



FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION,
TEZPUR UNIVERSITY

Uttaran...

WORLD TOURISM DAY

TOURISM FOR ALL....

SEPTEMBER 27



BRANDING
ASSAM

**FOOD AND BEVERAGE TOURISM
PROSPECTS IN NORTHEAST INDIA**

**MUSIC &
TRAVEL**

TOURISM
EDUCATION AND
TEZPUR UNIVERSITY

**FOREWORD**

Dr. Papori Baruah,
Professor and Head,
Department of Business Administration, Tezpur University

Indeed it is a matter of great pride that the Department of Business Administration of Tezpur University has come with this special issue of 'Uttaran' on the occasion of World Tourism Day, 2016. 'Uttaran' is an e-magazine published periodically in electronic form by the students of the Department of Business Administration. Written by students, faculty and experts, it has attempted to bring to the fore certain insights on Tourism. The contributors have tried to take the opportunity to explore the importance of tourism in their own way, and each article reflects the enthusiasm of an individual towards his/her chosen topic. The magazine has independently evolved as a collection of focused articles related to diverse topics on Tourism like Branding of Assam Tourism, Promoting Tourism Cooperatives of North East India, Disaster and Tourism, Tourism education, Heritage of Tezpur, Ecotourism, Crafts in Assam, Travel Diary etc. I congratulate the students for their untiring efforts in creating this piece of work; the faculty who guided them and enthused them in doing that and the editorial board in giving the final shape to the work. I thank those persons who had helped us in launching this special issue.

With very best wishes,

Papori Baruah

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

After a long gap, Uttaran is back with this special edition on the occasion of World Tourism Day. The reason for celebrating this particular event on the 27th of September every year is that back in 1970, on this very day, the Statutes of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) were officially adopted. With the objective of raising awareness on tourism, a theme is selected each year and the one chosen for 2016 is "TOURISM FOR ALL – PROMOTING UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY". In his official message, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon said, "1 billion people around the world living with disability, along with young children, seniors and persons with other access requirements, still face obstacles in accessing fundamentals of travel such as clear and reliable information, efficient transportation and public services, and a physical environment that is easy to navigate." World Tourism Day 2016 hopes to address some of the issues that restrict people's ability to travel.

Ashutosh Agnihotri, former Commissioner and Secretary, Tourism Department, Government of Assam, stated in 2015 that the tourism industry of the state is growing at a rate of 15 percent. This growth rate is observed despite the fact that the full potential of the state in this sector is yet to be realised. There has been some progress in the development of tourism infrastructure by the government but if these do not take into account the problems associated with accessibility that affect most tourist sites in India, then there would be some disappointed expectations that no beautiful photographs in a tourist brochure could address. There has been talk of hiring Bollywood celebrities for the promotion of Assam's tourism. This is hard to comprehend. There have been a number of campaigns, like the one from Madhya Pradesh, a state that has successfully positioned itself as the 'Heart of India', without doling out a fat paycheck to an actor. The State Government needs a better strategy in this regard and would hopefully find better excuses to spend its money.

The articles of this special edition are plenty and varied. Topics range from the issues of Branding Assam by Prof. Mrinmoy Kumar Sarma to Culinary Tourism by Ananya Kumari of MBA 1st semester. Most of the content are of informative nature and also appeal to the adventurous spirit in us all. As the new editor, my main motivation has been to ensure that a reader would be able to take something away from these writings. Dear reader, you will be the best judge of whether that has succeeded or not.

This edition has been made possible with the initiative of the first batch of students of the Master of Tourism and Travel Management Course. Their energetic and can-do attitude has made a lot of things possible within a short span of time. This and their selfless contributions makes this issue all the more special. I would also like to thank the editorial team as well as the contributors for their efforts. On a parting note, I would love to see a print edition of Uttaran in the near future. I believe even a small circulation of the print medium would be able to bring out the best of what the literary talents of the department has to offer. I hope to hear some feedback and suggestions for the improvement of this magazine. These can be sent to *uttaran@tezu.ernet.in*.

