



# FINER

## News & Views

FEDERATION OF INDUSTRY & COMMERCE OF  
NORTH EASTERN REGION

Vol. 18  
October & November, 2017



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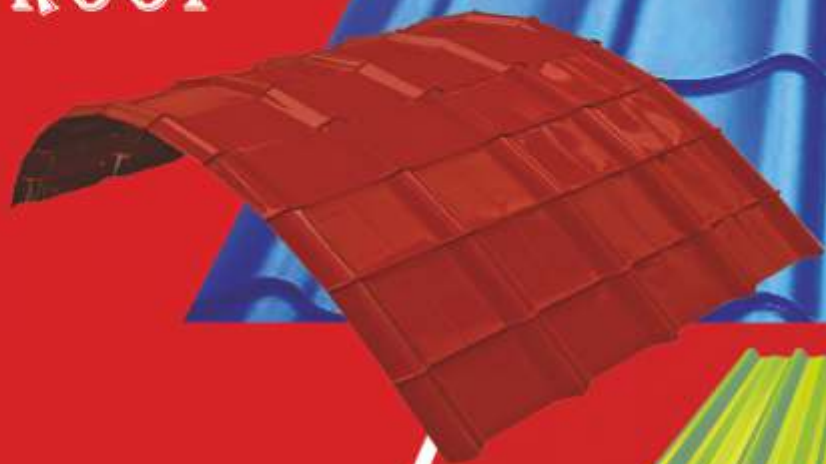
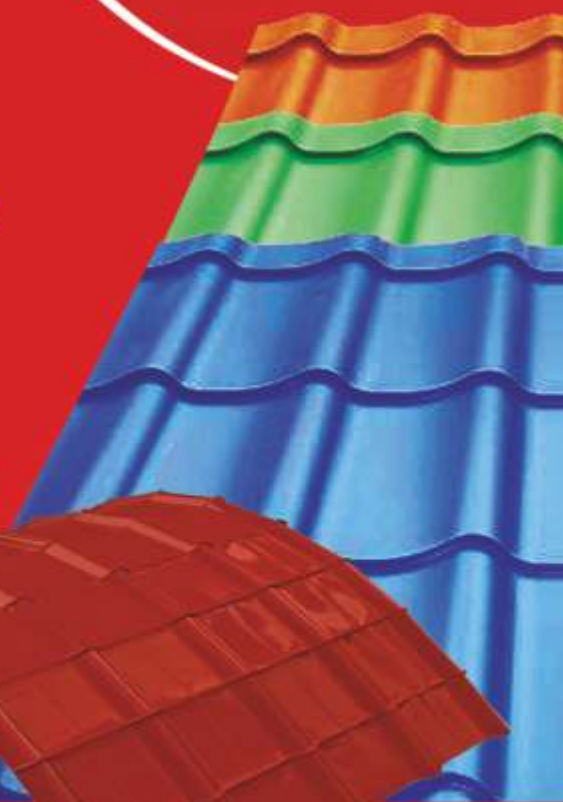


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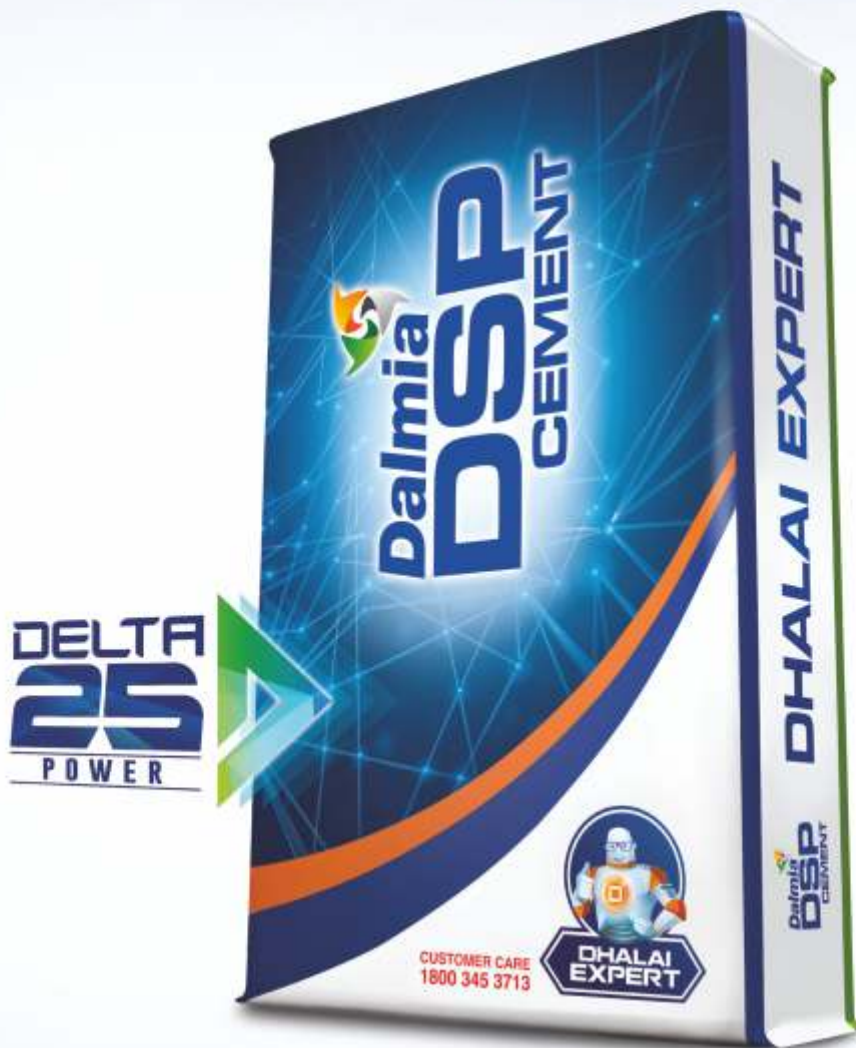
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NORTH EASTERN REGION





# JOIN FINER

## FINER MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

### Networking :

- Platform to interact with over 300 other members that are leaders in industry, trade and commerce of the region.
- Forum to meet business and political leaders in regular meetings.
- Platform to interact with state and central government, bank and other institutions.

### Policy work :

- Participation in different national and state policy committees and task forces FINER works closely with government on policy issues, legislation, regulations etc.
- Representations to central & state governments and other institutions on problems of general nature faced by members.
- Dissemination of Information on export, import and technology collaboration.
- Research studies on relevant topics.

### Business Services :

- Facilities participation in trade fairs & exhibitions in India and abroad.
- Develop business through buyer-seller within the region and outside.
- Participate in business delegations of FINER | FICCI | Govt. of India within India and abroad.
- Participate in Seminars | workshops on relevant topics conducted by experts in that field.
- Take part in training programs in house as well as outside in prestigious institutions of the country.

### Information dissemination :

- Access to publications and reports on wide range of subjects at FINER office.
- Directory of members with Company profile.
- Free subscription of FINER bulletin, a monthly update on business news and latest updates on government policies, notifications, tax, laws etc.
- Important business & economic news through FINER mailers.

### Web Services :

- Information on important events organized by FINER and other activities, press releases, important news etc. through FINER website :[www.finer.in](http://www.finer.in)

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<input type="checkbox"/>	MEGA	100 Crs +	20000	75000
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# President's Desk

India's North East is a land of undulating hills and plains with luxuriant green cover and a wide variety of rare and exotic flora and fauna. Consisting of 8 states, North East has some real surprises for travellers. Not so much established on the traveller's map, yet North East has its own charm.

The North East region of India is exquisitely beautiful and attracts millions of tourists from across the world. Unlike the other parts of India, North East tourism is less explored and its scenic beauty is nothing less than magic.

North East tourism industry is emerging out to be one of the most renowned and profitable one, as the region is not only frequented by locals, but also by almost all foreign tourists. The North East regions of India are mainly connected to the eastern part of the country via a small corridor. There are many places to visit in North East.

North East India, considered as one of the most culturally diverse regions in the world, has always been viewed as a fascinating, mystical place. Although the hotel industry in Guwahati, Assam, is still in the infancy stage, it is gaining momentum due to its gradually transforming economy of the state along with the reduction of insurgency problems. The North East India is a unique destination and bears no resemblance to any other destination in India, both in terms of its beautiful landscape and the challenges pertaining to the hospitality industry. Having said that, the problems of the North East are unique to the region alone. Independent hotels are narrowly surviving but with better and improved infrastructure, they are hopeful of achieving success. OYO marks its presence with over 70 hotels in Guwahati and in the adjoining areas. Assam's largest city Guwahati currently boasts of 350 five-star rooms, with three more five-star hotels slated to open. Currently, there are only two five-star properties in Guwahati which act as a gateway to the North East, namely Radisson Blu and Taj Vivanta. Barring these, the hotels in the rest of the areas of Guwahati are largely budget oriented, including those in other states of the region.

With regards,

Pabitra Buragohain  
Chairman



**Shoeb Samad**  
**Regional Director (NE)**



भारतपर्यटन-गुवाहाटी  
**Indiatourism- Guwahati**

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

**MESSAGE**

It gives me immense pleasure to know that FINER will be publishing its monthly news bulletin "**FINER News & Views**" with a focus on "Tourism and Hospitality in the North East Region" in its upcoming edition.

North East has a vast talent pool of well educated young and potential tourism entrepreneurs who can immensely benefit from the tourism growth in the North-eastern region.

I am sure that the comprehensive information contained in this news bulletin will be useful for all concerned in the travel and tourism industry, including policy makers, administrators and researchers.

I congratulate the entire team of FINER who deserves the highest appreciation for their hard work and dedication.

I wish them all the best in their endeavors.

(Shoeb Samad)  
Regional Director (NE)

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**States in North-Eastern Region**

Arunachal, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim





A Memorandum on Sustainable Development of North Eastern Region - Industrial & Investment Policy for N.E Region and Act East Policy was submitted to Shri Nripendra Mishra, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Secretariat, Government of India, New Delhi by FINER delegation led by FINER President Shri Pabitra Buragohain.



FINER delegation had a meeting with the Secretary, Finance, Government of India, Shri Hasmukh Adhia in Guwahati. A representation on "Budgetary Support under GST Regime" was submitted to him during the meeting.

## FINER DELEGATION MEETS UNION MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

A delegation of Federation of Industry & Commerce of North Eastern Region (FINER) led by Shri Pabitra Buragohain President and accompanied by Shri Bajrang Lohia Vice President, Shri R.S. Joshi, Past Chairman and Shri Amit Kr Jain, Past Vice Chairman, called on Shri Suresh Prabhu, Union Minister for Industry and Commerce at his office on 23rd October.

The minister was apprised of the fact that the people of the North East have very high expectations from him and are happy that he has taken over the ministry. The minister was briefed about the background of NEIIPP and how it has helped in industrialization and creation of large scale employment.

He was also apprised that substantial investment is in the pipeline awaiting announcement of the policy. The delegation informed him that an early announcement would be in sync with the Act East policy of the Govt of India, while Assam Govt has already created a separate department for the same at the state level.

The minister was positive in his response and said that the policy was already under active consideration and being sent to the cabinet. The delegation harped on the fact that the proposed policy in its present form, has been diluted to a great extent and in case it is declared in this form, it will not attract much investment or create employment opportunities. Generation of employment under the previous policy had minimized the insurgency problem to a great extent as unemployed youths were absorbed in gainful employment in industrial units. Minister was informed that the first generation and local entrepreneurs, as well as corporates from outside had started making a beeline to North East since last few years, till the policy was abruptly suspended in Dec 2014 and then expired in March 2017.

