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# Orissa Plus

### US company set for Orissa debut

Statesman News Service

BHUBANESWAR, Aug. 18. — US-based Laxmi Franklin Hospitality Private Limited will set up two budget hotels at Bhubaneswar and Puri at an estimated cost of Rs 20 crore.

The company's vice-chairman, Mr KC Mohapatra, signed a MoU to this effect with the state tourism secretary, Mr Ashok Tripathy at the state secretariat here today.

Tourism minister, Mr Surya Narayan Patro, who was present at the hurriedly organised MoU-signing function, said the state government was encouraging establishment of big and budget hotels in order to promote tourism. The occupancy rate in the hotels has gone up to 40 percent this year from last year's 17 percent as a result of the government's policy to boost hospitality industry.

As a follow up to the government decision to encourage establishment of hotels, Tata Group had signed a MoU to set up budget hotels in the state and construction of the proposed hotel at Bhubaneswar had already started, he said.

Now, an NRI, Mr Sharad M Patel, who is running 12 motels with more than 900 rooms in Tennessee and Kentucky provinces of USA, has proposed to set up two budget hotels at Bhubaneswar and Puri in the first phase, said Mr Patro.

Vice chairman of Laxmi Franklin Hospitality Private Limited, Mr Mohapatra said the company's net worth is approximately \$ 30 million and its annual turn over is \$ 40 million.

He said the company had requested the government to provide suitable land at market price in Bhubaneswar and Puri. As soon as the land was allotted, foundation stone of the hotel project would be laid and construction work would be taken up on the same day. The construction would be completed within 12 months.

At subsequent stage, the company would set up similar hotels at Paradip, Duburi and Jharsuguda, informed Mr Mohapatra.

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Other Orissa Plus New office-bearers take charge

**Memorandum submitted** 

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