Spa is one of the most popular Resorts in Rishikesh. Divine Resort and Spa possess all the qualities and amenities that are required to cater to the needs of a worldwide client base. Amongst all the Hotels in Rishikesh, the standards set by Divine Resort and Spa can be compared to the standards set by any of the top Resorts in Uttarakhand.

Divine Resort and Spa is also surrounded by Sal Trees thus imparting a mystic feel in the environment around it. Rare species of birds, butterflies, and flowers inhabit the resort and hence complete the picture by creating God's own abode.

The resort is popularly lies in the way of the famous shrines of Badrinath and Kedarnath and to the trekking routes of the Himalayan ranges. So the place is easily reachable.

All in all, Laxman Jhula Divine Resort offers the best facilities among all other Resorts in Rishikesh.

Our location makes Divine Resort and Spa a preferable destination for weddings and social events. In addition, we offer a wide range of activities and amenities, including a swimming pool, a full-service spa, a fitness centre and a variety of water sports.

We also have several on-site restaurants that offer a range of dining options, from casual beachside fare to fine dining. And for our business travelers, we have a state-of-the-art conference centre that can accommodate up to 500 attendees, as well as several smaller meeting rooms for more intimate

gatherings.

As a guest, you will experience traditional Himalayan hospitality with excellence.

What are some of the specific responsibilities of yours as a Director of Sales and Marketing at Divine Resort and Spa?

Some of the specific responsibilities of the Director of Sales and Marketing at Divine Resort and Spa include developing and implementing sales and marketing strategies to attract new guests and retain existing ones. This involves working with the sales team to identify new market opportunities and creating advertising and promotional campaigns to generate interest in the resort's offerings.

How does Divine Resort and Spa ensure that its guests have a safe and comfortable stay?

The safety and comfort of our guests is our top priority, and we have implemented several measures to ensure that they have a safe and comfortable stay. We have enhanced our cleaning and sanitation protocols to ensure that all areas of the resort are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis.

In addition, we have implemented several contactless solutions, such as mobile check-in and keyless room entry, to minimize the need for face-to-face interactions. We have also modified our dining and activity offerings to ensure that they comply with local guidelines and regulations.

Overall, we are committed to providing our guests with a safe and comfortable experience, and we will continue to adapt and evolve our protocols as necessary to ensure their well-being.





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Hospitality

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Planning a long-awaited holiday getaway is no easy feat. Planning one for the entire family? A tad more complicated. As travel bounces back with a vengeance, travelers all over the world are seeking out the best destinations to venture out to.

If traveling with the little ones is on the cards, we've got you covered. Hilton Maldives Amingiri Resort & Spa features an array of thoughtful amenities, including well-designed offerings to cater to babies and older children - from a dedicated kids' club to a teenagers-only rooftop lounge - making it the perfect holiday for the family.

For the junior explorers: The cornerstone of Hilton Maldives kid-friendly amenities is the Krakengiri Kids' Club, one of the largest children's club in the Maldives. It is a purpose-built space equipped with modern multicultural toys, games and a crafts area with an interactive doodle wall. The club also has a spacious outdoor area that comprises a small sports ground, a swimming pool, a baby pool and a splash park that is great for children to enjoy some fun in the sun. Other amenities include a multimedia space, a separate toddler room and sleep rooms for your little ones to have a relaxing snooze.

Something for the teens: Head up to the teens-only rooftop bar Re:Fuel a space exclusively dedicated to teenagers. The young ones are in for a real treat here with a milkshake barista on hand to serve up non-alcoholic drinks or help them make their own milkshakes. With all sorts of toppings like whipped cream, chocolate sauce, and sprinkles, teens can go wild with their creations. A cute seating area overlooks the sea where teens can lounge with their drinks and have a little me-time away from their parents (or vice versa).

For the water enthusiasts: There are many activities for kids who just love staying in the water. From swimming in the sea, kayaking, paddleboarding, snorkeling or just going parasailing and jet skiing. The private lagoon offers one of the best diving experiences for the kids too.

For the sports & art lovers: The club also has a tennis, a basketball and football pitch to play

on; join the staff in the evenings for a match, beach volleyball. For the artistic kids, we have an art studio dedicated to art classes. Throw in ecosystem activities in the kids club, a turtle talk by the resident marine biologist, kids' yoga, shell collecting and lots of fun and games and kids certainly won't run out of things to do!

Family vacations are the best time for quality bonding, and a kid-friendly resort can help facilitate this. What makes the Hilton Amingiri Resort and Spa a great option is the scrupulous attention to detail that the staff put into making your stay a memorable one. From personalized guest experience manager's recommendations on excursions and dining options, to the endless possibilities of grabbing some much-needed rest and relaxation, be it at the spa or simply lounging about your private villa's deck. Or perhaps, having a picnic on the resort's white sanded beach, the sky's the limit here!



The Set Collection



THRS (Travel and Hospitality Representation Services) has been appointed as the PR and sales representative for The Set Collection to promote their collection of iconic independent luxury hotels in Europe to the Indian market.