Minister was also briefed about dilution of the GST benefits to 58% from 100% as committed earlier. The minister advised the Jt. Secy, NE, Dr Vandana Kumar to look into it.

The delegation also met Mr Amitav Kant, CEO of NITI Ayog and Chairman of the committee on policy formulation for North East. He was briefed about the expectations of the industry fraternity from the new policy. He was requested that the capital subsidy limit should be raised to Rs 50.0 crores and a freight subsidy be fixed at 50% at least. Mr Kant was positive on the matter and assured that the suggestions would be looked into.

Subsequently on 24th Oct, FINER delegation called on Shri Nripendra Mishra, Principal Secy to PM.

Shri Mishra gave a patient hearing in detail and also perused the memorandum submitted to him. The delegation was able to impress upon him the catalysts' role played by the NEIIPP in generating large scale employment and attracting big investments into the North East. He was of the opinion that MSMEs need to be encouraged in the North East. The delegation assured that FINER is very supportive of the MSMEs and a majority of FINER members belong to this sector. The significance of the meeting was evident from the fact that both Mr Ramesh Abhishek, Secy DIPP and Mr Tarun Bajaj, Jt. Secy to PM, were also present.





## FINER Delegation meets the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam

Federation of Industry & Commerce of North Eastern Region (FINER) made a contribution of an amount of Rs. 10 Lacs to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, towards the Chief Minister's flood relief fund.

The delegation was headed by Shri Pabitra Buragohain, President FINER and accompanied by Shri Bajrang Lohia, Shri Rajeev Agarwal, Vice Presidents, Shri R.G. Harlalka and Shri Binit Todi.

The President availed of the opportunity to apprise the Hon'ble Chief Minister regarding some pressing issues affecting the economic activities including reintroduction of North East Industrial Policy. He further submitted suggestion regarding implementation of the Act East Policy. The Hon'ble Chief Minister gave a patient hearing and welcomed the suggestions made by the delegation and assured that the Government will try its best to address all issues and concerns of the Trade, Industries and Commerce of the State.



# Bharat Parv – Grand finale of Paryatan Parv

at New Brindaban Garden , Zoo Road, Guwahati  
on 24th & 25th October 2017

Indiatourism, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, in collaboration with Assam Tourism Development Corporation, Northeast Tourism Development Council (NETDC) and Federation of Industry and Commerce of North Eastern Region (FINER) had organized Bharat Parv – Grand finale of Paryatan Parv on 24th and 25th of October 2017 at New Brindaban Garden , Zoo Road, Guwahati .The objective of the programme was drawing focus on the benefits of tourism, showcasing the cultural diversity of the country and reinforcing the principle of "Tourism for All".

The Chief Guest of the Program was Shri Navadeep Kalita, Vice Chairman, Assam Tourism Development Corporation, Guest of Honour was Shri. Shoeb Samad, Regional Director, Indiatourism, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and the special guests were Shri. Rajeev Agarwal, Vice President, FINER and Shri. R.K. More, Director, FINER.

The special attractions in the event was Silk Symphony, Manju Silk, Koina, Novelty, Meenashree Boutique, OYO Rooms, Night Food Delight, Thancos Natural Icecream, Freepower, Oxyzone, Cygnett Inn Repose, Value My Trip, Runway to name a few. Various Cultural Programmes was organised and it was a grand success.

The entire event was partnered by DY365, GPLUS, ALL INDIA RADIO and INSTITUTE OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT.





# Sectoral Seminar on IT and IT Enabled Services on 16th December at Taj Vivanta

FINER, in collaboration with Department of Industries and Commerce, Assam Government and IT Dept, organised a Sectoral Seminar on IT and IT Enabled Services on 16th December at Taj Vivanta.

It was largely attended by IT professionals, academia, Engineering college Faculties, Senior students from IIT, IIIT, NEFTT, Don Bosco University and other institutions, and also sizeable section of entrepreneurs, prospective entrepreneurs. Secretary IT, Government of Assam, Mr Nitin Khare presented the Govt IT policy and assured all support to entrepreneurs. Mr M.K.Yadava, MD Amtron spoke about the need for local people to invest in their own state and start an era of entrepreneurship, only then investors from outside are expected to come in. Mr Bijoy Bora NRI and founder of Zaloni, a successful IT Entrepreneur, presented his paper on-line through Skype from USA. Mr Abhijit Barua, founder of MiF, another successful IT entrepreneur spoke of challenges and opportunities in the IT sector. Mr P.K. Das, Director STPI, spoke of creating an ecosystem for growth of IT sector in Assam. Mr Rajeev Agarwal, VP FINER spoke of psychological and social preparation required by young generation to dream of being entrepreneurs. There was an intense question & answer session.

Mr Biswajit Hazarika, Chairman, IT committee, FINER gave the vote of thanks.



Shri Rajeev Agarwal, Vice President, FINER delivering speech during the Sectoral Seminar



Shri Nitin Kumar Khade, IAS, Secretary, IT, Govt. of Assam  
delivering his presentation during the inaugural session of the IT Seminar

# Seminar on Holistic River Basin Management at Hotel Taj Vivanta on 11th December, 2017

FINER in collaboration with Embassy of the Netherlands and Dutch company Arcadis, organized a seminar on Holistic River Basin Management at Hotel Taj Vivanta on 11th December.

The seminar was inaugurated by His Excellency Alphonsus Stoelinga, Ambassador of Netherlands. Honorable Minister Water Resource, Government of Assam, Shri Keshab Mahanta was the guest of honour at the Seminar. The welcome address was given by Finer President Shri Pabitra Buragohain who also felicitated the Chief Guest while the Dutch team felicitated Shri Keshab Mahanta, Hon'ble Minister. The Seminar covered the issues on Flood Solutions, River Transport in Assam and Guwahati Smart City project utilizing Dutch technology. A team of experts from Netherlands Embassy and Arcadis, Netherland comprising of Mr. Michiel Bierkens, Mr. Luv Veeger, Mr. Kees de Vries gave a very detailed presentation on Holistic River Basin Management. The Seminar was attended by eminent scientists and specialists, Shri Prasanta Dutta, Addl. CE, Water Resource Department, Govt. of Assam, Prof. Nayan Sharma, IIT, Roorkee, Dr. Pankaj Baruah, Director, North Eastern Regional Institute of Water and Land Management, Mr P.K. Pal, Mr. Vikram S Bapat, Tata Consulting Engineers and Shri Bharat Bhushan Dev Chowdhury, Director, Inland Water Transport, were the speakers while academicians from Engineering colleges, Universities, senior Govt officials and Industry representatives attended and participated actively.



Inaugural Session of India-North East Region Holistic River Basin Management



Lighting of Lamp by H.E. Ambassador of Netherlands, Honorable Minister Water Resource, Government of Assam, Shri Keshab Mahanta, Shri Pabitra Buragohain, President FINER



## Seminar on Tourism Hospitality Wellness and Pharmaceutical sectors at Tezpur University auditorium on 13th November, 2017

FINER in collaboration with Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of Assam conducted a seminar at Tezpur University auditorium on Tourism Hospitality Wellness and Pharmaceutical sectors.

It was presided over by Shri Navadeep Kalita, Vice Chairman ATDC. Mr. K. J. Hilaly, MD ATDC and Shri Mukul Gogoi, Secretary Health, Government of Assam moderated the discussions. Shri R.C. Jain, Commissioner Tourism and Smt. Varnali Deka Additional Secretary Health made excellent presentations on potential and government policy to augment Industrial activity. Mr. M. Deka GM, DIC, sonitpur also gave a presentation. From FINER side Shri R.K. More Director gave the welcome address. The other participant we're Mr Rajeev Goswami and the speakers from Industry were Shri S B Singh from Patanjali, Mr. Pathak from Dabur, Mr. Ashish Phookan from Jungle Travels, Mr K. Sharma, Plant Head, VLCC, Mr. Aditya Jain, CEO OYO Rooms, Shri Deepak Singh from Ozone Pharmaceuticals Ltd. The speakers from Academia we're Professor Monika D. Kotoky, Darrang College and Professor M.K. Sharma from Tezpur University.

The seminar was attended by North Assam Chamber of Commerce and Industry's members, entrepreneurs and MBA students.



Shri R.K. More, Director, FINER delivering speech during the Seminar

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*Believe in tea.....*



# Natventure and Northeast

## Potentials and Problems

Nature's immense role in infusing humane qualities in us cannot be debated. Infinite patience and magnanimity are among its most valuable lessons. As firm believers of this philosophy, Natventure determinedly directs all its endeavours in facilitating an interaction between the Seeking soul and Nature's Wonders.



**Jitu Pegu**  
Natventure  
jitupegu@gmail.com

### About us:-

**N**atventure, founded by Supuraj Gogoi and Jitu Pegu, is a unique adventure oriented organisation based in Guwahati, the Gateway to North East India, in the state of Assam. The objective behind such an endeavour is to bring individuals closer to nature through various adventure activities. After all, Nature has always been the greatest Teacher and the best Healer.

At Natventure, we are a dedicated and professional team of adventure seekers and facilitators. Our team comprises of certified instructors and supervisors with immense experience

from diverse background. The aim is to cater to the requirements of every age and gender with all kind of tours.

We specialise in cycling tours and many cycle trips have been successfully organised in the region.

The weekend trips to the city outskirts are quite popular, especially among the city dwellers who seek a tranquil getaway from the hullabaloo of city life, at times.

The cycle ride in Cherrapunji, Shillong is also among the most sought-after trips by our clients for the immense scenic beauty that mesmerises in the mountains.

Counted among the crowning glory of all its trips, a high altitude cycle tour from Guwahati to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh is organised in April and October. The Guwahati- Tawang route, one of the highest motorable roads, is among the difficult cycling routes in the world. But it is so well compensated by the breathtaking beauty of the surrounds as one cycles all the way up to the highest point, Sela Pass and to Tawang thereafter.

Besides, Cycling to Ziro, Arunachal Pradesh during the Ziro Festival is also coming up as a favoured trip among the cyclists.

Natventure is also making efforts to co-ordinate with city schools and



facilitate Cycle trips etc. for students to ensure their involvement with nature related adventure and health activities.

Natventure also has some plans lined up to arrange trips for the less privileged children of the society in co-ordination with certain other organisations.

Scope and hindrances of tourism in NE India:-

Northeast India is naturally blessed with rivers, mountains, wildlife, forests and a rich eco-system which make it a prospective frontrunner in the field of tourism. The sharing of boundaries with neighbouring countries adds flavour to nature's blessings. Northeast India has over 220 ethnic groups and languages and certain areas are predominantly inhabited by tribal people.

Northeast has the potential to be the hub of tourism in India which will directly benefit the local people. The region has immense potentialities in the Tourism Sector which can be grouped as – Wildlife, Tea tourism, Golf tourism, Cultural tourism, River tourism, Medical tourism, Adventure tourism among others.

However, the image of Northeast India as an insurgency-afflicted area needs to be changed. A sense of security has to prevail before we expect more



tourists to travel to this part.

