Odisha Tourism Newsletter

Atithi


The grandest of all festivals happens rarely - this time after an interval of 19 years - share this unique experience at Jagannath Dhaam, Puri.

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It gives me immense pleasure to know that the newsletter brought out by the Department in the name and style “Atithi” will give a glimpse about the tourism activities of the State.

The name ‘Atithi’ truly signifies the true spirit of typical Odishan hospitality. I do hope a continuity of the endeavour.

Odisha is endowed with immense tourism potential & all out efforts are being taken to present Odisha as one of the preferred tourist destinations by aggressive & proactive media plan & campaign alongwith infrastructure developments. Publication of the “Atithi” the reflection of our activities & achievements is yet another step towards such endeavor in enhancing our brand image & reaching out to various stakeholders.

Bringing out the house journal by the Department of Tourism in the name and style of “Atithi” re-christening the old Newsletter was overdue. The spirit of Indian hospitality derived from “Atithi Devo Bhava” is reflected in Odisha. Odisha a multifaceted State known for its excellent art & culture is endowed with plethora of tourism products. To promote it, Odisha Tourism organises quite a lot of eventful promotional activities to attract more tourists to Odisha and position Odisha as a preferred destination in some of the major tourism source markets within the country and outside.

Tourist traffic to the State is surging which is growing at a rate of 10.08% in 2014. Like-wise, tourist expenditure in the State for the same year has gone upto Rs.11359 crores. No doubt, tourism plays a catalytic role in transforming the society and act as an engine of economic growth.

It is truly a befitting moment to bring out this Newsletter when Nabakalebara is round the corner. Nabakalebara, the mega spectacle is poised to draw millions of devotees to Odisha. State Tourism Department, District Administration and other stakeholders are fully geared up in a war footing to make this epoch making event a grand success. This particular issue will cover and highlight major issues and events relating to travel and tourism in the State.

We hope the readers will appreciate the endeavour, like the contents of the issue and help us to make each issues newsworthy and meaningful. We all together can give a thrust and bring the change in Odisha Tourism.
The 3rd International Conference on Buddhism was organized by the Department of Tourism from 13th to 15th February 2015 at Bhubaneswar. The objective of organizing this Conference is to bring to light the great Buddhist heritage of Odisha through promotion & publicity, deliberations and interactions with scholars, researchers, academicians and educationists. Many professors from Japan, University of Delhi, Banaras Hindu University, Lucknow University together with Tour Operators from Delhi and Banaras along with scholars and Tour Operators of Odisha participated in the conference. The Conference was inaugurated by Shri Naveen Patnaik, Hon’ble Chief Minister, Odisha in presence of Shri Ashok Chandra Panda, Hon’ble Minister, Tourism & Culture; Shri Amar Prasad Satpathy, Hon’ble MLA; Dr. Arabinda K. Padhee, IAS, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Tourism & Culture Department; Shri Subas Goyal, President IATO and other notable dignitaries.

Participation of Odisha Tourism in National Tourism Events

In a bid to promote Odisha Tourism aggressively in the domestic markets in 2014-15, the Department has participated in 10 nos of Travel and Tourism Fairs held at Guwahati, Ahmedabad, Surat, Pune, Chennai, Mumbai, IATO Convention at New Delhi, IITE Indore, IITF New Delhi and SATTE New Delhi. Representative stakeholders (HRAO, TAAO, OTOA & HAP) participated in all the events in great number.
The Department of Tourism in a bid to showcase its vast tourism products and attract more tourists to Odisha is organising a series of festivals. The most prominent among them is Konark Festival held every year in a fixed date from 1st to 5th December. There is perhaps no better place to organise such a scintillating classical dance concert than the backdrop of the Sun Temple at Konark, famous worldwide as a World Heritage site. Eminent dancers from all classical dance forms within the country are invited to perform in such a great platform which is attended by a galaxy of dance and music aficionados across the globe. International Sand Art Festival also is held from 1st to 5th December at Chandrabhaga beach, Konark.

The main objective of this festival is to attract the art-connoisseurs, tourists and the common people to witness the architectural marvel as well as the elegant Odissi dance recitals by noted dancers.

Odisha is a land of art, craft, literature, dance and music. The people of Odisha have always expressed their quest for creativity in any and every form. The Rajarani Music Festival held annually from 18th-20th January against the backdrop of the 11th Century Rajarani Temple since 2002 in the beautiful courtyard, is one such occasion to celebrate the richness and originality of Indian classical music. The objective of organizing this festival is to showcase the cultural heritage of our State in particular and country in general so as to attract more tourists. Eminent and celebrity artists like Ustad Abdul Halim Jaffar Khan, Sanjeev Abhayankar, Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia, Sushri Meeta Pandit, Pandit N.N. Seshagopalan, Ustad Baha-ud-din Dagar, Ustad Sahid Pervez Khan, ustad Dilshad Khan, Begam Perween Sultana, Padma Bhushan T.N. Krishnan, Rajan Mishra & Sajan Mishra, etc. have already performed their classical music extravaganza in this festival.

