

THE INCREDIBLE HEART OF INDIA

MADHYA PRADESH IS MAKING RAPID STRIDES IN THE FIELDS OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, TOURISM AND INDUSTRY. BY BINDU GOPAL RAO

Madhya Pradesh is home to three World Heritage Sites – Khajuraho, Sanchi and Bhimbetka; six Tiger reserves Kanha, Bandhavgarh, Pench, Panna, Satpura and Sanjaydubri; two Jyotirlings at Ujjain and Omkareshwar; Bhedaghat, a natural heritage; and the Pachmarhia biosphere. All of this makes the state a wonderful tourist destination. Hari Ranjan Rao, Managing Director, Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation says, “Madhya Pradesh is primarily perceived as a family destination that offers a safe and wholesome vacation which is a good indicator. But over the years, there has been a paradigm shift in the profile of the tourist. They are young professionals with adequate disposable income, adventurous and ready to experiment.” With large forest cover and water bodies the tourism department has

come up with policies on camping and water borne activities. Curating rural experiences and promoting homestays, heritage monuments being leased out to be converted into heritage hotels, curating heritage walks to familiarise the visitor with historical importance of different cities like Bhopal, Jabalpur, Indore and Gwalior through storytelling and food walks are some key elements.

With a lot of natural resources, fuels, minerals, agriculture and biodiversity, the state is primarily agricultural and now has theme-based SEZs upcoming near Jabalpur, industry parks in Indore and food parks at multiple locations. A large number of pharmaceutical units are concentrated in the industrial areas of Dewas, Indore, Pithampur, Mandideep and Malanpur. The Madhya Pradesh State Industrial Development Corporation Limited (MPSIDC), the nodal agency for industrial growth in the state, helps to coordinate, activate and ensure implementation of mega infrastructure projects.

Being a textile hub there is also a need to get investment into the textile sector for