



**Dr. Marri Channa Reddy Human Resources
Development Institute of Telangana, Hyderabad**

STUDY TOUR REPORT

**ISTM PHASE-1 Foundation Training Programme
for Assistant Section Officers (Probationer), CSS
Batch of 2023**

Submitted by:

Megha Bharti
Assistant Section Officer
Ministry of Labour & Employment
Group 01 (Tamil Nadu)
OT Code – A59

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Acknowledgement

At the outset, I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the Department of Personnel and Training for affording us this exceptional opportunity to partake in the mandatory training program at the MCRHRD Institute of Telangana. Additionally, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Smt. Usha Rani, Course Director at MCRHRD, for her invaluable support.

We are profoundly grateful to Mr. Sukumar Rao, Senior Faculty and Bharat Darshan Coordinator, for his invaluable guidance, continual supervision, and provision of essential information pertaining to the project. Furthermore, we extend our appreciation for his assistance in successfully completing the project.

The experience of working collectively as a group during the excursion to Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and Karnataka was truly distinctive. I found the study tour enriching, and the attachments with NGOs and the visit to the Tea-cum-Chocolate Factory provided valuable learning experiences.

I also wish to convey our gratitude to the Director General of MCRHRD for extending all necessary support, contributing to the successful culmination of this study tour.

Objective of the Tour

As an integral component of the mandatory ISTM Phase-1 Foundation Training Programme designed for Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) belonging to the 2023 Batch, a one-week Bharat Darshan initiative was conducted from April 28th, 2024, to May 4th, 2024, encompassing Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and Karnataka. Dr. Sukumar Rao, Senior Faculty (FTP), provided guidance throughout the duration of the program.

Comprising 61 participants from diverse Ministries, this Training Programme aimed to achieve the following objectives through the study tour:

- To familiarize the trainees with the research and developmental endeavors undertaken by non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- To acquaint the participants with the rich cultural heritage and artistic legacy of India.
- To foster team cohesion, enhance time management skills, cultivate crisis management abilities, and nurture adaptability to diverse and challenging circumstances.

Schedule of Study Tour & NGO attachment

The study tour organized by MCRHRD for as part of the mandatory ISTM Phase-1 Foundation Training Programme for Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) of 2023-Batch, from 28.04.2024 to 04.05.2024 at Tamil Nadu-Puducherry-Karnataka as per the following details:-

➤ **DAY 01: 28th APRIL 2024: HYDERABAD – CHENNAI (BY FLIGHT) – MAHABALIPURAM - PONDICHERRY**

10:00 AM: Depart from Hyderabad (27 OTs – BY INDIGO)

10:55 AM: Depart from Hyderabad (35 OTs – BY AIR-INDIA EXPRESS)

11:30 AM: Arrival in Chennai Airport (27 OTs – BY INDIGO)

12:15 PM: Arrival in Chennai Airport (35 OTs – BY AIR-INDIA EXPRESS)

12:30 PM: Depart For Mahabalipuram by Bus

01:30 PM: Enroute Lunch at Local Restaurant.

03:00 PM: Proceed to Mahabalipuram and visit Sea shore Temple, Five Rathas & Arjuna Penance.

06:00 PM: Proceed to Pondicherry and check in to the hotel.

08:00 PM: Dinner at the hotel & Overnight stay at Pondicherry.

➤ **DAY 02: 29TH APRIL 2024: PONDICHERRY**

08:00 AM: Breakfast at Hotel.

09:00 AM: Visit Auroville.

01:30 PM: Lunch at Restaurant

05:00 PM: Rock Beach

06:00 PM: Visit French Colonies

08:00 PM: Dinner & Overnight stay at Pondicherry.

➤ **DAY 03: 30TH APRIL 2024: PONDICHERRY – ADIYOGI - COIMBATORE**

07:00 AM: Breakfast at Hotel.

09:00 AM: Check out & Departure to Pondicherry Mangrove Forest

09:00 AM: Departure to Coimbatore

02:00 PM: lunch at Restaurant

06:00 PM: Visit to Adiyogi.

09:00 PM: Check in to Hotel & Overnight stay in Coimbatore.