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UNWTO OFFICIAL MESSAGES

General Ban Ki-moon (United Nations Secretary)



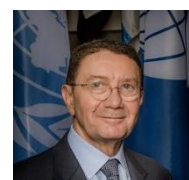
'Tourism for all – promoting universal accessibility'

With almost 1.2 billion people travelling abroad each year, tourism has become a powerful economic sector, a passport to prosperity and peace, and a transformative force improving millions of lives.

Everyone has the right to access leisure and tourism services on an equal basis. Yet 1 billion people around the world living with disability, along with young children, seniors and persons with other access requirements, still face obstacles in accessing fundamentals of travel such as clear and reliable information, efficient transportation and public services, and a physical environment that is easy to navigate. Even with modern technologies, those with visual, hearing, mobility or cognitive impairments are being left behind in many tourism destinations.

Accessibility is both an important market opportunity and central to responsible and sustainable tourism policies and business development strategies. I encourage policy makers, destination planners and companies working with people with special needs to work together to remove all barriers, mental and physical, to travel. On this World Tourism Day, let us recognize that all people can and should be able to participate in tourism and enjoy unforgettable travel experiences.

General Taleb Rifai (UNWTO Secretary)



"Tourism for all!"

Tourism has experienced a revolution in the past 50 years. In 1950 there were 25 million international tourists; today there are around 1.2 billion people travelling the world. Travelling has become a huge part of many lives.

When travelling, we come across new people, new sights, and new ideas. Often our perception of the world changes as we see more of it. However, we must not forget that for many, travelling can be quite a difficult process.

15% of the world's population is estimated to live with some form of disability. That is 1 billion people around the world who may be unable to enjoy the privilege of knowing other cultures, experience nature at its fullest and experience the thrill of embarking on a journey to explore new sights.

Accessibility for all should be at the center of tourism policies and business strategies not only as a human right, but also as a great market opportunity.

With the world's population ageing, all of us will benefit sooner or later from universal accessibility in tourism.

As we celebrate World Tourism Day, let us recall that all of the world's citizens have the right to experience the incredible diversity this planet has to offer.

We thus urge all countries and destinations, as well as the industry, to promote accessibility for all in the physical environment, in transport systems, in public facilities and services and in information and communications channels.

I wish you a very happy World Tourism Day and a future full of enriching and compelling travel experiences to be enjoyed by all.

Thank you very much!



BRANDING ASSAM

Dr. Mrinmoy Kumar Sarma

Professor,

Department of Business Administration, Tezpur University



At long last, and with a presumably sincere motive, the concerned authorities have started, what hitherto had been a not starter. Yes, there is palpable action regarding branding Assam as a tourist destination with the unveiling of a new logo (along with the tagline) as well as a substantial budget for a branding exercise.

We were tired of the many discussions revolving around the right type of brand Assam. Yet all may not be satisfied. For example, there could have been a different tagline; any destination can claim itself to be unique or “Awesome”. For that matter Bihar tourism can also very easily follow our tagline coining a slogan like “Splendid Bihar”. Theoretically, a tagline should be achievable in reality and secondly it should not be easily replicable. Nevertheless the present tagline tries to depict the “awesomeness” of Assam in terms of tourism resources – mainly the rhino, the tea, the sun (?) and the mighty Brahmaputra- as depicted in the logo. And oh, yes, there has been a huge discomfort among the stakeholders about the

logo. Mainly, why the so common and non-descript depiction of the tourism products? Does the rhino looks like a “rhino” or a buffalo? Why do the tea leaves look like something else? Why is the sun being promoted? Are we really promoting sun-baths by the river Brahmaputra, or is it just a symbol of vitality and never ending enthusiasm of the tourism stakeholders of Assam?

May be we are too tired of the “charging rhino” image and thus the new logo is promoting the “calm, flamboyant and glamorous” rhino. Can we really think that the tea leaves are the symbol of the serene greenery of Assam? Or rather have we never attempted to sell our state’s serenity and greenery? Even when observed in detail, I could not decipher the reason for showing the sun in the background. While surfing the net I came across a template logo with the sun as the background as the river flows by!