Besides, infrastructure development is also a must. Northeast India lacks trained manpower in this sector to provide professional services. There is an urgent need to profitably mould the inherent hospitality of the people of this region to a more tourist-friendly approach.

The local people should be made aware of the impacts of tourism

so that the local community is involved in the tourism process primarily to ensure balanced tourism experience for the tourist as well as for the local people.

Fund constraint is a major problem that start-ups like Natventure face for it is quite difficult to facilitate Loans etc for expansionary as well as trip-related activities at times. The Government can be expected to ensure easy facilitation of Loans after ensuring soundness of Projects and Proposals against which loans are sought.

Finally one cannot ignore role of the media to promote the Northeast. Mostly tourists are not much aware about the immense potential here and restrict themselves to explore selected destinations only. Certain information dissemination programmes on a national and international level can ensure awareness among the people so that a tourist friendly environment is established in the region.

Northeast and its potentialities are unparalleled. But to harness the same, some hand-holding on the part of the Government is required. Natventure hopes the day is not far when souls are awakened and Nature no longer remains a place to visit but Home in itself.





# FARAWAY

## The Travel Company

Tourism and travel related search may not only be confined through search engines like Google, Yahoo, and Bing etc. Needless to mention, these provide tons of information about any location and place, but there are places throughout the globe which the World Wide Web remains silent or may provide limited information of..!! These are generally unexplored, untouched and unique in nature.



**Rupam Bora**  
Partner & Co-founder  
[mail.farawaytravels@gmail.com](mailto:mail.farawaytravels@gmail.com)



**I**n a genuine attempt to popularize such destinations to the world audience, after multiple sessions of brainstorming and discussion, “Far-Away” –The Travel Company was formed. We are three friends who share a common passion for trekking, travelling and exploring and are determined to present Northeast in its raw form,

unlike never before. Our vision is promoting Northeast India—a region of beauty, culture and wilderness waiting to tell a million tales. In this endeavour, our promotion of the region is not only confined to our country but also to Southeast Asia. Tourism is predicted to boom in a big way in the coming years, thanks to the efforts of the Government for the various schemes and policies.

Currently, the team is focusing on Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. Trips have been taken throughout these states for curated tours, offbeat destinations and experiential travel. Manipur and Sikkim are being explored for providing the best services. Since there are many preconceived notions regarding the region, growth and development in the





tourism sector is much needed to break the stereotypes.

Northeast region as a whole needs a big push on the path of development, which can be achieved by improvement in the tourism sector. The marketing strategy of the Ministry of Tourism is now identifying new markets for tourism and this search is aligned with the 'Look East/ Act East' trade policy and the region is poised to become the country's Gateway to Southeast Asia.

Northeast India, a place renowned for its beauty and diversity is home to more than 40 million people. The region is endowed with huge untapped natural resources. All the states are dotted with beautiful mountains, valleys, hilly streams, and vast tea gardens. The Ministry of Tourism calls the region a 'paradise unexplored'. The rich natural beauty and its diversity, unexplored ecosystems, flora and fauna provide possibilities of a totally different experience for the tourists. The region apart from being blessed by nature is a source of tea, oil, natural gas, coal and

limestone.

However, Northeast has an insignificant share of the humongous tourists who contribute to employment and income generation unlike other states. Movements of domestic tourists improve the image of the place and the demand created lead to development of essential infrastructure. This process will facilitate movement of foreign tourists. According to a report by the YES bank, the total number of tourist visits in 2015 amounted to 14553 lakhs; share of Northeast Region (NER) is only 80.53 lakhs of which domestic tourism accounts to 79.40 lakh & foreign tourists to 1.18 lakhs.

Constraints like communication bottlenecks, geographical isolation, lack of infrastructure, political instability is holding the region back. . For development of the region, a planned approach should be taken and hospitality plays an important role as it provides the customers with the experience, since what is provided in the tourism industry is the intangible

product.

The Government has started taking initiatives in this matter. However for overall development, government alone cannot make changes if there is no support from the local communities. The people of the region need to be educated on the benefits of the tourism through workshops, i.e. employment and revenue generation. The locals would have an alternative livelihood and a motivation to conserve the area's natural habitat.

Assam Government to tap tourism prospects in rural and semi urban areas has started a Rural Homestay Scheme" Amar Aalohi (Our Guest)" to supplement the availability of accommodation in the rural tourist destinations where the tourists would get clean and affordable accommodation with opportunities to stay with Assamese families to experience local customs and traditions and relish authentic local cuisine. Involvement of the local community plays an important role since tourists come to places where people are friendly and welcoming. Namami Brahmaputra organized for the first time in the state is a welcome move to promote



the state's culture, tradition and beauty followed by the multi-state Paryatan Parv.

Arunachal Pradesh which is witnessing a rise in tourist arrivals every year has started taking steps-workshops and awareness campaigns to make people realize the importance of tourism and to help the local entrepreneurs, the government has announced Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Swalamban Yojana which will provide bank loans with subsidy. Homestays in Ziro among the Apatani Tribe is an example. Ziro Festival, Dambuk Festival, Mechuka Adventure Festival and Tawang Festival are some of the festivals organized which aiding in the growing number of tourists flow to the state.

Meghalaya Government also has a scheme running for development of infrastructure – homestay and resorts in the state to cater the growing number of tourists. In the recent years, the number of homestays, resorts and restaurants has increased in the region. Homestay in remote areas such as Nongriat Village (Living Root Bridge), Kongthang, Mawlynbna, Mawphlanur are some of the steps forward in Meghalaya Tourism.

Strawberry Festival, Nongrem Dance Festival, Behdeinkhlam Festival are some of the festivals held in Meghalaya.

Nagaland after witnessing a surge in tourism from the Hornbill Festival has also started homestay to cater to the tourists. Tourist Village in Touphema, Kohima is a result of such efforts. Aoleang Festival and Sekrenyi Festival are the other festivals held in the state.

Regarding infrastructure, currently there are only two five star properties in the region – Taj Vivanta and Radisson Blue and foreseeable entry of three new hotels - Marriott, Novotel and Courtyard by Marriott the hospitality market of the region is expected to see an influx of hotels in the five-star

segment. Entry of OYO and Treebo in the northeast market is a welcome move to the hospitality sector. Apart from this hospitality industry is dominated largely by local players with small inventories and limited tourism offerings.

Standard & hygienic food restaurants and hotels are lacking in North Eastern Region. To attract quality tourists, hygienic food joints are one of the foremost requirements. Restaurants are required on roads connecting major destinations. The food habits of North East are quite different, though this would become an additional interest point for some tourists, standard Indian food is required at all destinations/ key circuit routes. The wayside amenities including toilets, dustbins, drinking water, filling stations, vehicle repair shops etc. are inadequate/ nonexistent at sites and en-route. The guide services are limited in the region and even available guides are not properly trained about North Eastern Region's heritage.

Secondly many states in northeast region require a protected area permit (PAP) & ILP (Inner Line permit) - Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram. Although Restricted Area Permits (RAP) has been eased in 2013, there is a need to ease the special permits to enter the restricted areas of the region.

Security and safety is also a major concern in the region for the growth of tourism. To make the environment secure, special task force must be formed for safety and security of the tourists, effective handling of queries and complaints, most importantly prompt action in case of misconduct. These steps will remove apprehensions from the minds of the people visiting the region and help in promoting the region as a safe haven for tourists. The growth of the tourism sector will pave way for

greater socio-economic development of the region.

Regarding communication bottlenecks developments like Rail- Road Bridge over Bogibeel, investment of 33,688 crores for highways of the region, broad gauge rail link between Agartala and Dhaka are some of the many projects undertaken by the government.

Northeast Calling by the Ministry of DONER is a welcome move as it promotes the art, culture, heritage, cuisine and tourism of the region. States in the region have also come with tourism videos to promote their respective states.

For Development in the tourism sector in the region, the focus should be on experience based tourism rather than traditional holidaying i.e. promoting the region as an eco tourism destination with other experiential tourism segments like adventure tourism, participative heritage tourism, culture tourism, religious tourism.

Currently, Far Away is organizing treks to Meghalaya and Nagaland. The company keeping in mind its vision has started an initiative to promote Manchester of Assam – Sualkuchi known worldwide for Silk Weaving and ancillary industries. The village is a Handloom Heritage Village and may soon become a rural tourism center under UNDP Project. Although, it's popular worldwide, it is losing its importance among the current generation as they are opting for other jobs rather than weaving which becomes a concern among the current weavers of the village.

"Far-Away" organizes guided tours to Sualkuchi which include visits to the factory, weaving and handloom units to boost the tourist flow to the village which will boost interest among the localities, help them to be self employed and reconnect themselves to their roots. The company is also in talks with the Tourism Department to organize the tours covering rural/textile tourism.

# “Discover Northeast”

“Discover Northeast” was set up in December 2016 with the motto STEP INTO THE UNTOUCHED LAND. Initially, “Discover Northeast” started with two person's thought process- a person who is passionate about travelling and the other person for photography. With time and exchange of ideas the organization became a team of seven friends handling different sectors of the organization. Starting as travel start-up and with time it expanded its wings to sectors such as blogs, documentaries, teasers, photographs and merchandise. The company got the privilege to get recommendation from Mr. Martin Salter, Ex-British Parliamentarian. Mr. Martin visited Subansiri River in Arunachal Pradesh, where the famous Golden mahseer is found. He was accompanied by one of the member of Discover Northeast team.



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**T**he organization targets three section of the market-

1.The tourists within Northeast India, who haven't explored the other parts of the state.

2.The rest of the country's population, in order to make northeast India familiar and to break the negative picture which is often described in media. As we know Northeast is blessed with nature and we should welcome the rest of India to enjoy this blessing along with us.

3.Lastly, the foreign travelers. We often see foreign travelers in Himachal Pradesh, Goa, and Rajasthan. But why not Northeast? Where tranquility and nature is found in Northeast. Basically, to promote Northeast as a product for them.

Often seen as an isolated region by the rest of India, thus Discover Northeast team wants to break the

stereotypical picture. Carrying such motivation the team started organizing budget and luxury trips, mostly including the places where adventure is found, caving in Meghalaya (where Asia's longest cave is found), trekking, and camping to the beautiful sights of the state and so on. The most successful section of the company is the pocket friendly monthly trips attracting the young generation.

Discover Northeast also organizes camps for Ziro Music Festival, NH7 weekender, Hornbill Festival. Along with giving eye visit to the richness of culture, tradition, rituals, society of the northeastern states Discover Northeast gives the reader a good read through its blogs published in the official websites. The blogs are written by young writers from different parts of the region. The young energetic team also makes teasers of the northeastern states by self travelling and shooting. The

teasers can be enjoyed in their YouTube channel and the official website.

The organization has a Facebook, Instagram and Twitter page where maximum followers can be seen. Discover Northeast also promotes photographs of the gorgeous northeastern state click by the talent young photographers. The photographs are posted in the respected social media pages. The two verticals of the organization will be opening soon which is the merchandise and the documentary section. The merchandise section will include the souvenirs of the northeastern states which will be easily available for the people and documentary section where the beautiful landscapes of the countrysides, tribes, culture of the northeastern states will be promoted.

This young company has successfully completed 1 year in service with a vision to serve in the years ahead with the support of the Northeast India people government and the rest of India.