The Set Collection is a carefully curated luxury hotel group, comprising some of the world's most immersive independent hotels located in London, Paris, Amsterdam, Jerusalem, Beijing, Hong Kong, Chengdu, and

Shanghai.

As part of its strategic plan to build awareness in the emerging Indian luxury travel market, it has joined hands with India's leading representation

company for luxury hospitality and tourism brands, THRS. The cooperation is chiefly concerned with the Group's European hotels, Hotel Café Royal in London, Conservatorium in Amsterdam and Lutetia in Paris, as well as Mamilla in Jerusalem.





Cheval Collection: Incredible Growth from Indian Tourist Market

Cheval Collection, the award-winning luxury hospitality brand, is celebrating 40th Anniversary of providing high-quality serviced apartments worldwide. The collection includes the Cheval Residences, Cheval Maison and MY Locanda brands.

Leading luxury apartment and hospitality brand, Cheval Collection, recently exhibited at SATTE Expo event and can reveal how interest from the Indian traveller market has gone from strength to strength post pandemic.

Using SATTE 2023 to celebrate this buoyant travel market, Cheval Collection has confirmed India as one of its top five markets in terms of room nights and revenue in 2022.

Further to this, the award-winning brand has experienced a 30% increase in enquiries for short stay apartments from Indian travellers and revenue data reports a 40% increase for London city locations compared to 2019.

Cheval Collection is well known for its properties in London, Edinburgh UK and is now expanding its portfolio to the Middle East with a brand new Cheval Maison opening in April, 2023 in Dubai.

Cheval Collection has extensive expertise and resource available to take on new projects, from

inception to opening alongside support functions across the business, from technical services, operations and facilities management to revenue and reservations, human resources and sales and marketing.

40th Anniversary Celebrations

In October 2022 Cheval Collection celebrated 40 years since the doors opened at its first property in London's Knightsbridge district. Since those early days back in 1982, the collection has grown to include 12 properties in London and Edinburgh, with locations in Glasgow and Dubai also coming soon.

Every year the team welcomes around 30,000 guests from every corner of the globe; many of whom are familiar faces, as most patrons choose to return again and again to their favourite properties.

Introducing Cheval Maison - The Palm Dubai - Opening 1st April, 2023.

Cheval is bringing the new year 2023 with major new developments and all set to expand its portfolio to the Middle East with a brand new Cheval Maison due to open on the 1st of April, 2023 in Dubai.

Cheval Maison, The Palm Dubai is an all-apartment boutique property providing the ideal base from which to explore all that Dubai has to offer.

Located on the iconic Palm Jumeirah, 131 contemporary apartments provide the freedom, flexibility and space to create your own personal sanctuary, but still with easy access to the vibrant sights and sounds of this unique city.

The combination of 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartments, plus a stunning 3-bedroom penthouse, provide all the facilities needed for an indulgent sunshine getaway, or a longer-term stay.

Each apartment is stylishly designed, with the attention to detail and quality you would expect from Cheval.

V Hotel of Curio Collection by Hilton undergoes soft refurbishment

Aiming to elevate the contemporary nightlife experience and become truly timeless in design, V Hotel, Curio Collection by Hilton in Al Habtoor City has undergone a soft refurbishment throughout the hotel and added the enhanced funky, quirky vibe to the hotel.

The patrons can now unwind in the hotel's renovated guest rooms and relax in the newly unveiled rooms and suites with large spaces, which perfectly fit with V Hotel Dubai's theme to see and be seen with the open layouts.

With a special focus on nightlife cherished by the young audience with creative minds, the refurbished V Hotel Dubai is one of the celebrated Instagrammable destinations in Dubai given its unique round beds and other contemporary art pieces that can be witnessed throughout the hotel. La Perle, is Dubai's number one extravagant water-themed show, that combines excellent talent with one of the most technologically advanced theatre productions. La Perle, a theatre production featuring a fusion of artistic performance, creative

imagery, and groundbreaking technology. Guests can also have an exhilarating experience while their stay at the hotel by reserving either of the signature suites – Vibrant Suite, Penthouse Suite, Sky Villa, and more, that are equipped with noise-canceling walls and groundbreaking technology. The brand-new V Hub now located on the 7th floor is a fully open area where hotel guests and visitors alike can access a hidden, yet exhilarating array of facilities – from the V Gym, reception, 24-hour V Lounge and by sundown a DJ to set off the mood, with a wide range of cocktails to select from. The urban chic setting offers an expansive view of the sunset and a backdrop of retro-futurism design on the seventh floor. That's not it, the newly renovated hotel also presents a variety of dining options



like the vibrant V Deck or enjoying a fulfilling meal at Level 7.

Speaking about the development, **General Manager at V Hotel**, said, "The new-age patrons are driven by aesthetic, contemporary design and art pieces. Suiting just what they desire, our reimagined design is in line with what they desire while being able to express themselves to the fullest during their stay with us at V Hotel Dubai. We continue to serve the young and young at heart guests with the best of the modern-day amenities and the latest technology. We welcome all to come and experience the vibe here."