The logo is necessarily a sacred symbol that is used everywhere without any change, and as such we need to embark upon a logo that is self-explaining and depicts what we stand for. If we project the sun in the background, our tourism offerings must be based on the sun or sunshine, which I doubt is the case at this moment. Yes, Goa can depict the sun as the major component of its tourism as their main clientele is from the cold countries looking for the rays of the sun. Assam tea is an old cache and efforts to revive it have not been very successful. The greenery, serenity and

the potential for eco-tourism have not been depicted in the logo. I wish we had a chance to redo it with much concerted efforts and futuristic strategy.

It seems we can keep on criticising the new logo and the tagline. In hindsight, one might ask what good does it serve once the same has already been adopted as THE logo. Let us, therefore, delve into a bit of silver lining and the future course of action.

Now, the silver lining. I want to repeat what I started off with. It may not be acceptable to all that we have been discussing the logo, the tagline and the future strategy of Assam tourism endlessly. These factors have never been consuming as much public attention as they are doing now. I can cite many examples where the logo or the tagline is not satisfactory to all of the stakeholders – be it a destination or any other product. In many cases the logo of a product does not depict anything concrete – the focus being the surreal thing that is supposed to be carried forward by the brand. If we assume for a moment that the present logo of Assam tourism is ok, our next obvious question would be what lies ahead? The Government has earmarked Rs. 15 crore for the publicity campaign (presumably for this year). This is not a small amount considering the fact that we have been spending peanuts in this area till now.

The main question, therefore, is how are we going to spend this amount? What is the media portfolio? We have also heard about a brand ambassador (Ms. Priyanka Chopra the Bollywood-Hollywood actress), which has also become controversial. But what is she going to promote,

how it is going to be promoted? The main crux remains here rather than the logo and the tagline. We must promote what we can deliver. Because promotion shall create expectations among the prospective tourists, and when they finally come to Assam, they would look for fulfillment of these expectations. They would be a satisfied lot if their expectations are met and we can only wait for the cascading effects of positive clamor created by a satisfied tourist. We must also be wary about the other side of the coin – the dissatisfied tourist.

Now the time is absolutely right to decide on the portfolio of resources Assam Tourism wants to project to the outside world; surely enough there is no margin of error here. We can survive with a less competent logo or a not-so-smart tagline; but our money, time and efforts shall go to the gutter if we are not cautious now. But wastage of resources or the mispositioning of Assam would be very difficult to undo.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Hollonga Par Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary is the only one of its kind where seven different species of primates are found.

Mawsynram in Meghalaya is the wettest place on Earth.

APATANI CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

UNESCO Tentative List of World Heritage Site

Dr. Tridib Ranjan Sarma,

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The terrace cultivation of Ifugao in Philippines; The Fertő/Neusiedler Cultural Landscape in Hungary; Coffee Cultural Landscape of Colombia; Konso Cultural Landscape of Ethiopia; the Sulaiman-Too Sacred Mountain....and to that list we hope to add Apatani Cultural Landscape – or as is more popularly propagated by our media – the Ziro Valley of Arunachal Pradesh. Inhabited by the Apatani tribe, the area has approximately 32 sqkm of cultivable land within a plateau of approximately 1060 sqkm of plateau. The locale is a perfect bowl shape, with average elevation of 1525 MSL, and mountains all around in the range of 1830 to 2900 MSL. This is an area in the Central Eastern portion of Arunachal Pradesh, a state of North East India, which is being nominated for consideration into the UNESCO List of World Heritage Sites.

For onward journey, we decided to enter Arunachal Pradesh through Kimin, just near Lakhimpur. I had decided to tag along with my colleague Mridul and his parents. But the major pull factor was definitely the car in which we went. After a hearty lunch of roti, dal, sabji and omlette at the Govt. IB at Kimin, and establishing our credentials vide ILP at the police check-point, up we went into the hills. The twisting and turning road is the only one in that wilderness – but still Mridul decided to activate the GPS in his car.

Believe me, nothing can be more irritating than the smart voice advising us to take turns after fifty meters in that pristine settings!!