# ASSAM TOURISM POLICY 2017

## VISION:

Assam becomes a Nationally and Internationally acclaimed all-season Tourist destination for its unique wildlife, bio-diversity and experience of an unexploited wonderland. Tourism is to be one of the main sources of income generation for the people. It will also be a vibrant and significant contributor to the sustainable development of the State of Assam.



**Source :** Government of Assam



## OBJECTIVES:

- To make Assam a tourist Hub for North East India.
- To market Assam as a hot destination for the tourists from East & South East Asian Countries.
- To leverage innovative forms of Tourism such as Cruises, Ethnic Tourism, Tea & Golf, leisure Tourism, Transit Tourism, Adventure Tourism and Monsoon Tourism.
- To develop positive, Tourist friendly and reciprocative culture

among local tour operators, guides and hospitality providers.

- To upgrade skill, quality and professionalism of all service providers connected with tourism.
- To develop tourism packages to cater to various types of tourists and market them through global and local tour operators.
- Popularizing local and community hosts to promote Bed and Breakfast, cottages on stilts accommodation all across the Tourist spots/destinations.

• Developing Assam into an all season tourist destination.

- To focus on benefits for the Community from tourism.
- To create enabling environment for investment.

## STRATEGIES:

• **ASSAM TOURISM WEBSITE:** An interactive and fully comprehensive website of Assam Tourism will be launched wherein all required information for any prospective domestic or international tourist will be





readily available at the click of the mouse. The website will contain linkages to all sorts of information and bookings including Hotels, Air Travel, Rail & Road, Bus, Home Stays, Bed & Breakfast accommodation, Restaurants, Details of Tourist destinations, packages, Fairs and events, Route maps etc. It will have the facility for two way interactions with all stakeholders such as Tourists, Tour Guides and Tour operators. Hoteliers, Restaurateurs etc to collect feedback information on Do's and Don'ts, weather and local cultures will also be hosted to guide the prospective tourists.

- **BUILDING BRAND:** Inspite of having tremendous tourism potential, Assam has not yet aggressively marketed itself. A comprehensive marketing strategy will be chalked out in consultation with professional agencies. A brand image of Assam as "Awesome Assam" will be created portraying the states uniqueness and exotic beauty. The brand name will be translated to Hindi and other National and International languages. A renowned celebrity will be roped in as brand Ambassador of Awesome Assam.

- **ASSAM- A TOURIST HUB FOR NORTH EAST INDIA:** Assam is the gateway to the North Eastern states.

Geographically and culturally the states have interdependent relationship. A total NE perspective in tourism planning, where the strength of each state complement each other is beneficial to all and is a constructive way forward for tourism promotion. Assam will play a proactive role to develop such a wide view of tourism promotion through coordination among the states in creating zonal and regional circuits.

- **WILDLIFE TOURISM:** Though most of the domestic and international tourists are drawn towards Kaziranga and this heritage site has got best tourist facilities with private participation, yet the Government will develop infrastructure around individual Wildlife sanctuaries such as Manas, Pabitora, Orang, Pani Dihing, Barail and Nameri at Dibru-Saikhowa across Assam to accommodate tourists and resort to aggressive marketing to position Assam as Wildlife destination of the world. The Quality of Tourist facilities will be improved and proper tourist information centers will be established in each place.

- **SPIRITUAL TOURISM:** After wildlife, it is the spiritual tourism which attracts pilgrim tourists to Assam. Centering on the most famous

Shakti-peeth, Kamakhya Temple atop Nilachal hill top in Guwahati city, the religious/ spiritual tourism can catapult Assam into a major spiritual tourism destination in the country. Assam is known among the pilgrims and domestic tourists as a wonderland soaked in Shakti-pooja, mysticism, tantric practice, mythology and black magic of Mayong with Kamakhya as the epicenter. This advantage shall be turned into revenue spinning machine and local employment creation by right interventions.

- **ETHNIC TOURISM:** Assam has been a unique place on earth for the cultural and ethnic diversities. The state is a home land of various ethnic tribes and groups, each having its own cultural heritage. Each of these tribes possesses some unique features in its socio-cultural life including customs, religious belief, language, culture, dress, way of life, festivals, food habits, songs and dances which are different from others. Ethnic Tourist circuits will be developed to attract the tourists from all over the world. The ethnic socio-cultural and religious festivals will be organized where Songs and dances, display of colourful dresses, tasting of innumerable varieties of both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes is the main feature.

- **RIVER TOURISM:** The State of



Assam has an extensive river network. Brahmaputra is intrinsic to the socio-cultural life in Assam. Assam has immense opportunities to develop river tourism and water leisure activities. Colorful canal barges, boating, luxury cruisers, motor boats, dolphin shows, under water-world, water sports and lighters, para sailing, river rafting, water amusements and more. River tourism in Assam could be a great way to spend holidays. International standard of luxury cruises can be a great driver to draw more domestic and international tourist traffic to Assam.

- **TRANSIT TOURISM:** For many of the tourists, particularly for foreigners, Guwahati is not only a tourist destination but also is perceived as a halt or the entry-point to the north eastern states. It is a city from where one could connect to other parts of Assam or get in and out of the northeast. On an average, a tourist spends about 2 days in transit which could be turned as a great opportunity to promote Guwahati City based Tourism titled as 'One day in

Guwahati' or 'Two days in Guwahati'.

- **ADVENTURE TOURISM:** The enchanting blue hills and speedy rivers of Assam provide and enormous scope for the development of water based adventure tourism. Recently, some of the adventure sports activities like rock-climbing, trekking, para-sailing, water sports, river rafting and angling are promoted by the Department of Tourism. Tourism Department will join hands with Adventure Institute of Sports Department to design various adventure activities at tourist sites catering to tourists in particular. This will generate a lot of employment opportunities for local youths.

- **ECO TOURISM:** Eco-tourism is also a new concept, developed around the idea of travelling to places of natural beauty, moving around and staying with the places of nature for a couple of days. It has the twin objectives of conserving environment and improving the welfare of the local people. Assam has immense scope for

ecotourism. The state is virtually free from industrial pollution. Its green forests, blue hills, enchanting rivers are the basis on which eco-friendly tourism can be developed.

- **MEDICAL TOURISM:** The rapidly growing healthcare sector in state capital Guwahati has gradually started to attract international patients not only from neighbouring countries such as Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh but also from far-off countries, especially African nations. The domestic patients from other North Eastern states had already started flocking to Guwahati from a decade back. From a place of primary healthcare centres, dispensaries and clinics, the city has now expanded itself into a hub of critical care, multi-specialty and super-specialty centres. Health sector experts attribute this emerging trend to low-cost treatment, quality healthcare infrastructure and availability of skilled doctors.

- **PROMOTION OF FILM TOURISM:** Single Window Clearance





System to film makers, serial producers, documentary makers etc shall be ensured through Tourism website to facilitate fast track clearance of all required approvals/ permissions for film shooting in Assam. Assam shall motivate reputed filmmakers of Hindi / English / other foreign languages for film shooting in Assam through attractive incentives. Assam Tourism shall organize Regional, National and International Film festivals in suitable Tourist destinations to promote Film Tourism, with the assistance of Cultural Affairs Department.

• **IDENTIFICATION OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS /SPOTS AND CIRCUITS:** For each individual category of tourism such as Nature & Wildlife, Spiritual, Tea & Golf, Eco, Ethnic, Monsoon, Adventure etc different Tourist destinations and tourist circuits shall be identified. For example, Jatinga valley and Majuli can be destinations for Ethnic Tourism.

• **DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE:** A tourist is central to entire scheme of Tourism activities. A tourism destination must deliver quality service, environment and customer

satisfaction to a tourist. Our endeavor should be to deliver a feel good experience to all categories of tourists which can be achieved only by providing quality basic amenities at the destinations. This shall include services in hotels, restaurants, places of interests, up-keep and maintenance.

• **LOCAL TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT:** Transport from airport, railway stations, bus stations or any other point of disembarkation upto the tourist destination and between the destinations is the most crucial factor from tourist point of view. Safe, secure and reliable Transport Services are of outmost importance. Prepaid and meter taxi services to the destinations shall be regulated through transport department. The taxis may carry the logo of tourism department once all standards and certifications are made. Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC) will also be persuaded to ply AC/ Non AC good conditioned buses between tourist destinations.

• **SANITATION & CLEANLINESS:** Local Management

Committees shall ensure proper placement of public dust bins and private dust bins in shops and business establishments. Fines shall be imposed as penalty. Tourist places will have pay & use clean toilets at all required places. The Local Management committees will out- source these facilities. Bio-toilets from government fund will be installed at places where regular toilets are not possible. Road Side Eateries at tourist spots in Assam are poor in hygiene. Therefore a minimum standard of cleanliness and hygiene will be set by providing a code/ rules backed by law for proper enforcement.

• **STANDARDIZATION AND CERTIFICATION:** To promote sustainable development of the tourism industry and to prevent unplanned mushroom growth of tourism related activities, the State Government will put in place a regulatory mechanism. Government will formulate a compulsory system of certification of the services in tourism. The regulations will lay down standards for various services and government facilities and incentives will be extended only to those who fulfill the norms.



• **EXEMPTION OF TOURISM SECTOR FROM BANDHS/ STRIKES:**

Assam has an unpleasant history of bandh culture which has always been affecting the tourism sector adversely. Tourism Department will initiate discussions with all political parties and unions to exempt tourism sectors from bandhs. Stringent measures to be taken by the district administration in this regard to ensure free movement of tourists.

• **CONNECTING HIGHWAYS TO SOUTH EAST ASIAN NATIONS:** In tune with ACT EAST policy of the Government of India and to exploit fully the opportunities for tourism expansion opened up by the Trans-Asian Highway, particular attention will be given to connect the destinations by good all weather road links from this highway. The road connectivity of the North-West of South East Asia (i.e. Assam) to South-East Asian countries via Myanmar and Thailand to Singapore, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam will open floodgate for the tourists from these countries.

• **INCENTIVES:**

1. Tourism shall be accorded industry status in Assam and all facilities & incentives applicable to Industries shall be available to Tourism Industry also.

2. Financial grant to Hindi / English / foreign language Cinema makers who have produced minimum 5 feature films with country wide audience and having the following criteria -

a) Minimum 25 % of the entire shooting of the feature film in Assam

b) At least 25 % of cast & crew should be from Assam

c) Should get an U or UA certificate by Censor Board. Cash grant amounting to 25 % of Qualified Production Expenditure (QPE)

3. Rs 1 crore, whichever is less. Number of films to be covered will depend on budgetary provision for the year.

4. Additional rebate of 10 % on QPE for film having storyline on Assam's

culture / tourism / heritage.

5. Additional rebate of 10% on QPE for shooting more than 50 % of the entire shooting in Assam.

6. The producers who have produced minimum 10 films in Hindi/English /Foreign language will be provided free accommodation and transport for their important Casts during the period of stay for shooting of films in Assam.

7. A policy shall be made to pay stipend / remuneration to empaneled Tourist Guides on regular basis so that more people take it up as a profession. They shall be trained free of cost and licensed on basis of training assessment.

8. Free Counseling at Tourism Incubation Centre at ATDC for promotion of tourist business and entrepreneurship.

9. Fees Reimbursement to trainees for selected hospitality courses.

• **SUBSIDIES:**

1. In order to promote industrialization in the North Eastern Region, the Government of India has been announcing various Industrial and Investment promotion policies from time to time. The state Government shall take initiative for extending all such benefits/incentives etc. to the tourism sector also in addition to the Govt. of India's Scheme.