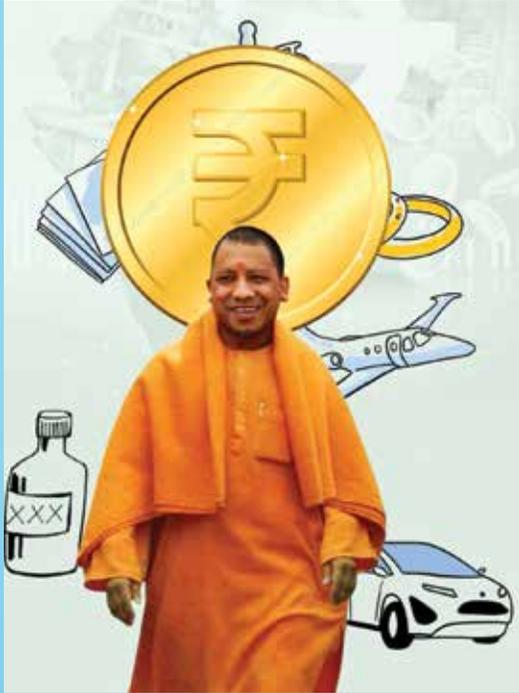
AMRIT KAAL: Budget of the Largest State of India “UTTAR PRADESH”

Suresh Khanna the Finance Minister, Government of Uttar Pradesh (UP) tabled the fourth consecutive budget of his tenure in the Vidhan Sabha and the seventh budget of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's tenure on 22nd February 2023.



A total of Rs 6.90 lakh crore allocated towards various sectors in UP government's budget for 2023-24.

The annual budget presented with aim to boost the state's economy, creating jobs, and improving the standard of living for its citizens. Uttar Pradesh Budget includes provisions for a start-up policy, women empowerment, farmers' upliftment, health infrastructure, and road and railways projects.



Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister, Government of Uttar Pradesh

In the first year of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, today seems to be a new year. The budget of Uttar Pradesh will add new golden chapters in the history



of social, economic and cultural development of the state. Undoubtedly, this UP Budget 2023 fulfills the interests of every section of the society including the poor farmers, youth and women of the village as per the vision of the respected Prime Minister.

This budget will help make UP self-reliant and serve as the foundation to make UP's economy in next five years a \$1 trillion economy. With its focus on development and job creation, the Uttar Pradesh Budget 2023-24 is poised to drive growth and transformation in the state.

Suresh Khanna, Finance Minister, Government of Uttar Pradesh

It would be the biggest budget in the history of the state. There had been a 16.8 per cent growth in state GDP and the unemployment rate before 2017 was 14.4 per cent which has come down to 4.2 per cent now and this is a crucial achievement. The budget focuses on building "New Uttar Pradesh" and aims to create 40,000 jobs in the textile sector in the financial year 2023-2024. It will be for youth, strengthening farmers and giving honour to women. The focus will be on infrastructure so that more employment opportunities can be generated.





- Rs 235 crores allocated for two new link Expressways i.e Jhansi Link Expressway and Chitrakoot link Expressway.
- Rs 600 crores under CM Mass marriage scheme for general category girls, while Rs 150 crores for marriage of OBC girls.
- In order to empower rural women, Rs 83 crore has been proposed for Self Help Groups.
- Rs 4032 crore have been allocated to provide assistance to destitute widows. At present about 32.62 lakh women are being provided assistance in the state.
- Rs 36,230 crore proposed for new 594 km long Ganga Expressway from Meerut to Prayagraj.
- A fund of Rs 2491 crore has been earmarked to build 14 new medical colleges.
- Rs 200 crore proposed for developing industrial corridor along Gorakhpur link expressways.
- Rs 25 crore to be allocated for Pharma Parks, Rs 20 cr for establishing UP institute of Pharmaceutical Research and Development, and Rs 26 crores for establishing nursing colleges.
- Rs 21,159 crore proposed for construction of new roads and flyovers, while another Rs 6209 crore for maintenance of existing ones. The government has allocated Rs 1525 crore for rural roads and Rs 250 crore for widening of roads leading to sugar mills. Another 50 crores have been allocated for widening of roads leading to Industrial and Logistic parks.
- In accordance with the Jan Lok Kalyan Sankalp Patra of the BJP for 2022 Assembly polls, 100 percent exemption of power tariff to be given for private tube wells. Rs 1500 crore proposed for the same. In 2022-23 budget, this was 50 per cent.
- Rs 1554 crore proposed for establishing second phase of Green Energy corridor in Bundelkhand to extract and transfer energy from solar plants. The target is to complete the scheme in next 3 years.
- The size of the UP annual budget is Rs 6.90 lakh crore for fiscal year 2023-24, as compared to Rs 6.15 lakh crore, the last fiscal.
- The fiscal deficit is estimated at Rs 84,883 crore, which is 3.84% of the estimated Gross State Domestic Product.

Allocation of Budget in Uttar Pradesh



Geographic Information System



The Uttar Pradesh government has recently released its budget for the year 2023, and one of the notable aspects of the budget is the emphasis on the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) technology in various sectors. GIS is a powerful technology that allows the collection, storage, analysis, and visualization of geographic data.

It has a wide range of applications in various fields, including urban planning, natural resource management, disaster management, public health, and many others. In recent years, GIS has gained significant traction in India, with many government agencies and private organizations adopting it to enhance their decision-making processes.