Ranganadi Hydel Project (NEEPCO)

After a roller coaster ride of around two and a half hours, we arrived at a junction to meet the road coming in from Itanagar. Cooled our heels at Potin over a cup of tea before proceeding ahead. Pretty soon in the ravine below, we see the Ranganadi Hydel Project on to our right. This definitely calls for a halt, since this is a name that features annually in local newspapers for inundating Lakhimpur and Dhemaji area.

We arrive at our destination after sundown – and that definitely created some problem in locating the Circuit House. All the while, our local contact – Lucy Ma'am (classmate of Mridul's brother) – was in constant touch checking our progress. Upon arrival, we were provided with really good rooms. And a lovely surprise awaited us at the kitchen area – a tub full of live fish, sourced from the Ziro Valley paddy

fields.



Fresh from the 'Paddy Fields'

The Ziro Valley is almost rectangular, and has a subtle slope. With the mountains all around to feed water, the Apatanis have perfected the art of naturally flooding their fields to grow rice. Each level is slightly lower than the previous level allowing water to naturally flow. The flooded level now acts as a natural pool where fish is reared. They dart playfully amongst the paddy tufts, all the while feeding on larvae or other natural food. The water is allowed to pass to next level through bamboo stilts and nets, which acts as a check gate against the fish from escaping to other's areas while allowing water to flow. Even though at a relatively lower altitude and humid climate, but this excellent practice has resulted in controlling mosquito menace to a great extent in the Valley.

Interestingly, apart from rice and fish, a third item is produced in these fields. Millets are grown on the mud embankments and bunds that separate one paddy field from another, one level from another. The agroecosystems are nourished

by recycling crop residues and use of organic wastes of the villages so that soil fertility is sustained year after year. Apatanis have over almost past twenty generations perfected their life through harmony with nature. This is the strongest claim on which their UNESCO bid is based on.



Bamboo 'Check Gates'

We were stuck with awe the next morning with a view of the golden harvest ready to be taken home. Groups were working in the fields mowing down the crop, and thrashing the same manually. Later on we learnt that families, friends and neighbours help each other in this and all other harvest related jobs. Interestingly, the President of a local NGO, Apatani Youth Association (APA), informed us that the soil is not tilled or turned over in preparation for next crop. Paddy transplantation is done in untilled, flooded



Millets growing on demarcation bunds

soil manually, where the waste of previous year acts as nutrients.



Warning Signage against land-cutting

Once transplantation is over, fish fingerlings are released in adequate quantity. These are mostly collected from a fishseed farm established near Hapoli – the district headquarters of Lower Subansiri. The name Hapoli is said to have been derived from "Hao-Polyang", by which name the Apatanis still know. Literally, "hao" means high or above and "polyang" means plain or plateau (Wikipedia).

Moving further from the eye-soothing paddy-fields, we move across the beautifully laid out villages – Dutta, Hong, Hari, Siiro, etc.

village of Asia. Signages are everywhere warning of penalty for anyone whose domestic animal might enter and damage crops. The Apatanis have a very well defined social system – which is manifested in distribution and usage of jungle areas as well. Each household has their 'own' demarcated jungle area, where generally timber or bamboo is cultivated. Behind that zone is the 'community' area, where zones are distributed amongst first amongst kinsmen and then 'clans' – where other clans do not intrude. Further outside, on the perimeter of villages possibly up the slopes, are the 'common' zone which belongs to the whole tribe, and is generally kept free of any exploitation. This mutual demarcation had passed down through at least twenty generations when the Apatanis are believed to have settled in this valley.



Writer at Hari Rantu (Sacred Grove)

On the mountain slopes, one can visit the sacred grove (Rantu) of the Apatani villages. We went to the sacred forest of Hari village, or the Hari Rantu. The Apatanis consider this as one of their first village, and in the sacred grove there still exist six of the original trees believed to have been

inhabited this area. Whether one believes that or not, but those trees are really enormous – both by girth as well as height.