2. A capital investment subsidy at the rate of 30% of capital investment subject to a ceiling of Rs.1 crore shall be available for Tourist lodges, Hotels, Resorts, Houseboats and floating Restaurant and located in tourism locations.

3. 25% of the cost payable to Assam State Power Distribution Company Ltd. (APDCL) for drawal of power line to the eligible units including the cost of transformer subject to a ceiling of Rs.10 lakhs.

4. 75 % of the cost of construction of approach road to the premises of eligible units shall be reimbursed in the form of a subsidy

subject to a ceiling of Rs. 10 lakhs.

5. Private sector will be encouraged to proactively participate and invest in tourist places in the Tourism sector. A special incentive will be offered as additional 10% capital grant upto Rs.25 lakhs for investment in remote/potential tourist destination of Assam.

6. For private properties in Tourism sector, both existing and new, 25% of investment on renewal sources of energy will be reimbursed subject to maximum of Rs.10 lakhs.

7. The incentive/subsidies mentioned in this Tourism Policy will be applicable to an individual unit/beneficiary only once for a particular activity.

• **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING:** All incentives under this policy can be claimed only after obtaining Eligibility Certificate from the prescribed authorities. Following Committees are constituted for scrutiny of the applications and to approve the deserving cases for the issuance of Eligibility Certificate for the entire fiscal and tax incentives under this Policy.

• **IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS:** For implementation of the above policy, Government can institute any of the mechanism as follows. It can also institute any other appropriate mechanism as and when necessary.

1. Free Counseling Centre at ATDC for tourism related business.

2. Inter- Departmental Tourism co-ordination committee.

3. Task Force for Destination Infrastructure.

4. Inter departmental Film Tourism Committee.

5. State Level Assam Tourism Council.

6. District Level Tourism Management Committee.

7. Local Management Committees (LMC) for tourism.

8. Tourist Wardens.

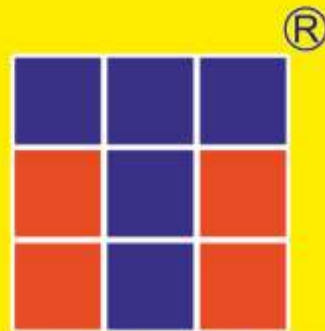


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# ADVENTURE TOURISM AND NORTH EAST INDIA



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## Concept and meaning of Adventure Tourism

Adventure tourism is active tourism that combines experiences, local interactions, and physical activities to explore and connect with self, nature, and communities. The best way to understand adventure tourism is to compare it with conventional tourism, which is exactly the opposite. If the majority of travelers tend to visit cities or lounging on the beach, adventure tourists are opting for a more active holiday, including extreme sports or exploring the nature. Adventure travel involves exploration or travel to remote exotic areas. Adventure Tourism is mainly seen as 'thrilling activities' tourism such as mountaineering, trekking, sailing, white water rafting, angling, ballooning, parachuting, motorcycle tours, eco tourism and so on. Adventure Tourism is becoming quite a rage with the younger generations, who wants to venture into and experience the unknown. Adventure tourism gains much of its excitement by allowing its

participants to step outside their comfort zone. Adventure tourists are passionate and risk-taking.

## Adventure Tourism - Its History and Growth in India

Even though, it is not certain how adventure tourism began, merchants are considered to be the first adventure travelers. For example, North America was discovered by Erickson, and America by Columbus, and Vasco Da Gama traveled to India. That was during a time when modernization didn't become a regular part of your lives. Adventure traveling of today is considered to have started around 30 years ago when people from around the world begin exploration of the Himalayan ranges in Nepal. In fact, they were nothing more than wanderers and created the new-age form of adventure traveling. Even though others have had been moving around the world, people in India took to adventure traveling in recent times. While there was a steady rise in

this form of traveling, India has now emerged amongst the leading 10 adventure tourism destinations in the world.

The diverse topography and the varied climate made Incredible India as one of the tourist hubs for adventure tourism. India being a country with a vast diversity of nature in terrain, flora and fauna has ample scope for many adventurous activities. Also, with the advent of technology and access to professional courses in various activities, it has now opened the doors to a wide variety of adventures that can be offered to both Indian as well as foreign tourists in India. India is blessed with a long shoreline on three sides which are blessed with beautiful beaches and many unexplored islands. This has opened the doors to a number of scuba diving and other underwater exploration activities. India is also blessed with beautiful mountain and hill ranges such as Himalayas, Aravalli, Sahyadri, Western Ghats etc. giving rise to a number of mountaineering, trekking, rock climbing



and other related adventure sports. The people are supporting, the culture is full of colors, there are millions of religious places, rivers, plains, mountains and the ancient tradition of yoga. All combine together to make India one enchanting tourism destination.

#### North East – The Paradise Unexplored of Adventure Activities

Welcome to the land where the first rays of sun kisses the nature at its best. The alluring land of North East India is one of the most treasured eco-friendly sites in the entire world. If you are ready to explore, there is a world of surprises waiting for you in this part of the country. From fantastic treks to lush jungles, natural caves and much more, there is so much to do and experience in the north-east.

North East India lie deep in the lap of the easternmost Himalayan hills in the northeastern part of India. This region is incidentally the closest that the Himalayan mountain range gets to the coast. This geographical factor added to

the fact that this region also receives some of the highest rainfall in the planet has resulted in one of the greatest diversity in flora and fauna and hence also a diverse mix of people. Distinct from the other states of India, this region shares some common ethnical features with Nepal, Bhutan, China, Burma & other South East Asian countries. Northeast India is one of the few places where you can feel the kick of adrenaline rush instantly with its offering of various kinds of adventure sports.

#### Activities in the North East Motorcycle Tourism :

The endless roads often beckon the rider in you to set forth on a journey of exploration and self-discovery! As exciting as it sounds, bikers go out of their way to unleash the inner adventurer in them. The experience of exploring new corners of the world on your bike cannot be replaced in any way. Indulging in a few motorcycle tours is probably the most adventurous ways to explore destinations. When

rumbling engines reach the hilly regions of Northeast India, the misty landscape welcomes every traveler with open arms. A bike trip in this region can offer one of the most adventurous mountain bike trips in India. Slanting hills and the narrow passes between them, snow covered mountains and the dense green forests can allure any biker for an adventurous motorcycle tour. With the opening up of roads to the South East Asian countries, Motorcycle Tourism can be the best way for road travel to these countries and spread the 3 Cs of Connectivity, Commerce and Culture.

#### Hand Gliding and parasailing

Hang gliding and Para sailing are the newer adventure experience in India. It is a dream come true for a man to be able to fly high above the sky. Man has always longed to fly. It is a great experience for a man to soar over hills and valleys and rising slowly, silently with thermals like the birds. Except during the monsoons, hang gliding is safe throughout the year; so is Para gliding, which is safer and easier to learn. The



long stretched Himalayan range contrasted with the vast river valleys landscape offer wide scopes for activities like Para Sailing, Para Gliding.

#### Trekking:

Trekking in northeast India will prove to be a rare wilderness experience. It has a charm of its own and you would get to see a lot of things in the form of spectacular waterfalls, scenic valleys and a whole lot of things amid the trek. There are countless trekking routes that have been recently opened for the trekking enthusiasts. For an enthusiastic leisure seeker, few destinations in the world would match the dimensions of the northeast India. Best trekking places in the region are - Beyul of Pemako, Nathu La Pass, Dzukou Valley, Living Root Bridges, Reiek Mountain, Singalila Trek, Green Lake Trek, Majuli.

#### Mountaineering:

The lure of the northeastern mountain region is tempting for the mountaineers. The northeastern part of India provide an excellent and endless scope for mountain climbing. The beauty of mountains midst the lush green vegetation and orchids, are truly fascinating, which will always have an everlasting appeal for those who venture in this region. The Sikkim Himalayas, the epitome of the world's mountains, encompass a wonderland, which for sheer beauty and magnificence remains unbeaten elsewhere in the globe. Mizoram offer excellent and exciting scope for mountaineering. There are about 21 peaks in Mizoram varying from 1,179 m to 2,157 m in altitude. Assam's topography makes her an ideal destination for mountaineers and rock climbers. The hills, in particular, the North Cachar Hills and Karbi Hills are ready to receive tourists for mountaineering. The Simhasana Hill of Karbi Anglong is also known for rock climbing.

#### White water rafting:

White water rafting has become one of the most liked attraction in the northeast India. Steering through the unbridled water and passing through precarious rapids, a rafter who is an



adventurer at heart realizes what adrenaline rush actually is! The White Water Rafting is also experienced at the mighty Brahmaputra, passing through the northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. Perhaps one of the most challenging rivers for rafting in India, Brahmaputra enters India through Arunachal Pradesh and offers a piece of thrill! This action-packed river being massive and untamed becomes a suitable river rafting site. The Teesta and Rangit in Sikkim offers some of the best rapids for rafting.

#### Cycling:

North East is a paradise for a cycling buff who is willing to unleash his cycling enthusiasm. Cycling in North East gives an opportunity to give your adventure spirit a new edge. From high terrain to plain roads, the region offers a wide range of landscapes and natural beauty with adventure of different levels. Some of the best cycling routes are Guwahati to Tawang, Rural cycling in Assam especially Majuli, mountains of Arunachal, Sikkim, Nagaland, Manipur, Khawhai Cycling trails,

#### Trail Running:

Trail running is a sport which consists of running and hiking over trails. When it comes to trail runs, North East has plenty of variety to offer – from plains to mountain runs, from tea gardens to forests to sand beds. With its natural diversity, North East can cater to trail runners in all seasons – whether it is pouring down or during winter. And you are likely to find one or the other trail run that suits your level of fitness and training.

North east has a plenty of other

adventure tourism activities to offer like Skiing, Zip-lining, Scuba diving, camping, canoeing and the ever popular Wild Life Safaris. Adventure tourism can emerge as the biggest employer in the north east region. As our Hon'ble Prime Minister has said "If developed and promoted well, this can emerge as the biggest employer in the region. It can also add to the growth and income of the region". The region can also look for combining a few popular destinations of the neighbouring South East Asian countries for added attraction for tourists. It can be the "Adventure Tourism Destination" of the world.

#### About NEICATS

North East India Company for Adventure Tourism and Sports or NEICATS was envisioned with one goal in mind – to be the bridge connecting the experiences the North East of India has to offer to a global audience who are searching for novel and unexplored experiences. The region has immense potential that, if utilised in the right manner, can make a mark on the global map. The North-East Region comprises of eight states, all of which have different developmental prospects and resources. There is no dearth of opportunities which covers a wide spectrum of eco-tourism, adventure sports and nature trails. While some of these ventures manage to gain decent popularity through word-of-mouth publicity and social media, there are others in more remote areas who have the skill and resources but not the means or access to reach out to a wider global audience. NEICATS wishes to bridge this gap, by bringing together all such talent and opportunities and giving them a platform to showcase and deliver their offerings to a global audience.





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# The Tea Story

**T**he Tea Story is a tea bistro which serves an unmatched array of local, exotic and in-house blend of tea beverages both hot and cold. It also has big selection in terms of aromatic tea, segregated among Black, Green, White and Herbal. It also features delicious bakery products from Cake Cottage by Ruhi Borooah. Ruhi is one of the finest bakers in Guwahati.