Amount of Funds for the use of GIS Technology

The Uttar Pradesh budget for 2023 has allocated a significant amount of funds for the use of GIS technology in various sectors. The government has emphasized the use of GIS technology in the development of smart cities, agriculture, water resource management, and disaster management.



Development of Smart Cities

One of the major areas of focus is the development of smart cities. The government has allocated Rs. 5,000 crores for the development of 10 smart cities in the state. GIS technology will play a crucial role in the planning and implementation of these projects, including the identification of suitable locations, infrastructure planning, and monitoring of progress. The use of GIS technology in the development of smart cities is expected to bring many benefits to the state of Uttar Pradesh, including improved living standards, better access to services, and enhanced economic growth.



GIS Technology in Agriculture

In addition to smart city development, the Uttar Pradesh government has also emphasized the use of GIS technology in agriculture. GIS mapping techniques have been helping farmers and the Indian agriculture industry to grow to their fullest potential. The budget allocates Rs. 300 crores for the implementation of a GIS-based crop insurance scheme that will help farmers to mitigate the risks of crop failure. The implementation of the GIS-based crop insurance scheme is expected to benefit many farmers in the state, particularly those who are vulnerable to crop failures.

Development of a Water Resource Information System

Furthermore, the budget includes a provision for the development of a water resource information system. The system will help in the management and conservation of water resources in the state. The government has allocated Rs. 100 crores for the development of this system. The water resource information system is expected to bring many benefits to the state of Uttar Pradesh, including better management of water resources, improved access to safe drinking water, and enhanced agricultural productivity.



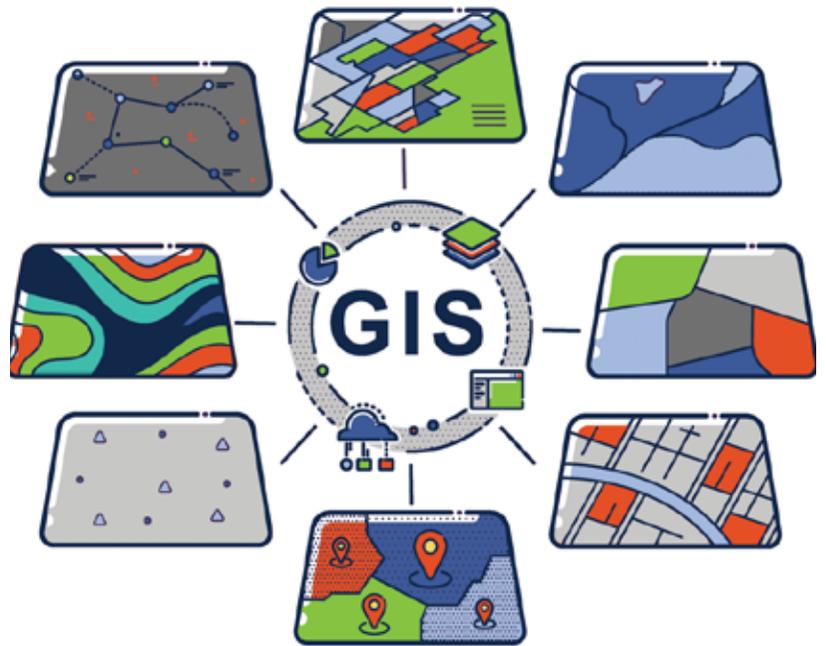
GIS-based Disaster Management System

The budget also includes a provision for the establishment of a GIS-based disaster management system. The system will help in the early warning of natural disasters and the efficient management of relief operations during emergencies. The government has allocated Rs. 50 crores for the implementation of this system. The GIS-based disaster management system is expected to benefit many citizens in the state, particularly those who are vulnerable to natural disasters.



Benefits of GIS in Uttar Pradesh

The use of GIS technology in various sectors is expected to bring many benefits to the state of Uttar Pradesh. It will help in the efficient allocation of resources, better planning, and decision-making, and improved service delivery to citizens. Moreover, the adoption of GIS technology is likely to create many employment opportunities in the state, particularly in the field of geospatial technology.



GIS: Welcome Move on the State's Overall Development

The emphasis on GIS technology in the Uttar Pradesh budget for 2023 is a welcome move that is likely to have a positive impact on the state's development. The allocation of funds for the development of smart cities, agriculture, water resource management, and disaster management demonstrates the government's commitment to leveraging technology for the betterment of its citizens. It will be interesting to see how these initiatives are implemented in the coming years and the impact they have on the state's overall development.





Tourism

Tourism is set to emerge as the bellwether sector which will see big-ticket investments and will also turn out to be job-spinner in years to come. Yogi government has set an ambitious investment target of Rs 10 lakh crore for augmenting tourism industry in the state and going by estimates, it hopes to create 20,000 jobs in next 5 years, under UP Tourism Policy 2022.

The state government priority is to build a network of corridors enabling simple access to religious sites.

In the annual Budget, the Finance Minister said that Rs 2,538 crore was being proposed for widening/strengthening of roads. A proposed investment of Rs 1,000 crore was also announced to promote religious tourism in the state. These roads leading to religious places will be called 'Dharmarth Marg'.