Mukteswar Dance Festival is organised on a erected platform on the precinct of a cluster of magnificent temples portraying excellent ambience at Mukteswar equally draws huge crowd to this festival. The festival is organised every year from 14th to 16th January. Odisha Tourism has been organizing this Dance Festival since 2006 inside the premises of the magnificent 10th century AD. temple. The Dhauli-Kalinga Mahotsav is organised in the foothills of Dhauli Shanti Stupa. Set against the backdrop of this magnificent monument, this 3 day festival attracts sizeable tourists. The world knows about the bravery of the Kalinga army who fought a watershed battle here which transformed Ashok from a war thirsty ruler to a champion of peace and love. With an objective to recapitulate the glorious past of this land in such a place studded with historical significance, the Department of Tourism in association with Orissa Dance Academy is organising this festival with a stream of martial dance, performing arts, be it classical, folk or martial.
Odisha Tourism showcases at International Fairs

Participation in International tourism events and exhibitions is one of the key strategy for Tourism promotion and publicity. In 2014-15, Odisha Tourism participated in three events viz; World Travel Mart held at Excel, London from 3 - 6 November 2014, New York Times Travel Show held at Javit Centre, New York from 23 - 25 January 2015 and ITB Berlin held at Messe Berlin from 4 - 8 March 2015. Odisha Tourism participated in the above festival with its stakeholders from the trade such as M/s Swosti Group, M/s Mayfair Hotels & Resorts, M/s Toshali International, M/s Eastern Voyage Pvt. Ltd., M/s Alternative Tours Pvt. Ltd., M/s Travel Link Pvt. Ltd. and others. The unique and important tourism products of Odisha of international repute are showcased in the Odisha Stand with good display and design. Pre arranged meetings are fixed and discussions takes place in the stand explaining on tourism promotion and publicity. The sole objective of such participation is to create an awareness about Odisha and let the international buyer know and promote Odisha through packages which in turn will boost tourism in the state.

Odisha Tourism organise Roadshows to attract Domestic Tourists

Roadshows and Workshops are organised with an objective to educate and inform the Tour Operators, Travel Agents, Travel Writers, Journalists and Opinion Makers of other major source cities and states about Odisha on across the table discussions and B2B meetings. Odisha Tourism provides the platform for the Stakeholders (FHAC, TAAC, OTOA & HAP) to have a fruitful dialogue with the other stakeholders to convert that interaction to a meaningful business opportunity. In 2014-15, Odisha Tourism has organised 7 roadshows in major cities like Pune, Bhopal, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Patna, Ranchi and Ahmedabad.

New Director Tourism Joins

Shri Anil Kumar Samal, IAS has joined as Director Tourism and Managing Director, OTDC w.e.f 13.05.2015. We welcome him and look forward to his guidance.
Developing Competency among Department Officials

Human Resources within the organisation plays a key role in transforming the objectives, visions and plans in to action. With a view to enhance the managerial skills and strengthen their competency level, 50 officials were deputed to undergo training programmes in two batches at Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar. Shri Ashok Chandra Panda, Hon'ble Minister, Tourism & Culture and Dr. Arabinda Kumar Padhee, IAS, Commissioner-cum-Secretary inaugurated the programme and spoke on the occasion.

Training on Initiatives of Change (IoC), at Panchgani, Maharastra

Imparting periodical training to the inhouse official is one of the important functions of Dept. of Tourism. With a view to strengthen the quality of service delivery systems and enhance motivation abreast with international standards, the officials of Department of Tourism, Department of Culture and OTDC were deputed in 3 batches to Asia Plateau, Panchagani, Maharashtra to undergo a 5 day residential training programme.
Tourism Projects cleared under Single Window Clearance Committee

Odisha Tourism has launched a New Tourism Policy in 2013 which came into force via Resolution No.4871, dt.17.04.2013 with a view to create an enabling environment and effective governance framework to create a conducive investment atmosphere in the State for the investors. The State Government has constituted a Special Single Window Clearance Committee (SSWCC) under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Odisha for clearance of projects on fast-track basis. Accordingly, SSWCC met on 06.04.2015 and the Committee has approved 8 tourism related projects to obtain required incentives under Odisha Tourism Policy 2013.