➤ **DAY 04: 01ST MAY 2024: COIMBATORE – COONOOR - OOTY**

09:00 AM: Breakfast at Hotel

12:00 Noon: Departure to Ooty.

02:30 PM: Lunch in Local Restaurant in Ooty

5:00 PM: Visit Simpson's Park

07:00 PM: Check in Hotel in ooty.

08:00 PM: Dinner & Overnight stay at Ooty with Party games & Dinner.

➤ **DAY 05: 02ND MAY 2024: OOTY**

08:00 AM: Breakfast at Hotel.

09:00 AM: Visit Dodabetta Peak

01:00 PM: Lunch at Restaurant

02:30 PM: Visit Tea Factory & Tea Museum

04:00 PM: Boating at ooty Lake.

07:00 PM: Back to Hotel. Dinner & Overnight stay at Ooty.

➤ **DAY 06: 03RD MAY 2024: OOTY – MYSORE**

08:00 AM: Breakfast at Hotel.

09:00 AM: Departure from Mysore

11:00AM: Enroute visit Pykara Lake & Dam.

01:30 PM: Lunch at Restaurant

06:00 PM: Arrive Mysore & Check in at Hotel.

07:00 PM: Free for Shopping in Mysore

09:00 PM: Back to Hotel. Dinner & Overnight stay at Mysore Hotel.

➤ **DAY 07: 04TH MAY 2024: MYSORE – BANGALORE (BY ROAD) /
BANGALORE – HYDERABAD (FLIGHT)**

08:00 AM: Breakfast at Hotel.

09:00 AM: Visit Chamundi Hills, Mysore Maharaja Palace

01:00 PM: Lunch at Local Restaurant & Departure from Mysore.

06:30 PM: Arrive Bangalore & Drop in Airport (Full Group Departure in
the Same Flight)

08:50 PM: Depart by Air-India Express Airlines to Hyderabad.

10:05 PM: Arrive at Hyderabad Airport.

**Exploring India's Rich Landscape and
Cultural Diversity in Tamil Nadu,
Pondicherry And Karnataka**

The Sea Shore Temple (Mahabalipuram)



- **Historical Landmark:** The Shore Temple is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, India, dating back to the 8th century AD.
- **Architectural Marvel:** It is renowned for its Dravidian style of architecture, characterized by intricate carvings, sculptural reliefs, and pyramidal towers.
- **Devotion to Lord Shiva:** The Shore Temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and is one of the earliest and most prominent examples of temple architecture devoted to him.
- **Seaside Location:** Situated on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, the temple complex offers breathtaking views of the sea, making it a popular destination for tourists and pilgrims alike.
- **Cultural Heritage:** The Shore Temple stands as a testament to the rich cultural and architectural legacy of ancient India, attracting visitors from around the world to marvel at its beauty and craftsmanship.

Krishna's Butterball (Mahabalipuram)



- **Natural Wonder:** Krishna's Butterball is a unique geological formation located in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, India. It consists of a massive, naturally occurring boulder balanced precariously on a slope.
- **Historical and Cultural Significance:** The site holds cultural and historical significance, with legends and folklore surrounding its origin. It is believed to be associated with the Hindu god Krishna, hence the name "Krishna's Butterball."
- **Tourist Attraction:** Krishna's Butterball is a popular tourist destination, drawing visitors from around the world to marvel at the unusual sight of a giant boulder seemingly defying gravity.
- **Geological Phenomenon:** The boulder, estimated to weigh several hundred tons, has puzzled geologists for centuries due to its improbable balance and resistance to natural forces such as erosion and movement.

- **Local Mythology:** According to local folklore, the boulder was placed by gods as a test of human strength and determination. It is said that numerous attempts to move or dislodge the boulder have failed over the years, adding to its mystique and allure.

Lion monolith



Within the confines of the temple complex, stands a monolithic sculpture portraying a lion, notable for its unique amalgamation of both partially carved and sculpted features. Remarkably, the torso of the lion sculpture bears a conspicuous aperture. Intricately sculpted upon the rear surface of this sculpture is a miniature representation of Durga, specifically depicted as Mahishasuramardini.

The gaping maw of the lion is interpreted symbolically, indicative of its revered status as the favored lion.