Religious tourism is set to see manifold increase in the state, owing to construction of Ram Temple and an International airport, the deadline for which has been set by late 2023. Post the inauguration of Kashi corridor, the influx of pilgrims has already recorded a new high.

Infrastructure

For the state's infrastructure development, the budget has set up Rs 28,350.31 crore. The growth of airports and ports, as well as the building of roads, bridges, and flyovers, would be the government's main priorities. The budget also aims to increase accessibility for citizens and raise the standard of public transit.



Agriculture

One of Uttar Pradesh's main economic drivers is agriculture. Agriculture and allied sectors will now receive Rs 22,114.78 crore from the government. The budget aims to encourage the adoption of contemporary technologies, enhance irrigation systems, and expand farmer access to credit.





Health

The health sector would receive Rs 18,790.62 crore from the government. The budget aims to raise the standard of healthcare, expand access to medications and medical supplies, and encourage the use of telemedicine to reach out to rural areas. Also, the state's administration intends to establish new medical schools and hospitals.

Education

The education sector would receive Rs 25,873.62 crore from the budget. The establishment of new schools and colleges, the offering of scholarships to students, and the improvement of teacher training are all efforts made by the government to raise the quality of education in the state. In order to give young people greater options for employment, the budget also aims to enhance the accessibility of programmes for skill development and vocational training.



Social Welfare

Rs.16,785.91 crore have been there in the budget for social welfare programmes. The goal of the government is to give money to the underprivileged and disadvantaged members of society, such as women, children, and the elderly. The budget also aims to give the homeless and less fortunate access to housing, food, and other essentials.



Urban Development

9,600 crore Rs have been set out in the budget for urban development. The development of highways, flyovers, and bridges is just one of the measures the government is taking to improve the services and infrastructure in metropolitan areas. The budget also aims to enhance the city and town public transportation network, including the opening of additional metro lines and bus services. To encourage sustainable growth, the government also wants to build smart cities across the state.



Employment Sector

In the Budget 2023, the Uttar Pradesh government allotted Rs. 2,500 crore towards the employment sector. This involves establishing new industrial parks, offering incentives to businesses to locate in the state, and coming up with a new start-up strategy.

The government has also suggested creating a new Employment Guarantee Plan, which will offer job possibilities to young people who are unemployed in the state. Youth will receive training and skill development through the programme, ensuring their employability across a range of industries.



Women Empowerment

In its Budget 2023, the Uttar Pradesh government set aside Rs. 1,200 crore towards the advancement of women. This includes offering financial aid to female business owners, setting up police stations exclusively for women etc.



Energy

Total Rs 11,789.50 crore allocated to Energy sector of Uttar Pradesh. The state government allocated Rs 6,500 crore for revamped distribution sector scheme (RDSS)-which aims to strengthen the infrastructure and efficient of power with minimum or no aggregate technical & commercial losses (line losses). Also, Rs 317 crore allocated for solar energy policy 2022, Rs 45 crore for bio energy policy, 2022 and so on.



Sports

The Uttar Pradesh government set up UP sports Development Fund for sports equipment, foreign exhibition tours, foreign training camps, appointment of specialized staff like physiologist and foreign coaches and to help promising players.

A budgetary provision of Rs. 25 crore has been made. The government has decided to organize the Khelo India National University games this year for 30 crore of budget has been allocated.

The government has proposed a provision of Rs 15 crore for felicitating the winners of national and international competitions. A budgetary provision of Rs 25 crore has been made for EKlavya Kreedha Kosh.

A provision of Rs 300 has been made for setting up of Major Dhyani Chand Sports University in Meerut district. A provision of Rs 20.50 crore has been proposed for the construction of sports college in Shaharanpur, Fatehpur and Ballia.

A budgetary provision of Rs 116.71 crore has been made for the development, upgradation and new construction of sports infrastructure in the state. A provision of Rs 25 crore has been made for the construction of International Sports Complex in Ayodhya district.

An arrangement of Rs 40 crore has been proposed for the purchase of land for the development of sports academies with private participation. A provision of Rs. 25 crore has been made for the construction of Velodrome in Guru Gobind Singh Sports College, Lucknow.

A provision of Rs 10 crore has been made for the construction of sports college in Ballia district and a provision of Rs. 20 crore has been made to promote activities related to sports and games.



Acharya Murari Pandey is a very renowned Astrologer with International fame. Over the years, Acharya Murari Pandey has assisted lot of people with their problems related of love life, businesses; family issues etc. and give 100% accurate remedies. He has earned lot of respect across the globe as an Astro- Consultant. While gaining deep knowledge of astrology Acharya Murari Pandey selflessly provided valuable and free consultation to several individuals as well.

MARCH 2023



ARIES

March will be a relatively calm and measured period in the life of an Aries. No major changes are expected. Everything will go according to plan, and representatives of the sign will be able to settle accounts and create a reserve for the future.

Some representatives of the sign will be attracted by philosophy and reflections on the meaning of life. The middle of the month will be an ideal time for those who are planning big purchases. If you are tired, try to restore your energy.