The Sacred Trees

Last weekend of every September – since 2012 – this place reverberates with high decibels of Rock music labeled as Ziro Festival of Music

(ZFM). Bands from near and afar with a healthy pack of fans camp out in the open fields at the venue – surrounded by mountains on three sides with the paddy field as the fourth backdrop.

With a well maintained and retained tradition of man-forest relationship based on high respect for Mother Nature, the Apatani Cultural Landscape is indeed a prime candidate for inclusion into the UNESCO List of World Heritage Site. This was a thought that played in my mind as we returned after two days back to the plains of Assam via the newly constructed TransArunachal Highway – which we had earlier met on our way up at Potin.



From old Circuit House : The Paddy Field beyond Ziro airstrip

With inputs from (all accessed on 22nd of September, 2016)

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5893/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apatani_people

<https://www.researchgate.net>

Photograph credit: Author's own clicks (September 2015), using Nikon D90.

PROMOTING TOURISM COOPERATIVES IN INDIA

– A strategy for peace & happiness

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From the dawn of human civilisation, we have seen that the development of any country or even a solution to a particular problem is not possible without the cooperation from the various societal stakeholders. The cooperative form of organisation works with the principle of collective action and equity for all the shareholders. In order to get out of the clutches of usurious moneylenders, the cooperative movement was started in India by far-sighted colonial officials that later became an instrument of the development state in the post-Independence era in the rural areas. Gradually, the scope of cooperative form of business got extended from agricultural credit to production, finance, marketing and processing in different industries as well as trading of several important farm products, consumer stores and housing. The scale of operations of cooperatives in India has grown enormously in the last hundred years. The expansion in the scope and reach of cooperatives as a whole and in the volume of their activity is impressive as evident from the following table.

Growth of Cooperative Societies in India

Year	No. of Cooperatives	Total Membership	Credit Disbursement
1950-51	1,81,000	15.5 million	NA
2007-08	1,50,000 credit primary and 2,60,000 non-credit primary societies	180 million 250 million	Rs 2,000 billion

Source: Compiled from Vaidyanathan (2013)

In 1963, the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) was established by an Act of Parliament in India as a statutory corporation under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. Planning, promoting and financing programmes for production, processing, marketing, storage, export and import of agricultural produce, food stuffs, certain other notified commodities e.g. fertilisers, insecticides, agricultural machinery, lac, soap, kerosene oil, textile, rubber etc., supply of consumer goods and collection, processing, marketing, storage and export of minor forest produce through cooperatives, besides the income generating stream of activities such as poultry, dairy, fishery, sericulture, handloom etc. Initially, NCDC started providing assistance to various "Service Cooperatives" like - Water Conservation works/Services, Irrigation, micro Irrigation in rural areas; animal care/health, disease prevention; agricultural insurance & agriculture credit; and rural sanitation/drainage/sewage systems through the cooperatives. Later on in 2010 through Gazette notification number 967 dated 18/05/2010, **Tourism** was also included as a service cooperative along with Hospitality, Transport, Generation & distribution of Power by New, Non-Conventional & renewable sources of energy and Rural Housing.

In order to bring growth and promotion of

the transport and tourism sector in India through Cooperatives, the National Federation of Tourism & Transport Cooperatives of India Ltd. (NFTC) was established as an apex organization of tourism and transport cooperatives of India. NFTC is a recognized body by the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India for the development of transport services [through road safety measures], tourism and culture in India. NFTC is a nodal body for co-operatives working under the transport, tourism and cultural sectors and to nurture and protect the working of the co-operatives in the transport, tourism and cultural sectors in India. NFTC provides financial assistance to help them survive economically in the competitive market. As an apex organization it is important to maintain its allies and co-operatives in such a manner that they grow and thrive in the competition outside the industry as well as inside. It helps them also to scale up, in order to sustain the market fluctuations. It helps them to plan their marketing strategies to achieve maximum returns on investment and assure an overall benefit to the society. In India, where we have 16% of the world population base, we had only 1% of the tourist base in the last decade. Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world. In India, Central and State Governments have taken some initiatives but it is has mostly been a case of little and too late. This is evident in light of the fact that the Government of India came out with a Tourism Policy only after 45 years of independence.