Indian Dance Festival-Mamallapuram

- The Mamallapuram Dance Festival, an annual event held during December and January in Mamallapuram, Tamil Nadu, stands as a testament to the rich cultural heritage of the region. Organized by the Department of Tourism, Government of Tamil Nadu, this festival serves as a platform for the virtuosos of various classical dance forms including Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathak, Odissi, Mohini Attam, and Kathakali.
- Set against the majestic backdrop of the Pallava rock sculptures, the festival exudes vibrancy and splendor, captivating audiences with mesmerizing

performances. Spanning a duration of one month, the festival attracts a vast audience eager to immerse themselves in the enchanting world of dance.

Pancha Rathas (Mahabalipuram)



- **Monumental Architecture:** Pancha Rathas is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, India. It features a collection of monolithic rock-cut temples, each carved from a single granite boulder.
- **Unique Design:** The temple complex is renowned for its distinct architectural styles, representing various Dravidian architectural elements. Each ratha (chariot) is dedicated to a different deity and showcases intricate carvings and sculptures.
- **Historical Significance:** Constructed during the Pallava dynasty in the 7th century AD, the Pancha Rathas is an exceptional example of early South Indian temple architecture and craftsmanship.

- **Symbolism:** The Pancha Rathas temple complex is believed to represent the chariots of the Pandavas from the Hindu epic Mahabharata, with each ratha symbolizing one of the five Pandava brothers and their wife Draupadi.
- **Tourist Attraction:** Pancha Rathas is a popular tourist destination, attracting visitors from around the world to admire its architectural beauty, learn about its historical significance, and explore the surrounding archaeological site of Mahabalipuram.

Auroville (Puducherry)



- **International Township:** Auroville is an experimental township located near Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu, India, founded in 1968 as a universal town where people from all over the world could live in harmony.
- **Vision of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother:** Auroville was conceived as a project of human unity and spiritual evolution, inspired by the teachings of Sri Aurobindo and his spiritual collaborator, The Mother.
- **Matrimandir:** The centerpiece of Auroville is the Matrimandir, an iconic golden dome structure surrounded by tranquil gardens, designed as a place for individual silent concentration and collective meditation.
- **International Community:** Auroville is home to a diverse international community of residents, known as Aurovilians, who work together in various fields such as sustainable living, eco-friendly technologies, education, and art.
- **Sustainable Living:** Auroville emphasizes sustainable living practices, including organic farming, renewable energy, waste management, and eco-friendly architecture, aiming to create a model for sustainable human settlements.

Rock Beach (Pondicherry)



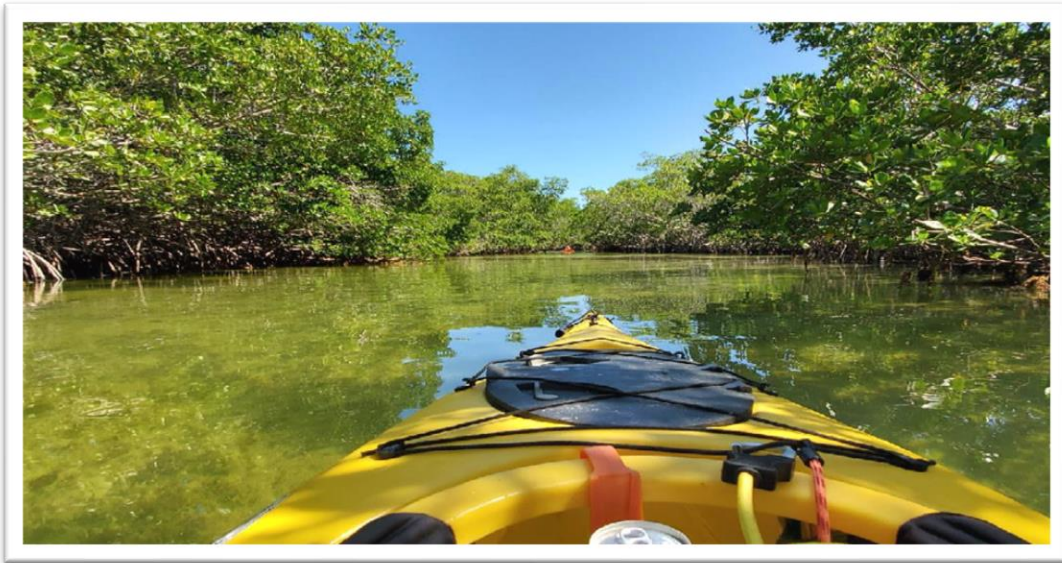
- **Iconic Seaside Promenade:** Rock Beach, also known as Promenade Beach, is a beloved attraction in Pondicherry, renowned for its scenic beauty and tranquil ambiance.
- **Natural Rock Formations:** The beach is characterized by unique rock formations along its shoreline, providing a picturesque backdrop for leisurely strolls and sunset views.
- **Cultural Hub:** Rock Beach serves as a cultural hub in Pondicherry, hosting various events, festivals, and cultural activities throughout the year.
- **Historical Significance:** The beachfront features landmarks such as the Gandhi Statue and the War Memorial, reflecting Pondicherry's rich history and heritage.
- **Recreational Activities:** Visitors can enjoy leisure activities like walking, jogging, and cycling along the promenade, as well as relaxing picnics by the sea.

