

Madhya Pradesh Showcases Gunjara and Barkheda as Model Rural Tourism Villages in the Vindhyachal Hills

Forest trails, Bhil heritage, Malwa cuisine, and a historic rail journey define these village experiences just 50 km from Indore

BHOPAL, MADHYA PRADESH, INDIA, April 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board (MPTB) is spotlighting Gunjara and Barkheda, two scenic villages in Mhow Tehsil of Indore district, as part of its rural and village tourism initiative. Located approximately 50 kilometers southwest of Indore, these villages are nestled between the Choral and Mahadev rivers in the Vindhyachal hills, offering an immersive blend of natural landscapes, tribal culture, regional cuisine, and heritage travel experiences.

A key highlight is their proximity to the Patalpani–Kalakund meter-gauge heritage rail section — a 155-year-old railway line preserved by Indian Railways for its historical and scenic significance. Stretching 9.5 kilometers through rugged terrain, the line was originally completed in 1878 under the Holkar State Railways and revived as a heritage route in 2018.

The journey is marked by four tunnels, 29 sharp curves, and multiple crossings over the Choral River, with sweeping views of forested valleys, gorges, bridges, and seasonal waterfalls. The train



Homestays in the Mhow Tehsil District, Indore - MP



Patalpani–Kalakund Meter-Gauge Heritage Rail

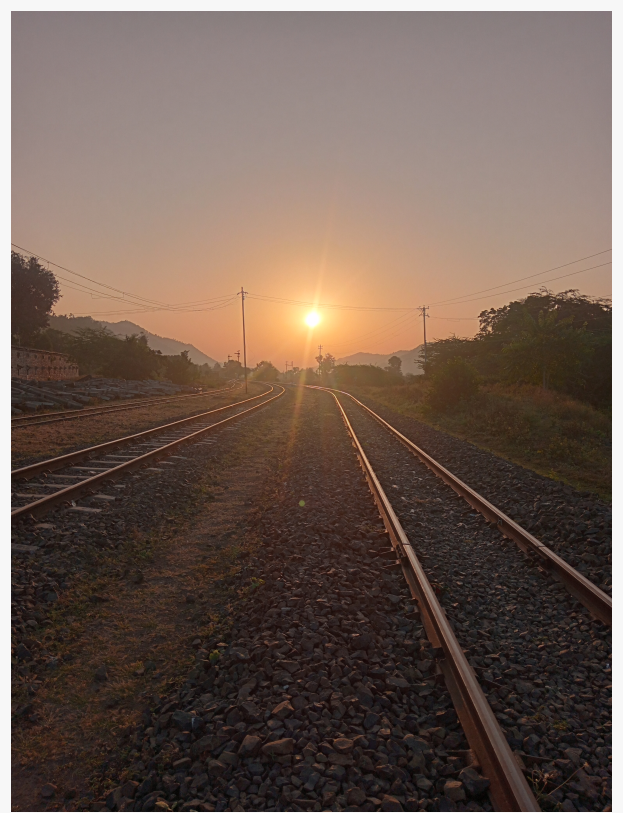
operates with VistaDome panoramic coaches and terminates at Kalakund station, located just 0.5 kilometers from both villages. Affordable fares and booking access via IRCTC make it an accessible experience, though travelers are advised to check schedules in advance due to seasonal operations.

En route, the train halts briefly at Patalpani station, named after Tantya Bhil, the revered tribal freedom fighter who resisted British rule in the 19th century — a symbolic tribute embedded within the journey.

Surrounded by forested hills, Gunjara and Barkheda are well-suited for trekking, camping, and nature walks. Within a 5-kilometre radius lie several points of interest, including the Mahadev Gufa cave temple, the twin shrines of Chhota and Bada Mahadev, Trimurti Waterfall accessed through hill trails, Kushalgarh Fort with expansive valley views, and Navdiya Van Gram for eco-trails. The region also features natural water bodies such as Kalakikund and Jalprapat, along with local pilgrimage sites like Lobani Mata and Dugdugi Mata. The banks of the Choral and Mahadev rivers offer tranquil spaces for riverside walks and informal picnics.

The villages are home to the Bhil community, whose cultural traditions continue to thrive. Among the highlights is the Aada-Khada Nritya — a vibrant dance form related to the Malwa region's Matki dance — where women perform in circular formations balancing earthen pots, accompanied by rhythmic dhol beats. Evenings often feature Malwi Lok Bhajans, devotional songs sung in the Malwi dialect, reflecting the spiritual and cultural ethos of the region. The villages also exemplify harmonious coexistence among diverse communities.

Local hospitality is an integral part of the experience, with village hosts serving traditional Malwa cuisine made from locally sourced ingredients. Signature dishes include Dal Paniya and Dal Bafla, offering an authentic taste of the region. Kalakund station itself is known for its iconic kalakand sweet, a long-standing favorite among train travelers and a distinctive part of the area's



Bhil Tribe of Madhya Pradesh

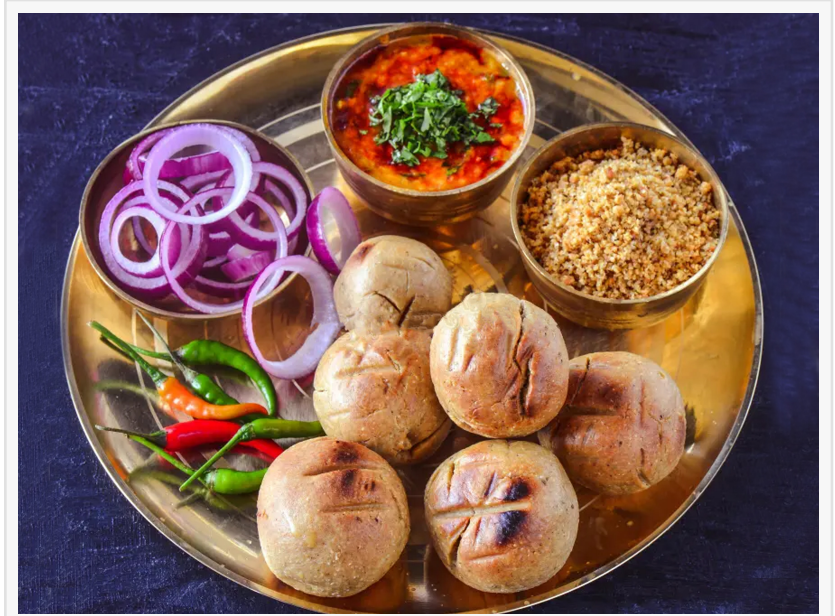
identity.

How to Reach

- By Air: Devi Ahilya Bai Holkar Airport, Indore, is approximately 63 kilometers away.

- By Rail: The Patalpani-Kalakund Heritage Train (No. 52965/52966) connects to Kalakund station, just 0.5 km from the villages. Patalpani can be reached by road from Dr. Ambedkar Nagar (Mhow).

- By Road: The nearest bus stand is Choral (12 km). Indore is 50 km away by road. Kalakund is accessible via a 12 km kachcha road from Khadua.



Malwa Cuisine - Dal Bafla

ZM

Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board

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