All the tea served in bistro is procured from small tea growers across Assam and few villages in Manipur. The idea is to promote these small tea growers and bring them to the commercial limelight as these farmers have quality production.

The Owner Deba Pratim Das was a former employee of the Marriott Groups of Hotels and Resorts, USA. Having an experience of over 3 years in the United States with an international chain like Marriott it gave him a lot of confidence in terms of the operational aspects of the hospitality industry. He always wanted to come back to his motherland Assam and start his first venture but was confused on what he wanted to do in the hospitality industry. He didn't want to start with a restaurant model that already existed in Guwahati. He then realised, Assam being a tea state had so less option for people to go and experience different types of tea. That's where the inception of "The Tea Story" began.

Finding a location in Guwahati was not an easy task. It took Deba Pratim 7 months to find the right location. He finally landed up at a 127 year old property which belonged to the noted Late Satya Prasad Barua, A renowned name in the Assamese Drama Fraternity. He has turned this old property into his tea bistro and has kept the old charm intact with it.

It took him near about one year on the research and development as he was working on the right blend and aroma that he wanted for the tea menu. The bistro has 22 different types of aromatic tea like Apple Pie white tea, Mango Green, Pomegranate Black Tea and Peppermint herbal tea to name few. It also has 20 different types of Ice tea and Bubble Ice Tea. Bubble ice tea is a regular ice tea which is served with bubbles made with tapioca starch and demerara sugar, which is also called as boba. This ice tea is very famous among the South East Asian nations.

To give the people of the city an international appeal, the bistro also serves Japanese Matcha green tea and the renowned blooming tea. Blooming tea or the flowering tea consists of a bundle of dried tea leaves wrapped around one or more dried flowers. These are made by binding tea leaves and flowers together into a bud, then setting them to dry. When steeped in a pot of hot water, the bud expands and unfurls in a process that emulates a

blooming flower, and the flowers inside emerge as the centrepiece. It is more of conversation table drink.

Heaven for tea lovers, this bistro has a unique wild tea named as the Manipuri Black tea. This tea comes from a village in Manipur Burma border. It is a kind of smoked tea. It is pot roasted for some time before it is consumer ready.

Entrepreneurial Terrain an NGO helping small tea growers across northeast also helps The Tea Story procure its tea from different places in Assam and northeast.

The servers at the bistro are trained well in terms of product knowledge and service techniques. The owner having a hotel background made sure that all the aspects of the bistro are overlooked personally by him to let his customer have delightful.

The Tea Story also have a small activity room which is let out for people to organize storytelling, book reading and poetry sessions and that too free of cost. They are also trying to empower young photographers and Artist/Painter to showcase or held exhibitions with no charge at all. They are trying their best to empower creative people in their own possible ways.

The tea story is a new hope for the tea lovers in the city of Guwahati. It gives the much needed calm and quietness, which most bistro lacks within the city limits.



'Aamaar Aalohi' - Rural Homestay Scheme is framed by the Tourism Department, Govt. of Assam, with the objectives of giving a new dimension and thrust to the Rural Homestay Facilities in the State of Assam and creation of self-employment opportunities for educated youths in rural and semi-urban areas of tourism potential and importance.



Source : Government of Assam

Under this Scheme, Assam Tourism Development Corporation invites two types of application: (1) New Homestays (subsidized projects)

(2) Existing Homestays.

Selection process of units / beneficiaries & criteria:

Suitability criteria for selection of the houses and their premises, their locations would be one of the most important criteria. The houses should not only be from a rural/non-urban area, these should be close to important tourists spots and may also be in such locations where some important tourism events like fairs and festivals etc. are held which draw large number of

visitors from different places.

(a) The selection process for registration of existing Home Stay units will be depends on the following

(I) Step – I : They have applied by submitting the prescribed Application Form alongwith the necessary documents / testimonials within the stipulated time.

(ii) Step – II : On the basis of their application, the Standard and Quality Assurance Committee will inspect their property and recommended the suitable applicants on the basis of their property by submitting an Inspection Report

before the Selection Committee.

(iii) Step – III : The Selection Committee will examine their Application Form and the Inspection Report and on the basis of that they will be shortlisted the applicants for the training programme to be organized by ATDC Ltd.

(iv) Step – IV : On the basis of the performance in the Training Programme on hospitality & housekeeping services and management skills to run Home Stay Units, the Selection Committee will finally selected the suitable Homestays for registration under the scheme.

(b) The selection process of beneficiaries for providing Subsidy / Margin money Assistance to set-up



new Home Stay unit will be as follows

(I) Step – I : Assam tourism development Corporation Ltd will issue open advertisement inviting offers from interested individual families and shall apply in prescribed Application Forms. These applications alongwith their submitted documents / testimonials would be examined for shortlisted, if necessary, shall call them for discussion before shortlisted. The applicants should have the following:

\* The applicant should have minimum educational qualification of minimum 12th standard pass.

\* The age of the applicant will not less than 26 years and not more than 55 years as on 01.01.2017.

(ii) Step – II : The Standard & Quality Assurance Committee will inspect the premises, locations of the shortlisted applicants proposals and further shortlisted their applications for the training programme to be organized by ATDC Ltd. on hospitality, housekeeping services and management skills to run Home Stays.

(iii) Step – III : After the training programme, the Selection Committee will select the suitable beneficiaries on the basis of the report of the Standard & Quality Assurance Committee and their performance in the training programme for providing subsidy / margin money assistance to set up new Rural Home Stay Unit.

Apart from above, the Applicant will also have taken necessary clearance of district / sub-divisional authorities on credential and other relevant issues including status of land etc. for Registration of existing Home Stay Unit or setting-up of the proposed Home Stay Unit. A Police Verification Certificate has also to be obtained for selection.

Incentives / Assistance to be given under the scheme:

(I) The existing Homestay units will get the following incentives under the scheme :-

(a) Recognition through online-registration as an authorized tourist establishment register under Assam

Tourism;

(b) Professional advice for improvements of homestays & guest services by experts in the respective fields;

© Free training on homestay and hospitality services, basic accounts, attitude building, marketing etc.;

(d) Free publicity and marketing opportunities through official websites of Assam Tourism;

(e) Listing the accommodation guide and homestay directory published by Assam Tourism;

(f) Free of charge listing in the periodically printed brochures and advertisement;

(g) Free marketing opportunities via national and international information counters, travel fairs, tourist directories, guidebooks and social media networks;

(h) Allow eligible homestay unit to display the Assam Tourism homestay logo as a registered establishment;

(I) Familiarization trips (FAM trips) for homestay operators to famous homestay organization / tourism entities promoting rural, cultural and nature tourism.

(j) Encourage local communities to adopt organic farming techniques.

(ii) For newly set-up Homestay units will be entitled for the following incentives / financial assistance under the scheme along with the aforesaid incentives under (I) above:

(a) Limit of subsidy for the type of construction :-

(I) Assam type cottage (type 1): Assistance of 80% of the project cost as per Annexure IV;

(ii) Stilted Assam type cottage (type 2): Assistance of 80% of the project cost as per Annexure V;

(b) The remaining fund (20% of

project cost) would have to be arranged from bank or such other sources by the beneficiaries.

© The Govt. of Assam or ATDC Ltd. shall not provide any guarantee for the loan components nor shall be liable for any financial liability of the beneficiaries in any manner under this scheme at any point of time to any party for any reason whatsoever.

Release of financial assistance and time limit for completion:

The State Govt. assistance 80% would be released in the following phases:

(a) 20% of the assistance immediately after selection, approval and registration of the units and on production of documentary proof of arrangement of the remaining fund for the project apart from the subsidy / margin money assistance.

(b) The second instalment of 50% would be released after spot verification by authorized officials and on being satisfied that construction up a reasonable extent have been completed with the first installment from his/her own contribution of 20% of the project.

© The final instalment of 30% would be released after completion of the civil works and the unit is ready for commissioning.

(d) The time limit for completion of the units would be 6 months from the date of release of the 1st instalment.

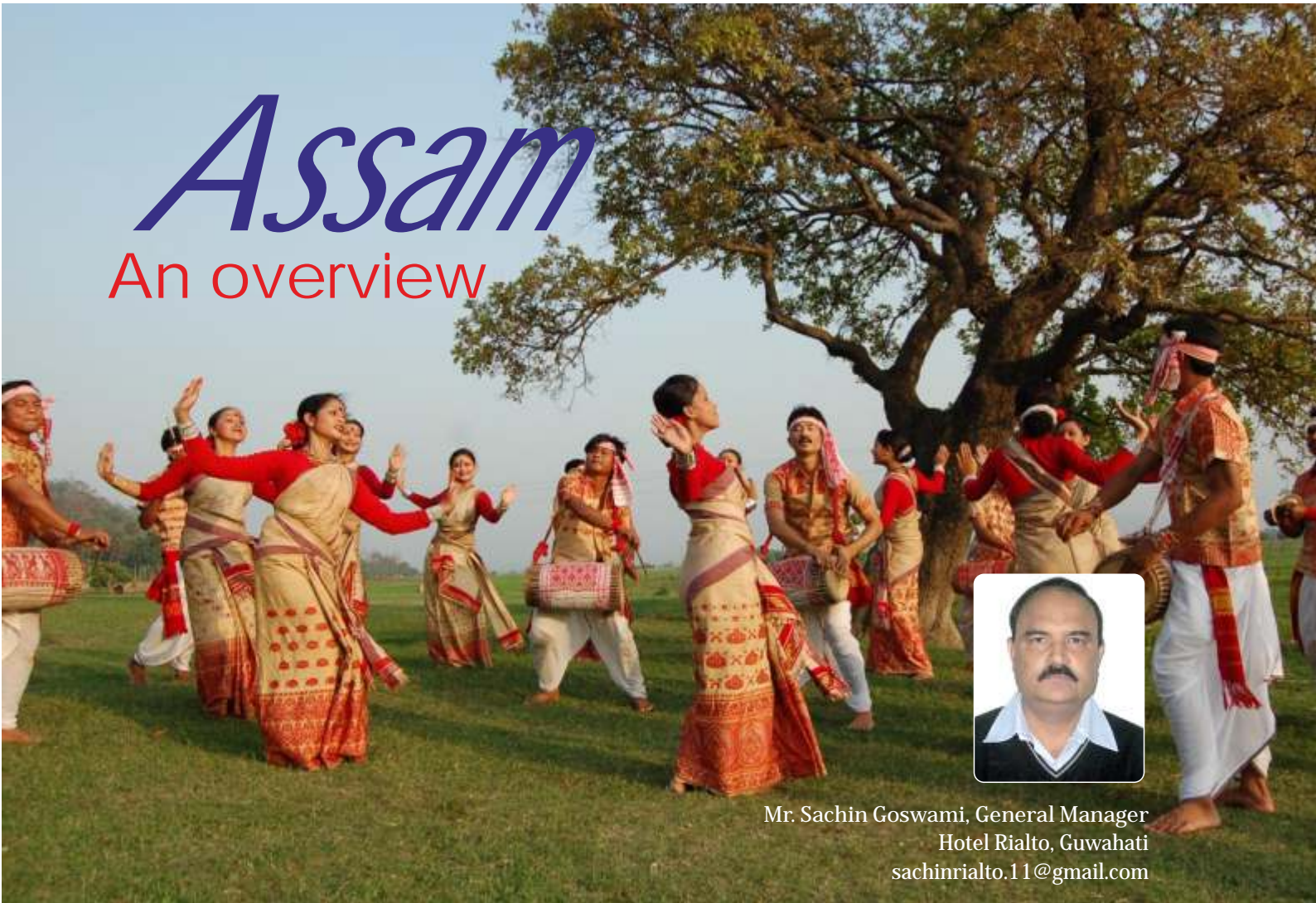
Only selected new homestays can avail subsidy from Tourism Department, Govt. of Assam to build the home of an amount of approx. 6 lakh (Assam type) and approx. 8 lakh (stilted Assam type).