French Colony



- Pondicherry, once a French colony, retains a distinct charm with its colonial architecture, tree-lined streets, and French-inspired cuisine. Strolling through the quaint lanes of the French Quarter, visitors are transported back in time with its vibrant colors and European ambiance. The blend of Indian and French cultures is evident in the architecture, cuisine, and way of life, making Pondicherry a unique destination that captivates travelers from around the world.

Mangrove Kayaking



- Mangrove kayaking in Pondicherry offers adventurers a serene and immersive experience in nature's tranquil beauty. Paddling through the intricate network of mangrove forests, kayakers are enveloped by the lush green canopy and the rhythmic melody of bird songs. As you navigate the winding waterways, keep an eye out for elusive wildlife such as herons, kingfishers, and even playful otters. This eco-friendly activity not only provides a thrilling adventure but also promotes conservation awareness, highlighting the importance of preserving these vital coastal ecosystems.

Adi Yogi (Coimbatore)



- Adiyogi in Coimbatore, the colossal 112-foot statue of Lord Shiva, serves as more than just a spiritual landmark; it's also an educational resource hub, offering various programs and events aimed at personal growth, holistic well-being, and spiritual exploration. Here are a few key points about Adiyogi and its educational initiatives:
- **Spiritual Significance:** Adiyogi is revered as the Adi Guru or the First Guru in the yogic tradition. The statue represents the fundamental aspects of yoga and offers a space for spiritual seekers to connect with their inner selves and explore the depths of yogic sciences.
- **Isha Yoga Center:** Surrounding the Adiyogi statue is the Isha Yoga Center, a sprawling campus that serves as a hub for various educational programs and events. The center offers a conducive environment for individuals to engage in yoga, meditation, and self-transformation practices.

- **Educational Programs:** The Isha Foundation conducts a wide range of educational programs catering to people of all ages and backgrounds. These programs include yoga and meditation workshops, wellness retreats, leadership programs, and youth empowerment initiatives. These offerings aim to empower individuals with tools for personal growth, stress management, and enhanced well-being.

Overall, Adiyogi in Coimbatore serves as a beacon of spiritual wisdom and educational enlightenment, offering a diverse array of resources, programs, and events to support individuals on their journey of self-discovery and inner transformation.

Sim's Park, Coonoor



- **Botanical Gem:** Sims Park is a renowned botanical garden located in Coonoor, Tamil Nadu, known for its diverse collection of exotic plants and trees.
- **Variety of Flora:** Sims Park boasts a wide variety of flora, including rare and indigenous species of plants, flowers, and trees, making it a paradise for nature enthusiasts and botanists alike.
- **Landscaped Gardens:** The park features beautifully landscaped gardens, tranquil pathways, and serene water features, providing a peaceful retreat for visitors to relax and unwind.

- **Recreational Activities:** Visitors can enjoy leisurely walks, photography sessions, and picnics amidst the scenic beauty of Sims Park, making it a popular destination for families and nature lovers.
- **Educational Value:** Sims Park also serves as an educational resource, offering valuable insights into horticulture, biodiversity, and conservation through informative signage and guided tours.