From the literature available, we can easily figure out the strength of cooperatives for the development of various sectors around the world.

A review of the cooperative trends in recent times indicates that cooperatives are aware of diversity in new areas like tourism (Verma, 2015). The India tribal life is rich in cultural tradition. Tribal life and tribal products can emerge as focal areas in tourism. Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India is the national level organization of tribal cooperatives in the country. It has already identified certain regions for promoting tourism. The organization stands for holistic development of the tribal sector in all aspects and in this regard tourism is considered an important component. Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) started in 1987 and is planning to start Tribes shops in all the major international airports so that all the traditional and ethnic tribal products are showcased for foreign tourists. The example of TRIFED clearly indicates that cooperative sector is aware of the need for marketing its products from a tourism point of view. The cooperative products have developed strong brands which clearly indicate that cooperative principles and values can be used for effective business. For example "Amul", brand of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation is a household name in India signifying milk revolution. UHP milk powder is already distributed in all the pilgrimage tourist sites. The cooperative products spread the message of peace (Verma, 2015).

Cooperatives are successful as it works for benefit of its stakeholders. In any form of cooperative business, profit maximisation is not the aim but equity and prosperity of all its members is the mission of the organisation. This

concept is embedded in the Upanishad as given below:-

Om SarveBhavantuSukhinah
SarveSantuNir-Aamayaah
SarveBhadraanniPashyant
MaaKashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-
BhavetOm

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः
सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु
मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत् ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

1:Om, May All become Happy,
2: May All be Free from Illness.
3: May All See what is Auspicious,
4: May no one Suffer.
5:Om Peace, Peace, Peace.

Cooperatives work in groups and when the members in the group become happy they would definitely spread peace and happiness not only within its members but also to the members of the society at large. Thus we can say that the cooperatives work for “Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah” i.e., for the benefit of all the members of the society. The cooperative products and services are always better and cheaper. Cooperative principles take care of community’s welfare interest at large and facilitate involvement of the members of the society. This would promote a state of welfare and peace in society which is a prerequisite for the development of Tourism sector in any place in the world.

Tourism involves cross-cultural interaction among people of different nations and strengthens dialogue between regions and neighbouring countries through promotion of cultural

understanding, mutual respect and peace. Therefore, tourism facilitates dialogue, peace and goodwill and has been a major contributor to international goodwill and enriches friendship between nations. The aim of this article is to appeal to the youth of India to come forward in teams and form Tourism Cooperatives in order to benefit from the cooperative principles that would promote the tourism sector spreading peace and happiness in India. This will be only possible when we would practice in our daily life this philosophy of Upanishad - “Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Nir-Aamayaah, Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyant, Maa Kashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet” which means that all our actions must follow the thoughts like - All become Happy, All be Free from Illness, All See what is Auspicious and No one Suffers. We need to pray together for Peace, Peace, and only Peace. When there is peace and happiness, there will be a flood of people from around the world to our country to experience its positive energy which will promote the Tourism Industry as a whole.

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TOURISM EDUCATION AND TEZPUR UNIVERSITY

Tarun Jyoti Borah

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In the year 2002, UNWTO declared it as the “Year of Ecotourism”, where they advocated for the minimum disturbance of nature and culture, and encouraged participation of local people in the Tourism sector. Coincidentally, in the same year, the Department of Business Administration of Tezpur University introduced a Post Graduate Diploma Programme in Tourism Management with an objective to create some trained persons in the Tourism sector as well as help in tourism development. This PGDTM programme was a pioneering one in North Eastern India. Since then, several other Universities have started offering the Degree at the Post Graduate level in the region as well.

