

FROM THE HEART



From the Heart, yet again!



Being a Collector & District Magistrate is much different from being a Managing Director. As Collector of Jabalpur, I faced many challenges, but they seem to fade in comparison to the ones I face almost every day as Managing Director of MP State Tourism Development Corporation.

When I joined my new assignment in February 2010, I immediately realized that succeeding a quintessentially tourism personality like Mr. Ashwani Lohani was both a blessing and a challenge. He had been responsible for transforming the tourism scenario in Madhya Pradesh during his two tenures lasting four and a half years. By the time he demitted charge in December 2009, Madhya Pradesh had already joined the ranks of the leading tourism States in the country, and Brand Madhya Pradesh ("Hindustan ka Dil") had become a well-respected brand. My challenge was to make sure that the brand remained vibrant, and there was no slackness at all in the hectic pace of development. Nearly seven months into the job, I have reason to believe that we are on the right track, and that Madhya Pradesh will continue gaining ground in occupying the 'preferred destination' slot it rightfully deserves to hold.

MPSTDC is an organization on the go. Unlike in most other States of the Union, in Madhya Pradesh, the onerous responsibilities of developing infrastructure, running a vast network of tourist accommodation and promoting destinations, all fall in the domain of the Tourism Corporation. Our mandate is not only to run the 60 odd accommodation and catering units, along with a 110 vehicles-strong transport fleet, efficiently and profitably, it is also to

implement the policy initiatives of the State Government to involve and encourage the private-sector to invest funds for creating and expanding the tourism infrastructure in the State. To boot, the Corporation's multi-media publicity campaigns are aimed at promoting Madhya Pradesh as a destination brand, and not just Madhya Pradesh Tourism as a corporate brand. We want the private-sector to work hand-in-hand with the public-sector in Madhya Pradesh to realize the full tourism potential of the State.

I would like to use this front-page space to mention a very important policy initiative, currently in the pipeline.

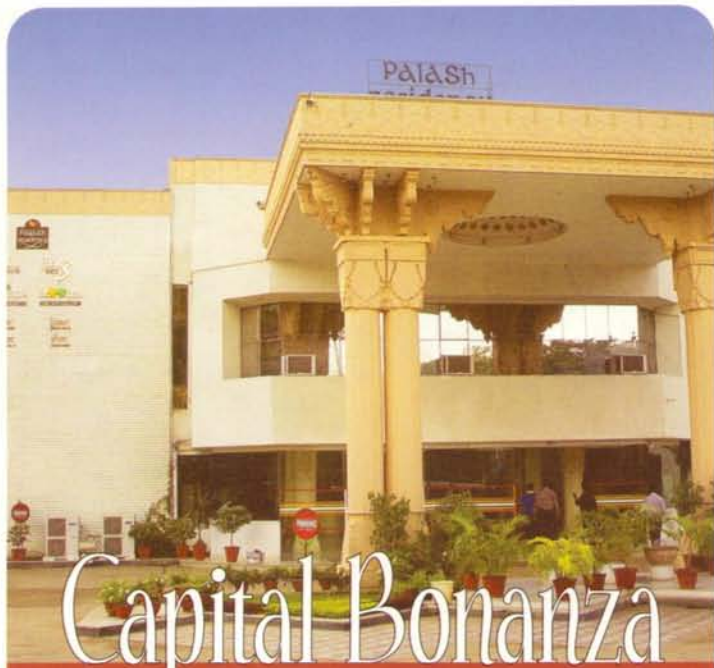
The architect of this initiative is our very pro-active Principal Secretary (Tourism), Shri Iqbal Singh Bains. Today, on World Tourism Day, we have scheduled a Workshop involving all the

prominent stakeholders to discuss the State's new Tourism Policy. We are hoping that at the end of the day, we will have taken into consideration all the various strands of thought which will guide us in formulating a policy document that will become a cornerstone of tourism development in Madhya Pradesh in the future. The objective behind the exercise is to create an investor-friendly environment so that tourism-related projects see the light of day quickly. I believe the way forward is the PPP model of development. The proposed policy initiative is, therefore, a pivotal step towards achieving that goal.