Doddabetta Peak, Ooty



- **Highest Point:** Doddabetta Peak is the highest mountain in the Nilgiri Hills, standing at an elevation of 2,637 meters (8,650 feet) above sea level.
- **Location:** It is situated near Ooty (Udhagamandalam) in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, India.
- **Cultural Significance:** Doddabetta Peak is revered by local tribes for its spiritual significance, often visited by pilgrims seeking blessings.

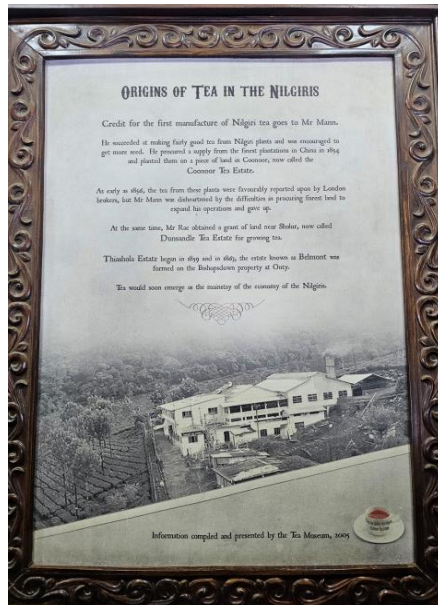
- **Biodiversity:** It's part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, boasting diverse flora and fauna including endemic species like the Nilgiri tahr and Nilgiri langur.
- **Ecology:** The peak's montane grasslands and shola forests contribute to the rich ecological diversity of the region.
- **Tourism:** Doddabetta is a major tourist attraction, offering stunning panoramic views of the surrounding hills and valleys, accessible by road or trekking trails.
- **Recreation:** Visitors can engage in outdoor activities like trekking, birdwatching, and nature walks, enjoying the serene ambiance and cool climate of the area.

The Tea Factory and Tea Museum



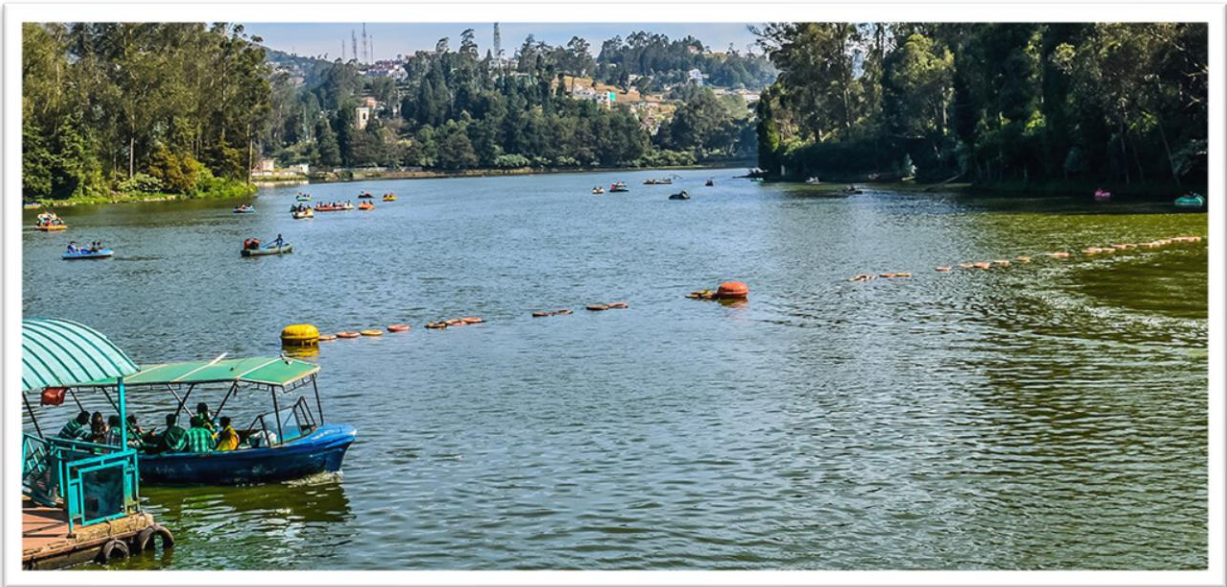
- **Location:** The tea factory and tea museum are located in Ooty, a picturesque hill station in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, India.