FEE:

For both category applications, the processing fee is Rs. 1000 to be submitted along with application. The registration for existing homestays is for one year and a minimal amount will be imposed for the renewal of registration from the next year. The mode of payment is on DD in favour of "Managing Director, Assam Tourism Development Corporation Limited."

# Assam

## An overview



Mr. Sachin Goswami, General Manager  
Hotel Rialto, Guwahati  
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Stretched out like a soaring bird, Assam is comprised of three main geographical areas: the Brahmaputra Valley which constitutes the expansive wingspan, the Barak Valley extending like a tail and the intervening Karbi Plateau and North Cachar Hills.

ASSAM is synonymous with unspoiled natural beauty, teeming wildlife, immaculate tea gardens and warm, beautiful people. Its strategic location in the northeast of the country and its accessibility from the rest of India make it the gateway to the northeastern states. It shares borders with Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and West Bengal and communicable to all capital cities through National Highways. It also shares the international boundaries with Bhutan and Bangladesh.

GUWAHATI the gateway, is identified with the ancient city of

Pragjyotishpura overlooked by the hallowed temple to mother Goddess KAMAKHYA. In the Mahabharata, it was the capital of Kamrup Kingdom. Guwahati is the fastest growing commercial city of India. From a humble population of 2.00 lakh in 1971, present day Guwahati is a teeming metropolis with approximately 20 lakh stretching around 60 kms in length.

PANBAZAR, was the only commercial hub of the ancient Guwahati also houses some of Guwahati's important landmarks like Curzon Hall, Earle Law College, famous Cotton College, Handique Girls College, Kamrupa Anusandhan Samiti, Assam State Museum, Assam Sahitya Sabha Bhawan, the High Court is also located on the famous banks of Dighalipukhuri.

UGRATARA TEMPLE, a prominent centre of Shakti cult stands on the northern bank of Jurpukhuri.

Legend has it that after Lord Vishnu dismembered Sati's body and her navel fell on the spot where the temple now stands. The temple was built by Ahom King Swargadeo Siva Singha in 1725 AD who was also instrumental in digging Dighalipukhuri.

NABAGRAHA TEMPLE, is the ancient seat of Astrology and Astronomy, located on Chitrachal Hill, is the only temple of NINE PLANETS, has a red beehive-shaped dome and enshrines NINE LINGAS.

SUKRESWAR DEVALAYA, is another attraction of Tourists. This SIVA REMPLE, constructed by Ahom King Pramatta Singha in 1744. From wee hours of the morning devotees throng the temple to seek the deity's blessings before setting about their daily activities. A small pathway at the backside of the temple leads down to Sukreswar Ghat, from where Brahmaputra River Cruises take off.





A short ferry ride/ mechanized boat ride from kacxhari Ghat takes one to Peacock Island. This tiny island on the Brahmaputra with its spiritually stirring vista, is home to the Umananda Temple and now Tourists paradise. This Temple is located atop the Bhasmachala Hill.

**KAMAKHYA TEMPLE**, on Nilachal Hill, is about 7.00 kms from Hotel Rialto is one of the most venerated Shaktipeeths in India. The temple is dedicated to Mother Goddess Kamakhya, an incarnation of Sati.

It is on Nilachal Hill, says the Shiva Purana, that the Yoni or creative organ of Sati fell when Vishnu, in a bid to save the world from the Shiva's Tandava Nritya or the dance of destruction, cut her dead body into 51 pieces with his Sudarshana Chakra. The Garbhagriha deep inside the temple, marks the sacred spot and is kept covered with red silken cloth.

Emerging from the Garbhagriha on to the open, the temple faces a series of steps that lead to SAUBHAGYA KUNDA or the pool of DIVINE BENEDICTION, overlooked by a Ganesh shrine. The story behind mythical warrior saint, parashurama once practiced Tapasya or penance at the shrine of Kamakhya. BHUNESWARI TEMPLE on the hill top offers a spectacular views of the surrounding landscape & view of the Guwahati sprawled along the banks of the Brahmaputra River.

There are plenty of places of historically importance like Basistha Temple, Balaji Temple, Deepor Bell, Saulkuchi, 37 Kms from Guwahati is weaving village that produces world famous Assam silk.

**HAJO** 35 Kms west of Guwahati, in the Kamrup District, is an important pilgrimage for hindus (hayagriva Madhab Temple, Kedarnath Temple, Kameswara Temple & Hara Gauri Temple). Poa Mecca is most important Muslim Pilgrimage in Assam. The Dargah, standing on garurachal hill, houses the tomb of the 1th century Sufi Pir, Sheikh Ghiyasuddin Auliya

**MADAN KAMDEV TEMPLE** 40kms from Guwahati one of the most beautiful temples in Assam was destroyed by whom not known clearly. There are many stories. The Garbhagriha of the main temple however enshrines an idol of Parvati and Shiva as Uma- Maheswar, holding each other, propagating the local belief that it was a temple dedicated to the God of Love- Madan Kamadeva. Some historian also opined that the Art & Sculpture as has been reflected over the stones has the resemblance with the Art work as scripted over the stones in Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh

**TEZPUR**, on the north Bank of Brahmaputra is the largest city in Sonitpur District is about 200Kms

from Guwahati. Tezpur is considered the cultural capital of Assam and also well known for Mahabhairab Temple, Usha Aniruddha Park & Padum Pukhuri

**JORHAT** on the bank of Bhogdoi River, is the third largest city in Assam. With the Ahom King Swargadeo Gaurinath relocating his capital to jorhat from rangpur in 1794, the cities importance in Ahom history rose may notched. When British came to power in 1824, they began rebuilding the city destroyed by Burmese raids. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, the British set up tea Gardens in the area and made Jorhat the Nerve centre of their Business. In fact Assams first tea estate in cinnamora is in Jorhat and surrounded by 300 ea estates. Mitha Pukhuri, bangal pukhuri, kunwaripukhuri, buri gosain than, Gymkhana Club, Raja Maidam, Purnanda Buragohain Maidam, Gorokhia Dol, Tocklai tea research centre, Science Laboratory are some of important landmarks of Jorhat.

**MAJULI** 20kms from Jorhat city, the largest riverine island in the world, is enclosed in the mighty Brahmaputra. Hence the name Majuli meanng "in Middle" is the land of Vaisnaviteculture. Scholars attribute the island to hydro-geo-tectonic forces and the deposition of sediment scarried along by the Brahmaputra and its tributaries. It is believed that island was formed due to extreme floods in the Brahmaputra that diverted part of the flow to dihing about 190kms upstream of actual confluence. When the two rivers joined, the intervening land area became an island which is bound by rivers Subansiri, Ranganadi, Dikrong, Chici and tuni on North West: the Kherkatia Suti in the north-east and the main Brahmaputra in south and southwest.

Rasleela is a three day festival held usually in mid November. It celebrates the legendary love of Radha and Krishna and the devotion of the Gopis and Krishna.

**ALI-AI-LANG**, held in February March, is the colourful annual festival of the Mishings. The ceremonial sowing of Paddy starts on this day.

**MAJULI FESTIVAL** is a four day

state sponsored festival held in the last week of November from the 21<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>. A large fair is organized where the traditional bamboo and cane craft, pottery garments etc., are displayed for sale. Majuli is currently in the tentative list of UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Sites and is undergoing scrutiny for nomination as a world's Cultural Heritage Site.

SIVASAGAR, 60 Kms from Jorhat, was the capital of the Ahom Rulers from 1228 to 1826 AD, today is the quarter of the Sivasagar Tank, Shiva Dol, Vishnu Dol, Dev Dol, Tai-Ahom Museum, Jai Sagar Tank, Rang Ghar & Kareng Ghar are some of the prominent monuments / Palaces of tourist attraction and presently protected by Archaeological Survey of India.

CHARAIDEO MAIDAMS, 30 Kms from Sivasagar Town, are the burial mounds of forty-two Ahom Kings. The burial tombs, however, bear a close resemblance to the Egyptian Pyramids, with a mound on top and massive vault underground. Ajanpir Dargah is the shrine of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Sufi Saint Ajan Fakir which is also known as Hazrat Shah Miran. Originally from Baghdad, he settled in Sivasagar. He was the first to have composed Zikr, a unique genre of Sufi hymns, in Assamese.

DIBRUGARH, headquarter of the Dibrugarh District in the upper Assam is another important business centre. Well connected by Rail, Road & Air, Dibrugarh is also the Railway Station in Eastern India. Dibru Saikhowa National Park of evergreen swamps, grassland and wet comprising forests, it was created to conserve the habitat of the endangered white-winged wood duck. A must visit for bird watching enthusiasts, the park is also home to Royal Bengal Tigers, sloth Bear, Water Buffalo and Gangetic Dolphins. The semi-Wild Horse, descents of Horse that had escaped World War II Army Camps that live in and around the Park are also one of its attractions.

DIGBOI accessible from Dibrugarh via NH-37, boasts the World's oldest operating oil refinery. Digboi retains its colonial ambience with its unique bungalows. The town has



as many as eight gold courses within close proximity. Its famous Ridge Hill point provides a breath-taking view of Digboi. Another town Margherita, traditionally a centre of tea gardens, plywood factories and coalmines.

Vividly described as the "Switzerland of the East", North Cachar Hills district is garlanded by lofty mountains that together with the district of Karbi Anglong, separate the Brahmaputra Valley from the Barak Valley. Located at a height of 513m, Halflong, the headquarter of North Cachar Hills District is said to be the only hill Station in Assam. The word Halflong, in the local Dimas language, hillock of the white ant, is an obvious reference to the numerous termite mounds in the immediate environs of the town. Jating is 9 Kms from Halflong is famous for 'Mass Suicide' by migratory birds for mysterious reasons. Maibong, on the banks of river Mahur 47Kms from Halflong, is home to the ruins of once flourishing capital of Dima-Kachari kingdom. Umrangsu, located at the distance of 112Kms from Halflong, is the site of the biggest hydel power plant in north-west India.

The Barak Valley forms the southernmost part of Assam & comprises the district of Hailakandi, Karimganj & the Cachar.

Recommended for the Tourist to Barak Valley is the picturesque train ride that commences in Lumding in Nagoan District and ends in Silchar, the biggest city in Barak Valley, passing through verdant green hills along the route. The line is a part of the Northeast Frontier Railways and the best showcasing of the region's natural beauty. A particular stretch of the Railway line from Lumding to Badarpur in Karimganj district is considered one of the most picturesque routes in India. On 162kms stretch, the train crosses 585 bridges, passes through 37 tunnels and negotiates 600 hundred curves. According to Bill Aitken, "the journey was thrilling in terms of mountain scenery and Rail road engineering... one just has to go back and ride the line for the sheer pleasure of it... the lushness of the bamboo thickets even in November, which graze the carriages as they force a way through, is phenomenal."