Moreover, professionally, you will also have many opportunities to prove your worth. Even if you are into business, you will get projects of your choice and interests. So finally all the things are turning in your favour.

lucky colours: Red, other colours you can choose are yellow and white
lucky Number: 6 and 9



TAURUS

For the Taurus zodiac, March will be filled with slight warnings. For example, professionally, you could have to be extra careful about how you should take up your work. Moreover, if someone is trying to distract you, ignore such influence. In your personal life, you will

be having issues with your partner. There could also be an unexpected argument or fight if you need to be more careful of your words. But it's just a matter of time before it will all be solved. For bulls, March will be an extremely productive and interesting month. Positive changes will occur in almost all areas of life. And everything you do in March will be an excellent basis for future achievements, although you will feel it much later.

lucky colours: white and lotus pink colours
lucky Number: 5 and 6



GEMINI

In March, due to the increased energy potential, twins will be able to realize their dreams in the business field. Many representatives of the sign will have the opportunity to try new projects and tackle the proposed tasks with enthusiasm. But don't forget the trade-off: your love of resisting the whole world can

cause a lot of trouble. Be careful what words you use in communication so you don't hurt anyone. The end of the month promises pleasant romantic adventures with people from the past. March will bring opportunities for the Gemini people, but you have to look closely into it. You have to choose wisely between the given choices. Professionally you could be given extreme credit for your hard work. Moreover, there could be a promotion coming your way. This is one of the best times to invest in stocks, but make sure to research before going for it.

lucky colours: green and yellow. **lucky Number:** 5 and 6



CANCER

March will be a period of awakening and striving for new heights for Cancers. Luck will be on your side for almost the whole month. Humble Cancers will unexpectedly come out of their shell and try new activities. The experiments will be successful. In the middle of the month, pay more attention to your

social circle. Let go of the past, all the best is ahead of you. Cancerians are going to see a financially stable month. As a result, there will be a lot of business opportunities or ventures arriving your way. Moreover, if you have been working to your full potential in the past, there could be a promotion too. However, investing your money in some property, like a house or a piece of land, is recommended later. Also, if you have debts, those will get cleared by the end of this month.

lucky colours: silver, white, cream, lemon yellow and red best colours
lucky Number: 2 and 9

**LEO**

A very stormy and controversial period awaits Leve. On the one hand, you will have many opportunities. On the other hand, you can find an incredibly large number of constraints that will not be easy to balance between. In early March, lions will have to focus on material issues. Solving financial problems should be one of the most important tasks. Only a fresh head and a sober view of things will help you cope with challenges. Don't try to tackle everything at once - take a few days off and go on holiday or take a break. Thoughts will fall into place and things will begin to improve. As per the monthly horoscope by date of birth, the Leos of the zodiac charts will have to take good care of their health. Therefore, your zodiac needs to take a fully balanced and healthy diet. Moreover, avoiding junk is also necessary.
lucky colours: gold and orange, lucky Number:5 and 9

**VIRGO**

March will open brilliant opportunities for Virgos. Usability will take practice - don't overlook that. Virgo stars promise career growth, which could turn some representatives of the sign upside down. The middle of March will make you look at love relationships in a new way. Virgos can start a passionate romance at this time, but be careful who you give your heart to. Be more active, exercise. Virgos! You will have a surprisingly pleasing upcoming month. All your pending work will get completed, be it professional or personal. Moreover, you will get enough chances to solve any past tensions you have been dealing with. Personal life will also be good several good marriage proposals could come your way. Also, you could find someone who could become your better half.
lucky colours: white, green and blue, lucky Number: 5 and 6

**LIBRA**

March will be very interesting for Libra, but not the easiest month. Libra will dive headlong into work in early March. By the end of the year, your determination will bear the first fruits. In the first half of the month, stormy love adventures are also coming. Libras are waiting for interesting acquaintances and bright loves. You will enjoy what you already have and be grateful. According to the march horoscope, your zodiac sign will have a financially lucky month. Your investments will receive good results. Moreover, there will be a lot of financial opportunities waiting for you in terms of ventures or job promotions. You will be getting excellent chances to enhance your skills as well. For example, if you have been dealing with issues with your partner, then this would be the time you two could find common ground to solve them.
lucky colours: white and orange, lucky Number:6, and 9

**SCORPIO**

Scorpios will be at the peak of their creative ascent in March and will be able to implement many plans. The activity of those who work with people and in the field of art will be particularly successful. But remember that there is not only inspiration, but also routine. If you avoid regular work, you risk the work piling up. In March, many scorpions will be able to try themselves as volunteers. It can also be social activities and free help to loved ones. The end of March will be a favorable period for changes in the love field. By monthly horoscope, Scorpio zodiac will have a fulfilling month. There could also be many romantic proposals for you throughout the month, but only the genuine ones will stay till the end. So, be it a professional proposal or a personal one, you need to be confident and sure enough before choosing the best one for you.
*lucky colours: Red, chocolate brown, orange and white
lucky Number:1, 2, 4 and 7 bring them favorable results*