19 agencies recognised as Excursion Agents

The Department of Tourism has accorded recognition to 19 nos. of Tour Operators & Travel Agents as Excursion Agency during 2014-

15. Hence till date the State Government in Tourism Department has approved 79 agencies as Excursion Agents.

Odisha Tourism undertakes Safety & Security measures

Keeping in view the growing number of tourist arrival to this State, the Department of Tourism has aptly taken steps to ensure adequate safety & security for the tourists to experience a hassle free and memorable journey during their sojourn in Odisha. Tourist Police patrolling have been introduced in Puri-Satapada and Puri-Konark route since 01.02.2015. Similarly the Department of Tourism has decided to operate Tourist Police Cells in 8 different strategic locations in the state such as Puri, Konark, Chandrabhaga, Lingaraj, Dhauli, Nandankanan, Chandipur and Gopalpur. Further the Department of Tourism has also created Tourism Emergency Fund in each districts to help the tourists facing any kind of disastrous situations while visiting the State.

MOU signed between Odisha Tourism & ITDC for Light & Sound Show

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed on 21.10.2014 between Odisha Tourism & ITDC for implementation of Light & Sound Show (SEL) at Dhauli, Khandagiri-Udayagiri & Konark at a project cost of Rs.6.06 crores, Rs.6.15 crores and Rs.6.56 crores respectively. The Government of India have sanctioned Rs.5.00 crores for each of the above projects and the balance will be borne by the State Government. The projects are under progress.
Union Minister of Tourism & Civil Aviation, Govt. of India visited Odisha

Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Union Minister of State (Ind.), Tourism & Civil Aviation visited Odisha on 21.03.2015. A meeting was organised at Odisha Secretariat attended by Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister of State (Ind.), Petroleum & Natural Gas, Shri Ashok Chandra Panda, Minister Tourism & Culture, Dr. Lalit Panwar, Secretary Tourism, Government of India, Dr. Arabinda Kumar Padhee, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Tourism & Culture in the presence of tourism trade representatives and other dignitaries. A detailed discussion was held relating to tourism projects in the State, support for Nabakalebara, promoting and branding Odisha in the overseas market under Ministry of Tourism global publicity campaign.

Global launch of first ever Sand Art Animation Film on Lord Jagannath

Odisha Tourism Department has launched a film titled 'Divine Rebirth', a Sand Art Animation Film on Nabakalebara coined by internationally acclaimed sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik. The short film is available on DVDs also had a global online release. The film depicts the rituals associated with Nabakalebara, starting from Barajaga Yatra (search for neem trees by Daitapati servitors of Puri temple) to Ghata Paribartan (transferring the soul to the new idols). The sand art animation film of 7 minutes duration was launched on 07.05.2015 in presence of Tourism and Culture Minister Shri Ashok Chandra Panda, Chief Secretary Shri Gokul Chandra Pati, Development Commissioner Shri Upendra Nath Behera and Additional Chief Secretary to Chief Minister Shri Aditya Prasad Padhi and many other guests.
New Tourist Office at Puri inaugurated

The new Tourist Office at Puri was inaugurated on 01.01.2015 by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Naveen Patnaik in the presence of Hon'ble Minister Tourism & Culture Shri Ashok Chandra Panda, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Tourism & Culture Dr. Arabinda Kumar Padhee, Collector Puri Shri Aravind Kumar Agarwal. The new campus equipped with conference hall and art & craft museum is located at Subas Bose square, Puri.

Celebrating World Tourism Day 2014

The travel & tourism fraternities world over under the UN-WTO umbrella celebrates 27th September each year as the “World Tourism Day” with great pomp and pageantry. The theme of World Tourism Day 2014 was “Tourism & Community Development”. Synchronizing the theme, Odisha Tourism had planned a series of programmes to celebrate this auspicious occasion. A Tourism Walk was flagged off by Hon'ble Minister, Tourism & Culture which started from Master Canteen Square terminated at Ekamra Haat, Bhubaneswar. The walk was attended by the students of travel & tourism and hospitality management institutes (IITTM, IHM etc.), stakeholders (HRAO, TAOA, OTOA & HAP) the Pink Auto and Taxi Driver Association and general public at large participated in the walk as well. To celebrate the occasion in a grand way, quiz, photographic, debate and painting competition was organised. In the evening prize was distributed to the winners which followed by a Drama presented by the members of the Paryatan Bibhaga Sanskrutika Parisad.
His Excellency the Governor of Odisha inaugurated the Buddhist Interpretation Centre at Maniabandha

The Buddhist Centre at Maniabandha in Cuttack was inaugurated by His Excellency the Governor of Odisha Dr. S.C. Jamir on 4th of May, 2015. Among other dignitaries present at the glittering function were Hon’ble Minister of Industries and School & Mass Education, Sri Debi Prasad Mishra, Hon’ble Minister of Tourism & Culture, Sri Ashok Chandra Panda, Hon’ble Minister of Handlooms, Handicrafts & Textiles Smt. Snehangini Chhuria and Hon’ble MP Sri Bhatruhari Mahatab.