- **Heritage:** Ooty's tea factory and museum showcase the rich heritage and legacy of tea cultivation in the region, dating back to the British colonial era.
- **Educational Experience:** Visitors to the tea factory and museum can learn about the tea-making process, from plucking the leaves to processing and packaging, through guided tours and interactive exhibits.



- **Cultural Insight:** The museum provides insights into the history of tea cultivation in the Nilgiris, its economic importance, and its role in shaping the region's culture and identity.
- **Sampling and Purchase:** Tourists have the opportunity to sample various types of tea produced in the factory and purchase them as souvenirs, offering a taste of Ooty's renowned tea to take home.

Ooty Lake



- **Historical Significance:** Ooty Lake is one of the most prominent landmarks in the hill station of Ooty (Udhagamandalam), Tamil Nadu, India. It was constructed in 1824 by John Sullivan, the then Collector of Coimbatore.
- **Scenic Beauty and Recreation:** Spanning an area of about 65 acres, Ooty Lake is renowned for its picturesque setting amidst lush greenery and rolling hills. It serves as a popular recreational spot for tourists, offering activities such as boating and horse riding.
- **Flora:** Surrounding the lake is a diverse range of flora, including indigenous species such as eucalyptus, pine, and conifers. The verdant landscape provides a tranquil environment for visitors to unwind and appreciate the natural beauty of the region.
- **Fauna:** Ooty Lake is home to various avian species, making it a haven for birdwatchers. Visitors can spot a variety of waterfowl and migratory birds along the shores of the lake. Additionally, the surrounding hills harbor small mammals and reptiles, adding to the biodiversity of the area.
- **Conservation Efforts:** Efforts are underway to preserve and maintain the ecological balance of Ooty Lake and its surrounding ecosystem. Measures such as afforestation and waste management initiatives aim

to protect the natural habitat and promote sustainable tourism practices.

Mysore Palace



- **Cultural Symbol:** Mysore Palace is an emblem of Mysorean heritage, representing centuries of cultural richness and tradition.
- **Historical Hub:** As the former seat of the Wadiyar dynasty, Mysore Palace holds significant historical and strategic importance in the region.
- **Artistic Treasure:** The palace boasts intricate architecture and exquisite artwork, including paintings, carvings, and sculptures, showcasing the craftsmanship of bygone eras.
- **Preservation Efforts:** Ongoing conservation endeavors ensure the maintenance and preservation of Mysore Palace's architectural and artistic heritage for future generations to appreciate.



- **Tourist Magnet:** Today, Mysore Palace stands as a major tourist attraction, drawing visitors from around the globe to marvel at its cultural significance and architectural splendor.
- **The Divine Connection:** The palace has a temple dedicated to the Hindu goddess Chamundeshwari.

Conclusion and Learnings

The study tour stands out as a transformative journey that left an indelible mark on each participant. We embarked on a voyage of discovery, traversing the length and breadth of India to unravel its myriad layers of diversity and unity. From the ancient heritage sites to the bustling metropolises, from the tranquil countryside to the vibrant cultural hubs, we witnessed firsthand the kaleidoscope of experiences that define this incredible nation.

Our immersion into India's rich landscape extended beyond surface-level learning; it delved into the heart of its history, culture, ecology, and governance. We were captivated by the majestic monuments, intrigued by the tales of bygone eras, and humbled by the richness of its natural landscapes and biodiversity.

Furthermore, the study tour served as a crucible for personal and professional growth, nurturing skills in teamwork, time management, crisis resolution, and adaptability. As we navigated through the challenges and opportunities encountered along the way, we forged enduring bonds of friendship and camaraderie, creating memories that will last a lifetime.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the MCR HRDIT, the Course Director, the Study Tour Committee, and officials for orchestrating this enriching experience. We also express our appreciation to our fellow participants for their companionship and support throughout the journey.

Moving forward, we carry with us a deep sense of appreciation for the diverse mosaic of India and a commitment to apply and share our learnings in our future endeavours. With a spirit of curiosity and exploration, we look forward to revisiting these remarkable destinations and continuing our journey of discovery in our incredible India. Jai Hind!