**SAGITTARIUS**

There's nothing like living fully in the present For Sagittarius, March will be about home and family. You will spend a lot of time with your loved ones. This will help strengthen relationships and repair long-lost family ties. At the end of March, they will finally feel the influence of positive spring energies. New friends and interesting events will literally burst into your life. The latter will be mostly fun, but while you're having fun, you won't forget about work and you'll make many useful acquaintances. A positive month for the Sagittarius zodiac. All your pending works will be completed and you will feel a divine energy behind them. Indulge in some spiritual activity or try meditation for a clear perspective. Of course, there will be obstacles, but help lies within you. Moreover, you could also visit some famous pilgrimages with your family.
*lucky colours: orange and dark yellow
lucky Number: 3, 5, 6, and 8*

**CAPRICORN**

March will be a month of unprecedented activity for Capricorns. Capricorns will have to become leaders and performers at the same time and be fully responsible for what is done. You will be at the center of an ever-changing stream of information. Capricorns will make many useful contacts at the highest level in March. In the future, this will have a positive effect on the career. In the middle of the month, check everything you hear - information obtained from unknown sources may turn out to be false. No major changes are expected in the love field. However, this only applies to the exterior of the event. Capricorns need to be extra cautious about March monthly horoscope as you will discover who cares about you and who pretends. This could be someone in your workplace or your close inner circle.
lucky colours: purple and black, lucky Number:5, 6 and 8

**AQUARIUS**

March will bring stability and peace to Aquarius. But this is true only if they surrender to the flow of life. Many surprises await those who, as usual, go against the wind. Creativity will help fill the void. However, what happened will force you to reevaluate your social circle and perhaps get rid of negative people. whether you want to continue. The stars promise that you will definitely not be bored, and one of the meetings can be really wonderful. The month of March will bring everything in your favour. If you have been dreaming about a job for a very long, then this could be the time you might get it. Moreover, if you have a dream house or trip in mind, this could be it. The stars are totally in your favour. Also, there will be highly cherishable and romantic moments with your partner to celebrate your love all over again.
*lucky colours:purple and light blue
lucky Number:3, 7 and 9*

**PISCES**

In March, fish will begin to actively change their usual life. To do this, they will dive into the abyss of events and try to be everywhere. It's important to work together, but don't work against yourself if you feel tired. At the end of March, objectivity will become your main characteristic. You will definitely break away from illusions and self-deception and move to a new level of communication with people. During this time, a rush of creative forces awaits you. For this zodiac sign, the March monthly horoscope says that there are signs for sometime significant to happen in their love life. If you are already in a relationship, you will find a new side of your partner. However, if you are not, you will have someone special who will blow your mind. Moreover, your professional life will also be good as per the stars in your monthly charts. This is because you will get many opportunities to showcase your talents.
lucky colours: orange and yellow colours, lucky Number:3 and 7

● **After a thriving career in advertising, working alongside industry leaders at the likes of Lintas, what inspired you to make a bold career change and become an actor at the ripe age of 51? What sparked this transition in your life?**

I always wanted to act. More than two decades ago, I did some work as an actor but soon enough, I realized that I needed to do something to run my kitchen. Acting is not a regular job. You could be working on a project today and there might not be any work for the next few weeks. When you are younger and have a lot of responsibilities, it gets a little difficult to chase your dreams. I had to choose between acting and a stable profession.

I decided to take up a job as I thought it was the right thing for me to do at that point in time. However, I remained abreast of what was happening in the industry. At Lintas, I was heading a division which was into brand placement. I used to meet film and TV producers quite regularly because of the nature of my job. My work helped me stay in touch with the industry. In the year 2018, I decided to give acting a shot. I feel it's never too late to follow your passion.

● **With a wealth of industry connections from your time in advertising, did that open door for you when you made the leap into acting? Did your network make the transition smoother for you?**

Initially, I used to think that getting acting jobs would be easier as I knew some people in the industry. However, soon enough I realized that it was not going to be an easy process. You have to stand in a queue and give auditions. After giving 100 auditions, you get 2 or 3 jobs. I had to go through multiple rounds of auditions for my first film 'Darbar'. Even now, I give 15 – 20 auditions every month.

● **Did you have to face any challenges when you made the daring leap from a thriving advertising career to the world of acting?**

Bidding farewell to a steady paycheck was no easy feat, but I couldn't resist the call of my passion - acting. The journey wasn't without its challenges, with idle days spent at home, waiting for my next big break. But I wouldn't trade it for the world.

With my son all grown up and my responsibilities fulfilled, I decided to chase my dreams. Life is short and one should listen to their heart, no matter what. And boy, am I grateful I did! The past two years have been a rollercoaster of opportunities and I feel incredibly lucky to have landed some amazing roles. Living the life I've always wanted - no regrets here!

● **The OTT world has been expanding rapidly, but has it brought more opportunities for people to find employment in the entertainment industry?**

The space is too big and we are talking about a project that cost 130 CR. The medium

will definitely grow and will not go all out. Bollywood movies not working is just a bad phase and soon the good phase would start. It all boils down to content. On OTT, it is all about how much the engagement has been done and in films it's the Box office. The theatre culture won't come down as the families love to go and watch the movie and have popcorn and samosas. Anything with good stories and good content would work.