I take special pride in re-launching this newsletter on World Tourism Day, and in sharing some of the recent developments with you. From now on, it would reach you regularly every three months. I look forward to receiving your comments and feedback on md@mptourism.com

Hari Ranjan Rao
27 September 2010

From The MD's Desk



Capital Bonanza

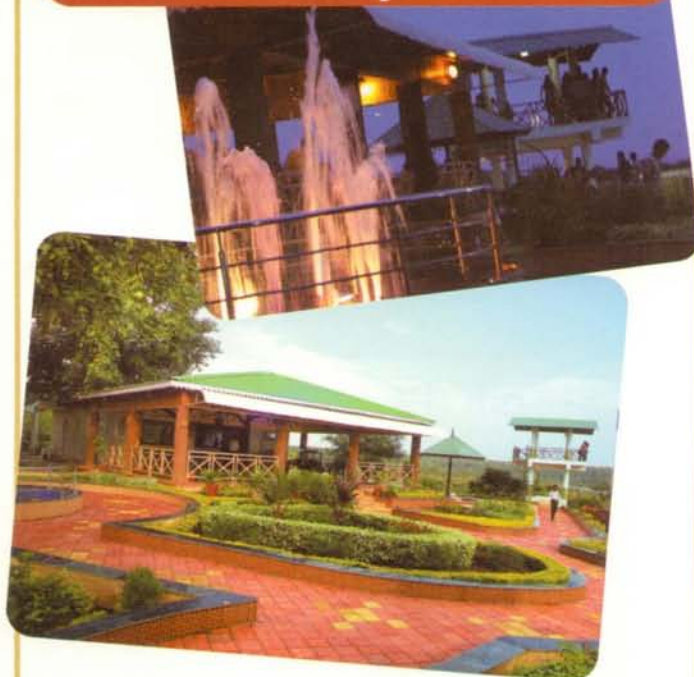
Palash Residency, now a 3-star hotel, is doing wonderfully well. With 6 suites, 31 rooms, one multi-cuisine restaurant, one fast-food eatery, a well-stocked bar and 3 conference halls, it continues to be M.P. Tourism's flagship hotel. And now, there is more good news. Palash is going in for comprehensive expansion. The adjacent PWD rest house is going to be merged with Palash through a linking passage, 24 additional rooms, banquet hall, swimming pool and a poolside restaurant, gym, spa and jacuzzi.

The Champak Blooms



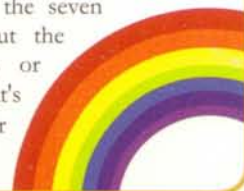
Ah Pachmarhi! The delightful **Rock-End Manor** was declared a Heritage Hotel some months ago. Similar recognition is awaited for **Glen-View** and **Satpura Retreat**. And here comes **Champak**! M. P. Tourism's latest offering at Pachmarhi is the old **Champak Bungalow**, tastefully renovated and restored in the heritage idiom. Its 14 rooms and 5 Swiss Cottages are set amidst expansive grounds in a forested setting. Truly wow!

Hot Spots



piknik@Bhopal, our delightful eatery at the scenic Kerwa Dam is a year old now. It continues to attract local residents and tourists alike, and offers delectable fare, with stunning views of the vast water body and the surrounding hills. If you haven't been here sunset-time, go today; it's truly mesmerizing.

And in just a few days, we will launch a new hotspot called **Rainbow Treat**, overlooking the Shahpura Lake, near Manisha Market. Spread amidst landscaped grounds will be seven fast-food outlets (representing the seven colours of the rainbow) dishing out the goodies. *Chaat* or Chinese, Kebabs or *Dosas*... choose what you will. What's more, you can even make a booking for any of the MPT hotels from here.



The Princess Returns

She was beautiful, and everyone loved her. And then she left the city, and everyone missed her. M.P. Tourism's star attraction on the Upper Lake, the **Lake Princess** cruise boat was so popular that people would queue-up happily to wait for their turn for a spin on the lake.

On popular demand, and much to the delight of its lake-loving residents, the **Lake Princess** returns to Bhopal in its new *avatar*. It's already on its way from Hyderabad, and will be ready to adorn the placid waters of the beautiful Upper Lake again in just a few weeks.



More New Arrivals



You can call them 'border posts'. M.P. Tourism's new 'babies' at Burhanpur and Neemuch are just that. While the 11-roomed **Tapti Retreat at Burhanpur** welcomes visitors entering into Madhya Pradesh after visiting Ajanta and Ellora in Maharashtra, the 6-roomed **Tourist Motel at Neemuch** does that for visitors coming from Chittaurgarh and Udaipur in Rajasthan.



M.P. Tourism has been bitten by the adventure bug! Inspired by the success of adventure camps organized in 2009 on the initiatives of the district Collectors of Chhindwara and Jabalpur, similar camps will be organized at 11

different locations this year between October and December. The first one of these will happen at Ater in Bhind from the 11th to the 16th of October, to be followed by others in Tamia & Patalkote (Chhindwara), Pachmarhi, Jhinna (Panna National Park), Choral Dam (Indore), Ban Sagar & Kshir Sagar (Shahdol), Bargi (Jabalpur), Orchha, Mandu, Amarkantak and Kaliasote Dam (Bhopal). On offer will be trekking, rock-climbing, valley-crossing, hot-air ballooning, parasailing, paramotoring, skiing, and motor-boating, etc.