The Buddhist Centre in Maniabandha has been constructed by Tourism Department is dedicated to the local Buddhist Society to be used as an Interpretation Centre and the tourist can witness hand-on experience of fabrics woven by the local artisans. The artistically designed structure shall promote tourist inflow and help artisans in selling their handloom products directly to the end consumers.

Training under HSRT on Hospitality Management

Under the aegis of the Ministry of Tourism, the Tourism Department is conducting Hunar Se Rozgar Tak (HSRT) training programme under CBSP Scheme since 2010-11. The objective of this training programme is to fill the gap of acute shortages of trained manpower in the industry and strengthen the service delivery system in hospitality sector. It aims at creation of employable skills specific to hospitality and tourism sector amongst the un-employed youths. Under this scheme, so far, 4179 un-employed youth have been trained in different trades in the hospitality sector namely Food Production, Food & Beverage Service, Bakery & Patisserie and Housekeeping utility.
Eco-tourism Guide Training Programme under Odisha State Youth Policy

To sensitize the local youths of our State about the importance of eco-assets, Eco-tourism Guide Training programme is being organised under Odisha State Youth Policy 2013. Such Training have been organised at Bhitarakikana, Satkosia, Chilika, Simlipal and other eco-tourism centres. Till now, 300 local youths have undergone the training to obtain knowledge on escorting, guiding, behaviour and etiquette management, etc. The IITTM Bhubaneswar, has been designated as the nodal agency for organisation of such training programmes with a budgetary provision of Rs.1.00 crore during 2014-15.

To create adequate trained man-power to take guiding as a profession in the State, Odisha Tourism has imparted Guide Training to 1123 youths

Odisha Tourism witnesses increasing Tourist Arrival

Statistics available in the Tourism Department indicates that the international and national tourist flow to Odisha is in an increasing trend. This is due to aggressive marketing and various promotional activities initiated by the Tourism Department. The tourist arrival figure for the last five years is as follows.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<td>75,91,615</td>
<td>10.16</td>
<td>50,432</td>
<td>10.39</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>82,71,257</td>
<td>8.95</td>
<td>60,722</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>83,31,979</td>
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<td>90,53,086</td>
<td>9.45</td>
<td>64,719</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>91,17,805</td>
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<td>8.25</td>
<td>66,675</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>98,66,810</td>
<td>8.21</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>107,90,622</td>
<td>10.10</td>
<td>71,426</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>108,62,048</td>
<td>10.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conference Hall of Department of Tourism got new look

The Conference Hall of the Tourism Department has been fully renovated with state-of-the-art equipments. Hon’ble Minister, Tourism & Culture Shri Ashok Chandra Panda inaugurated the Chandrabhaga Conference Hall on 28.02.2015 in the presence of Secretary Tourism and other Departmental officials. This hall will facilitate organising meeting, seminars, workshops etc. of the Department.

FHRAI Convention in Odisha

The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Association of India (FHRAI), the apex body in hospitality sector in the country is poised to celebrate its Golden Jubilee at Bhubaneswar from 25 - 27 September 2015. About 1200 delegates comprising who's who of the hospitality sector across the country will participate in the mega event. Odisha Tourism will support this event as a State Partner. The programme indicates that 1 day is dedicated on Odisha, ethnic food, cultural programmes and Heritage Walk on 27th September.

Branding Wayside Amenities Centre as JAJABARA

Earlier launched Wayside Amenities Centre (WAC) has been redesigned with a new name – JAJABARA. In view of the growing demand of travel along the country-side and highways there is a definite need to provide basic touristic facilities on the way where the tourist can spent some time and enjoy the place with family. The unit shall be equipped with facilities like toilets, cafeterias, restaurant, parking place, souvenir shop, sitting outs, etc. The DoT has decided to establish 15 JAJABARA in different locations at a cost of about Rs.1.00 crore to Rs.1.50 crores for each project in an area varying from Ac.1.5 to Ac.4.0 of land.