● **You have done a lot of work in the OTT space. Do you think the rise of streaming platforms has resulted in a larger number of people getting employed?**

Definitely! There is a lot more work happening in the industry because of the digital boom. The earliest streaming shows largely featured newer actors or the ones who had not got their due till then. Now, the biggest film actors are working with OTT platforms. One can sense that OTT platforms are now looking to invest in projects that feature big stars.

● **How do you usually prepare for a role.**

The script is my guide, and I follow its twists and turns with eager anticipation. My first task is to understand the scene - its setting, its players, and my role in the story. I consider my relationships with each character, searching for the emotional connections that bring the scene to life. Only with a clear understanding of the context can I bring my lines to life, imbuing them with the right emotion and intensity. A dialogue with the director is the final step, as we work together to bring the story to vivid life."

● **Can you talk about your experience with auditioning and how you handle rejection?**

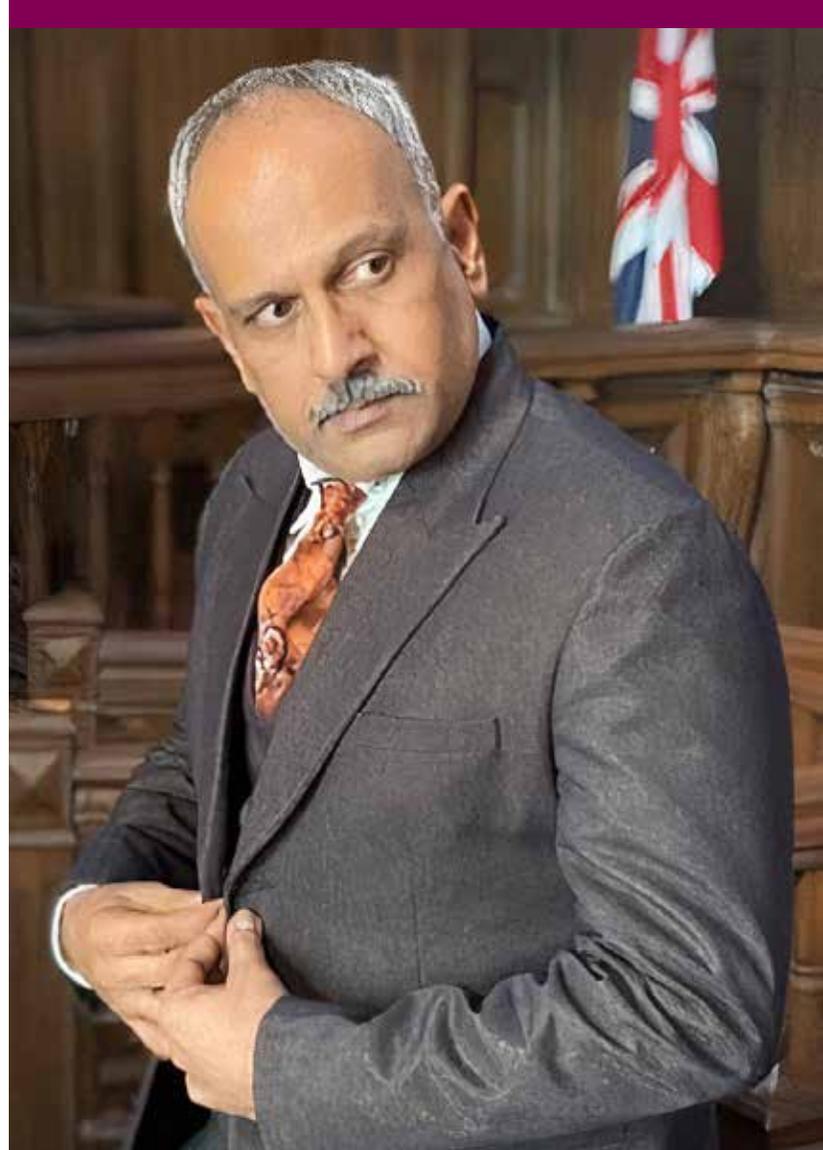
Stepping into the world of web-series, the journey to land a coveted role is paved with trials and tribulations. The audition process is a rite of passage, where the cream of the acting crop rises to the top. No longer is simply being an actor enough to secure a role - one must audition, and audition again, until they finally earn their place on the final roster."

● **Where do you see yourself in the next**

five years?

In the world of acting, every performance is an audition for the next big role. That's what I'm striving for, that one defining project that propels me to new heights. The unpredictability of fame is what makes this industry so thrilling - you never know which character will capture the hearts of audiences and skyrocket you to stardom.

I have my sights set on greatness, with a line-up includes "Chore 'nikal k bhaga," "Sam Bahadur," RBalki's "Ghoomar" and Om Raut's "Adipurush." These projects have given me the chance to work with some of the most talented and creative minds in the industry, and I can't wait for audiences to see what we've been working on. It's truly a thrilling time for me in my career, and I'm eager for what lies ahead!



Age is just a Number: Your dream needs true dedication

"Life is short and one should listen to their heart, no matter what." said actor Krishna Kotian.

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