

Panna in Madhya Pradesh, India listed as UNESCO biosphere reserve

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BHOPAL, MADHYA PRADESH, INDIA, December 29, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Panna in Madhya Pradesh, India listed as UNESCO biosphere reserve

At the heart of a vast and ancient land called India is Madhya Pradesh, a state that has earned the title: "The Heart of Amazing India." It's not just for its geographical location, but more because it's a microcosm that India has to offer - from ancient protected forests that abound with wildlife to the many forts and stately palaces of its ancient kingdoms, cliffs from marble shining in the moonlight to ancient caves and cave paintings, temples and stupas with intricate carvings. Madhya Pradesh is full of history, heritage, religion, Indian cuisine and textiles, culture and natural beauty.

In October, UNESCO announced that Panna Tiger Reserve, located in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh has been included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. This is an initiative under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme. This is the third location in Madhya Pradesh after Pachmarhi and Amarkantak.

Panna is described by UNESCO as a "critical tiger habitat" characterized by forests and marshy vegetation, with an abundance of rare medicinal plants as well as other non-timber forest products, such as kattha, gum and resin. The area has undergone substantial ecosystem restoration in the buffer zone. With only three urban centres and over 300 villages, agriculture is the main source of income, together with horticulture, forestry, and cultural and eco-tourism.

UNESCO biosphere reserves seek to reconcile human activity with the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. They are a central element of UNESCO's research and awareness-raising work to foster innovative sustainable development practices and combat the loss of biodiversity supporting communities and understanding, valuing and safeguard the living environment.

The wildlife here is diverse and includes deer species like Sambars (which are listed in the 'Vulnerable' category of the IUCN red data list), wild dogs (Dholes), jackals, Indian Gaurs and Nilgai (the largest antelopes in India), and of course big wild cats like leopards and tigers, among

others. Ghariyal, a huge reptile found only in the Indian subcontinent, can be spotted at Ken Ghariyal sanctuary. Out of the nine vulture species found in India, seven are found in Panna.

UNESCO also announced their cooperation with Tourism Dept, Madhya Pradesh for Historic Urban Landscape recommendations for Orchha and Gwalior in their newsletter on Historic Towns and World Heritage cities. Madhya Pradesh is known for its myriad tourism offerings that include wildlife, heritage, culture, spirituality, adventure and cuisine and attracts visitors from across the world.

The state has 3 UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The temples of Khajuraho are a sparkling show of architectural skill and exquisite sculptural art. The fine sculptures that date back 1000 years represent various themes such as meditation, spiritual teachings and above all, erotic art. Some of India's oldest Buddhist relics can be found in Sanchi, northeast of the capital, Bhopal. Bhimbetka is known for its caves and rock shelters, some of which contain ancient rock paintings, housing one of the earliest settlements dating back to the Paleolithic era.

The biggest attraction of Madhya Pradesh is its forests and wildlife. Its rich protected forests cover one-fourth of the state. The vast expanses of woodlands are home to more than 20% of the Indian tiger population with 6 popular tiger reserves (Bandhavgarh, Kanha, Panna, Satpura, Pench and Sanjay Dhubri). These vast forests also offer refuge to leopards, spotted deer, wild boars, blackbucks and crocodiles. Barasingha is a swamp deer, the official animal of Madhya Pradesh.

Madhya Pradesh has something to offer to every traveler. Gwalior is of great interest to music lovers (it also boasts of a magnificent old fort), Orchha and Mandu are a must visit for those interested in exploring the palaces of ancient India. Places of natural beauty (Bhedaghat, Tawa) abound, as well as sites of religious interest (Ujjain, Amarkantak). The state is also known for its varied culinary delights that range from Mughal-inspired meat dishes to unique local street food.

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