#### WILD LIFE IN ASSAM

With five National Parks, two of which are designated WORLD NATURAL HERITAGE SITES by UNESCO and 20 wild life sanctuaries, Assam is blessed land for wildlife enthusiasts. From riverine grassland to tropical and sub-tropical forests, marshy wetlands and bamboo groves, this is where nature dwells at her creative best. Naturally therefore, over





180 species of mammals including several rare and endangered species like the great Indian ONE HORN RHINOCEROS, the ROYAL BENGAL TIGER, the golden langur and hoolock gibbon and a spectacular range of flora and fauna.

Assam's most famous parks are KAZIRANGA and MANAS and both were conferred WORLD HERITAGE STATUS in 1985.

KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK is spread over 850 sq kms across Golaghat, Nagaon and Sonitpur districts and the PARK is divided into 5 ranges- Central Range (entry point at Kohora), Western Range (at Bagori), Eastern Range (at Agaratoli), Western- most Burha Pahar Range and Northern Range. Kohora situated 240 kms from the Guwahati Airport lies in the Central Range. This settlement is not only most conveniently located for tourists visiting the park, but also offers facilities like Hotels, Resorts, Restaurants, Banks, etc. A memorable way of exploring Kaziranga is on elephant back.

MANAS NATIONAL PARK, 180 kms, spread over 500 sq kms, by road from Guwahati, is declared part of Chirang- Ripu Elephant Reserve which serves as the international corridor for elephant migration between India & Bhutan. UNESCO included the site in its list of WORLD HERITAGE in DANGER in 1992, owing to the threats posed to its ecosystem and especially the migrating elephant population, by human conflict. Besides formidable flora and fauna, in Manas one can easily notice variety of other rare species beside one horn Rhinoceros, are the hispid hare, pigmy

hog, golden langur, wild water buffalo and clouded leopard. Considered one of the world's rarest simian species, the GOLDEN LANGUR was first spotted in Manas in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Moving east ward along the foothills of the Himalayas, spread over 200 sq kms, 200 kms from Guwahati, is Charduar, the entry point to NAMERI NATIONAL PARK. Its beautiful deciduous forests and the adjacent river JIA BHARALI, fringe the border of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. This is therefore a popular stop enroute Bhalukpong in Arunachal, where anglers congregate to fish for the FAMOUS GOLDEN MAHSEER, Nameri itself is popular as elephant country, though one may also spot the tiger, Himalayan Black Bear, varieties of snakes, the endangered white winged WOOD DUCK and a dizzying variety of BUTTERFLIES including the prized atlas moth.

Rajib Gandhi Orang National Park is termed as MINI KAZIRANGA by enthusiastic travellers spread over 78.81 sq kms is about 140 kms from Guwahati.

The major and only national park at the northeastern end of the State, DIBRU- SAIKHOWA NATIONAL PARK, covering 340 sq kms partly in Dibrugarh District and partly in Tinsukia District, is famous for its feral horses and gangetic dolphins.

PABITORA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, 45 kms from Guwahati in Marigaon district, is said to have the densest population of one horned RHINOCEROS in the world. Burhachapori on the south bank of the

Brahmaputra in Sonitpur District and Laokhowa Sapor in Nagaon District are other habitats of the Rhinoceros.

Laokhowa Wildlife Sanctuary, Nambor Wildlife Sanctuary, Garampani Nambor Wildlife Sanctuary, Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary & Hollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary are other important Tourists attractions in Assam. Panidihing Bird Sanctuary in Sibsagar district, Deepor Beel Bird Sanctuary in Guwahati, Bordoibam Beelmukh Bird Sanctuary are some of the important Bird Sanctuaries of Assam.

#### WHEN TO VISIT

Assam enjoys temperature weather with a maximum of 35-38 degree C in summer and in winter a minimum 6-8 degree C, particularly the Brahmaputra Valley and Barak Valley. As one ascends towards the hilly areas, however, the mercury falls considerably in winters. With a lush green cover almost throughout its length and breadth, Assam experience high rainfall and humidity as well- afternoon thunder showers are a common occurrence during monsoons- and early morning fog in winter. THE BEST TIME TO VISIT IS BETWEEN SEPTEMBER AND APRIL when the weather is pleasant, rainfall is moderate and the paddy fields look resplendent. However, note, that the NATIONAL PARKS AND SANCTUARIES are remain closed for monsoons between June and September.

RANGALI BIHU (BOHAG BIHU), the most important and colourful festival is celebrated in the April mid when the entire state erupts in festivities and makes it a good time for tourists to visit the STATE OF ASSAM.

# THE ESSENCE OF A BRAND



**Sandipan Nair**  
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The other day I had the privilege to present before a group of young budding entrepreneurs who had assembled to attend a workshop on Marketing Assistance and Public procurement organized by the ministry of Micro small and Medium Enterprises MSME development institute and FINER.

I somehow felt incongruous as I was somewhat ignorant of the practices of Public procurement.

We are from the marketing fraternity and we can talk at length on Brands & Branding.

However from the discussions which ensued I kept on pondering on how a medium or small entrepreneur can create a viable enterprise over a long period of time.

That brought me to the potential question on how to build a brand for an MSME.

Can a Micro, Small or a Medium Enterprise build a brand for itself. How

can it do it.

What are the possible USPs which it can build on which shall differentiate its offerings in the market.

What shall be the uniqueness of its offering?

Shall it be a Product offering or service.

How can a product manufacturer offer a differentiating service. Can a product manufacturer however small or micro be its size also position as a potential be a service provider and can this be its USP in establishing a brand.

That brings us to the thresholds of a very exciting subject:- THE ESSENCE OF A BRAND.

How can an MSME entity become a brand.

Let's see how.

Are brands just a name or a logo or a colour or a mnemonic. Certainly not in today's scenario!

So what is a brand or rather a

more pertinent question in today's kaleidoscopic market scenario is "who is a brand"

Are brands just a name or a logo or a colour or a mnemonic. Certainly not in today's scenario!

Brands have taken on philosophical dimensions in today's worlds.

Brands unite masses- Look at IPL where in the whole country gets glued to one single sporting activity.

Look at Rajnikant- there is a oft cliched banter which says that the day a Rajni film get released - the same day becomes a holiday (typically a film gets





released on a Friday). Look at the pull of the masses towards such an entity and unitedly flock towards. So who is Rajnikant? Is he a national figure. Certainly not. Therefore he too is a regional entity much as our own MSMEs. But he is a brand which can endorse a belief or for that matter a product.

Brands fortify a belief- How many of us attended sessions of Ramdev's genre of Yoga?

Once in Patna Baba ramdev had conducted one session of Yoga and prescribed a fitness diet. The next day "lauki" had disappeared from the vegetable market or else priced thrice the standard market operating price- Why? Just because Baba Ramdev had prescribed Lauki juice as a fitness drink!

Now all legitimacy of the fitness claims apart- what I am alluding to is that fact that the Baba Ramdev has probably done the appeal of a strong Brand Salience.

So BABA Ramdev is truly a Brand in itself- and literally yes as it stands at a whopping 10561 crore FMCG company ranked third in the country.

According to a study conducted by IPSOS Patanjali has entered the league of top 10 most influential brands in India. But who was Baba Ramdev? Born in 1965 in Haryana BABA ramdev, originally known as Ramkishan Yadav took special interest in teaching yoga. In 2006 he launched Patanjali Ayurveda. Ramdev established the Patanjali Ayurved Limited in 2006 along with Acharya Balkrishna with the objective of establishing science of Ayurveda in accordance and coordination with the latest technology and ancient wisdom.

Baba Ramdev's Patanjali is a classic case of how one single Man can turn into a brand and deliver millions.

So what are the brand success stories?

1. Introduction into an erstwhile unknown and hitherto unexplored market segment called FITNESS and health consciousness.

2. Conviction in what the brand

propagates.

### 3. Consistency in Communication

I think this is a great successful case study which all MSMEs can adopt and taste success.

So what is the moral of the story:

- Its not good enough to be good!
- If you are good talk about it.
- Once you talk then



demonstrate that you are good

➤ Then Prove Yourself that you are good- raise your own bar and challenge yourself

➤ If you are good, advertise yourself

➤ With all the above your good becomes Better- Create your own brand

Way forward

- Make concrete steps
- Create an identity for your enterprise

➤ Coin a Vision- things you will do, things you will NOT DO

➤ Be unique in thought process- DO NOT COPY

### ➤ Create a Brand

➤ Consistently communicate to your TG about your offerings

➤ Design an FBA- Feature Benefits Advantage

➤ Be connected to your TG always

Create a Brand

➤ Who are you- identify!

➤ What are you- jot down your USPs

➤ What do you aspire to be - Your road map, objectives and vision of the enterprise

➤ Why are you- what you claim to be- RTB

Some tips on Brand Building

➤ Brand positioning- what do you stand for

➤ Visibility on various platforms where your TG is available

➤ Consistency in Visibility- display the right image!

➤ Practise what you preach

➤ Are you a responsible corporate citizen!- your social responsibility

I feel that in today's world it is important to create a brand out of all MSMEs so that there is a long horizon of growth and self development.

Sandipan Nair works as a General Manager Marketing in Dalmia Cement Bharat Ltd in Guwahati and Heads marketing for Dalmia Cement Northeast India. ☐☐



# INSTITUTE OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT

## INTRODUCTION:

The Institute of Hotel Management Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition, Guwahati is the First Full fledged 3 year degree level Institute of Hotel Management in North East India. Established in 1984 as Food Craft Institute offering certificate course in different areas of hospitality, the institute has been upgraded twice since then, by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India. The Institute is affiliated to NCHMCT, Noida which is an autonomous body under Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India.

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOSPITALITY GRADUATES:

Global growth and development of tourism have opened up innumerable

openings. As a result, the graduating students can look forward to career opportunities as:

- Management Trainee in Hotel and Allied Hospitality Industry;
- Kitchen Management/ Housekeeping Management positions in Hotels after initial stint as trainee;
- Flight Kitchens and on-board flight services;
- Indian Navy Hospitality services;
- Guest/ Customer Relation Executive in International and National fast food chains;
- Hospital and Institutional Catering;

➤ Faculty in Hotel Management/ Food Craft Institutes;

- Shipping and Cruise lines;
- Marketing/ Sales Executive in Hotel and other Service Sector;
- State Tourism Development Corporation;
- Resort Management;
- Self-employment through entrepreneurship and
- Multinational companies for their hospitality services.

About 80% of the graduates are employed by Hospitality and other service sectors through on-campus and off-campus recruitment process.

## COURSES OFFERED IN IHM, GUWAHATI

	Qualification
➤ 3 year BSc. Programme in Hospitality & Hotel Administration	– Class 12th pass of 10+2 pattern
➤ 1½ year Post Graduate Diploma in Accommodation Operation & Management	– Graduate in any stream
➤ 1½ year Craftmanship course in Food Production & Patisserie	– Class 10th pass
➤ 6 months Craftmanship course in Food & Beverage Service	– Class 10th pass
➤ 1½ years Diploma in Front Office operation	– Class 12th pass of 10+2 pattern

## INSTITUTE CAMPUS

- New Campus on 20 Acres land at Hengrabari, Guwahati.
- Hotel Ginger, a subsidiary of Taj Group of Hotel inside the Campus.
- Principal's bungalow, staff quarter for both academic & administrative staff in the campus.
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