Safari MADHYA PRADESH

If you have not travelled on the incredibly good roads of Madhya Pradesh recently, you won't know what surprises are in store for you. Bhopal to Indore in two and a half hours; Jabalpur to Kanha in much the same time... any place to any other on silky-smooth roads. To showcase this wonderful transformation, M.P. Tourism has planned a convoy drive called Safari Madhya Pradesh to cover some of the famous tourist destinations of the State. The Safari will kick off from Indore on January 8, 2011 and travel on to Omkareshwar, Bhopal, Madhai, Pachmarhi, Tamia, Jabalpur, Bandhavgarh and Khajuraho before returning to Bhopal on January 13. Celebrities, film & TV stars, sports personalities, diplomats, industrialists, motor car rallyists, media personalities, travel writers, tour operators, automobile and travel magazine editors...they'll all be there. Come and join!



To supplement tourist accommodation in cities and at places of tourist interest in Madhya Pradesh, M.P. Tourism has launched a Bed & Breakfast (B&B) Scheme, effective from 1st April 2010. The scheme has been introduced in line with the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, for providing comfortable Home Stay facilities, and giving an opportunity to foreign tourists to experience the famed Indian hospitality, cuisine, customs and traditions by staying with Indian families.

MPSTDC has already issued a booklet containing the guidelines for Home Stay owners to get their establishments registered and become operational. In fact, eight of them are already functional in Bhopal, Indore, Pachmarhi and Gwalior. For more details, visit www.mptourism.com

The Caravan Moves On

M.P. Tourism scores another first! Madhya Pradesh becomes the first State in the country to introduce Caravan Tourism. In the first phase, Parking Bays are coming up at Bhopal, Tawa and Pachmarhi. Other destinations like Gwalior, Shivpuri, Orchha, Indore, Maheshwar and Mandu will follow. Three customized caravans are ready for hiring in Bhopal, self or chauffer-driven. Surely, an experience not to be missed!



Land Ahoy!

Under the M.P. Government's progressive **Land Bank Policy** to develop tourism infrastructure through the PPP model, land parcels have already been leased out to the private-sector for 90 years at Madhai, Pench, Ujjain, Panna, Orchha, Bandhavgarh and Bhopal, along with built-up properties like Hotel Rahil at Khajuraho and Govindgarh Fort at Rewa. Land has also been identified and reserved at Gwalior, Jabalpur, Chhindwara, Narsimhapur, Chhattarpur, Dhar, Indore, Ujjain, Seoni and Babai. In addition, heritage palaces at Panna and Datia, and MPT properties at Khalghat, Ujjain, Ban Sagar, Halai, Karera, Nowgaon, Katni, Rookhad and Deori are also on offer for the private sector.

Must See



Have you been to Orchha recently? If not, do go, and don't miss the **Sound & Light Show** in the premises of the Raj Mahal. The one-hour show in Hindi and English brings alive the four hundred-year history of Orchha in a stunning spectacle.



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Incredible India

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Water World



Madhya Pradesh's stunningly beautiful and vast water bodies are soon going to be developed for tourism purposes. Under the provisions of the State Government's recently declared **Water Tourism Policy**, the Tourism Department will act as the nodal agency for all tourism related activities at sites such as Gandhi Sagar, Indira Sagar, Bargi, Ban Sagar, Madhikheda and other dams. In the first phase, Government land has been identified at Indira Sagar (Khandwa) and Gandhi Sagar for transfer to the Tourism Department for further development. Such land will be added to the Land Bank and made available to private-sector investors for 30 years on signing Development Agreement.

Entry into Chhattisgarh

Not too long ago, MP was home to them, and they are still nostalgic about it. People in Chhattisgarh love to visit tourist destinations in their erstwhile home State. Looking to their ever-growing interest, M.P. Tourism set up its Marketing Office in Raipur some months ago. The office, in the premises of Chhattisgarh Tourism Board, is headed by Senior Manager, S.P. Singh, always available on his mobile - 9424796777 or e-mail, raipur@mptourism.com

Awards Galore!



It's always nice to receive awards, and M.P. Tourism has been doing very well on that front. In 2010, the big one came some months ago when the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, selected Madhya Pradesh Tourism for the National Award of

Excellence for "Best Tourism Promotion Collateral Publicity Materials". Others this year include Hospitality India's "Best State", Safari India's "Best State for Heritage & Wildlife", IATO's "Best Brochure" and Today's Traveller's "India's Best Publicity & Promotional Campaign".