Site selected for construction of Tourist Offices

The Department of Tourism has sanctioned funds for construction of Tourist Office in the district of Keonjhar, Bhadrak, Kalahandi, Nuapara, Balangir, Koraput, Kendrapara and Nayagarh. The land for the purpose has already been alienated in favour of Tourism Department. OTDC has been designated to undertake the work.
Nabakalebara 2015

Etymologically, Nabakalebara means the new body associated with Shri Jagannath temple at Puri. It is the re-embodiment of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Sudarshan when the Soul or the Brahma is transferred and the deities relinquish their old bodies and assume the new one. Invariably, it falls at a gap of 12 to 19 years. As per the Hindu Lunar Calendar Nabakalebara falls when there are two Ashadha in a year, which normally happens in every five years as there is an extra month making the year of 13 months. The entire rituals of Nabakalebara starting from 29th March 2015 (Banajaga Yatra) to 27th July 2015 (Sunabesa) takes 121 days.

The Department of Tourism has undertaken a series of projects during Nabakalebara 2015 such as construction of Toilet Complexes, Temporary Accommodation, Development of Deuli Matha, WAC at Patnaikia, Interpretation centre, Craft Complex, Pilgrim Rest Shed and Toilet Block at Jagannath Ballav Matha, Development of Alarnath Temple, Pathways & Landscaping at Atharanala & Development of Pathana Pokhari at Puri.

The Department also has taken steps to promote by giving advertisement both in print and electronic media. Besides a special brochure and different varieties of Souvenirs are being planned to be prepared specially for Nabakalebara.

Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC)
Meet to Devise Strategy for Tourism Development

The 1st meeting of the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) formed under Tourism Policy 2013 was held under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Odisha on 05.06.2015. The objective of the meeting was to discuss matters relating to devise tourism development road map, bring a synergy among other line Departments and suggest strategy of action to be undertaken for Odisha Tourism Department. The meeting was attended by Tourism Advisory Committee Members.
OTDC Makes A Turn-Around

The Corporation has made a substantial improvement in its business, services and facilities. This has resulted a more than two-fold increase in its profitability. OTDC has made a post tax profit of Rs.6.08 crore during the financial year 2014-15 which it takes from Bronze category to Silver category State PSU. The thrust area of the Corporation has been improved infrastructure, personalized services through employees’ motivation, training and brand building.

Panthanivas Facilities Improved

As an initiative to up-grade facilities of Panthanivases CC TV & free wifi has been provided in all major Panthanivases. Lift facility is being provided at Panthanivas Puri & Bhubaneswar and these facilities shall be provided in all major Panthanivases in phased manner. Panthanivases at Rambha, Bhubaneswar and Puri have been upgraded and all other Panthanivases have been giving a facelift.

OTDC Launches Special Packages for Nabakalebara - 2015

In an endeavour to facilitate darshan of different events of Nabakalebar, OTDC has started Special Packages for the Nabakalebara, 2015. The packages have been designed to capture all important rituals of the Nabakalebara i.e., Banayaga Yatra, Snana Purnima, Naba Yauban Darshan, Rathe Yatra, Bahuda Yatra and Suna Besha. The detail about the packages are available in the website of www.panthanivas.com and www.visitodisha.org.

Special Offer for Conferencing in OTDC Panthanivases

OTDC is offering competitive tariff to the Corporate Houses for conferencing. The package includes accommodation, food, venue, etc. This can be booked through the website www.panthanivas.com and www.visitorissa.org or through the Toll Free Number-1800 208-1414 and through Central Reservation Counter of OTDC Tel: 91 674 2430764.
Visitors' quotes...

Nice show...
A good opportunity for us to discover other dances different from our country
We appreciate also the music.

Guilheme Hansen
A fun to have.
Jiao, College Lee Colman, France.

A very spectacular and wonderful dance festival.
I love it!
Thank you for this nice moments.

Erica Ehrlich
Zwingenberg, 222
47616 Unna
Germany

We haben hier live das erste Mal ein Hindustani geben...
Es ist wunderschön, auch die Stimmung und Dekoration
ist sehr, alles ist sehr gut organisiert.

We have seen here our first performance the first time.
It is very beautiful and we like it.

Also the atmosphere and the organisation is very nice.

For us this evening is a nice experience. Thank you.

Fanny Giger
Rothengasse 1
CH-4051 St. Gallen
SWITZERLAND

Honestly, everything is more than perfect.
Do not change anything, thank you.

Wonderful telling, decoration, careful details.
Really beautiful! Very special.

Edward Powell
Vancouver, Canada

Put a ban on mobiles maybe announce on the stage
Beautiful program, great variety
Robert Musicians
Setting is divine

A. Swaastrow
Sweden