If we go back to the objectives of the World Tourism Day celebration, UNWTO puts forward one theme every year and tries to create global awareness for sustainable development of tourism. The world apex body has long realised that the industry lacks trained professionals and researchers in tourism. Most of the people who are directly or indirectly involved in the industry were either from real estate development or with experience in other sectors of business. Without the proper understanding of the philosophy of tourism and its socio-economic, natural and cultural impacts, it is no longer possible to keep it as a smokeless industry. With more and more intangible and perusable products, this service

based industry is a dream selling industry. Managing cultural shock, managing apathy towards local people’s sentiment, proper management of natural, cultural and human resources are some of the major challenges for the sustainability of the industry. The marketing and promotion of industry is based on the satisfaction level of the guest which again depends upon comparing the expectation and experience of the visit/experience. Besides these, understanding government rules and regulations, both national and international ones, are also important for the sustainability of the industry. In order to achieve this in tourism, education is very essential which would help anyone to understand the industry.

In this context, Department of Business Administration introduced the Post Graduate diploma course in 2002 with 17 students. Since its inception, the Department has been trying to incorporate practical exposure to tourism resources and destinations, and also to entrepreneurial input in the syllabus offered. The syllabus provides opportunities to students to visit tourist destinations and also arranges for interaction with service providers, administrators and local people. The visits are not only to be seen as general field studies but also as important exposure to the industry. Students are evaluated after each of these visits. The tour reports submitted by the students have proved to be a

good resource base of the particular destinations. The students also celebrate events like World Tourism Day not only in the University level but also with district and state level participation that imbibe them with event management skills. The alumni of the programme have been serving in the government and private sectors and many have even started their own entrepreneurial activities. From this year 2016, the Diploma course has been upgraded to Master in Tourism and Travel Management (MTTM) with 15 seats. The Department still continues with the main objective of generating trained manpower in tourism sector with emphasis on entrepreneurship development.

DID YOU KNOW?

Mawlynnong in Meghalaya is the cleanest village in entire Asia.

The Tawang Monastery is the largest monastery of India and the second largest in the world.

PICTURESCAPE



Nam Phake Buddhist Monastery; clicked by Paridhi Brahma



A view in Haflong ; clicked by Chandan Kumar Das



The Autumn Ascent; clicked by Rakesh Pandit

DISASTER RISK MITIGATION FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDUSTRY

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A disaster like situation may arise in a system, when any hazard (threat) causes significant damage to its physical components (biotic or abiotic) thereby resulting in disruption of basic facilities; direct loss of livelihood, revenue, production, income etc.; higher cost of operation and inflation; as well as long term negative impact on macro-economic indicators, social and environmental support systems. The probability of damage, loss and impact in a system under the influence of a threat (natural or man-made) is defined as disaster risk.

In general, disaster risk of any system is correlated with impact of probable threat and degree of susceptibility of the physical components to that specific threat. Estimation of disaster risk should be hazard specific, because for a multi-hazard prone system (*maybe a tourism industry*), the degree of susceptibility of a particular element varies for different hazards and hence probability of damage to that element by different hazards may not be the same.

Probability of damage, loss and impact is also linked to weightage of individual elements of a system. Weightage of an element depends on its value and importance in the system. For example, the weightage of rhinos is much higher to that of other elements of Kaziranga National Park. So, any damage to the rhino population will cost higher and long term negative impact in this industry.

Disaster risk mitigation is the integral part of sustainable development. The physical elements

of a system may be susceptible to external threats due to physical, social, material, motivational, technical, political, and other reasons. So, in-depth analysis of differential vulnerability, which enhances disaster risk of a system, is essential for disaster risk mitigation planning and sustainable development.

Many options are there to minimize the probability of damage to physical elements and subsequent loss and negative impacts. Resisting external threats from striking our system by suitable hazard resistant devices may be one option to avoid damage and loss. We can also go for minimizing the impact of hazards by reducing magnitude and exposure to them in time. Otherwise we can adopt certain measures to make physical elements resilient to probable hazards by eliminating unsafe conditions for improving coping capacity. For a tourism industry, the valuable physical elements may be linked to accommodation, communication, transport, catering, recreation, visitor and visitor services, flora and fauna, religious establishments etc. Weightage and susceptibility of the elements are dependent on the nature of industry and its natural and man-made threats. Planning for disaster risk mitigation of the tourism industry, addressing possible threats and vulnerability is necessary for a strong economic growth of the nation, creation of skilled and semi-skilled jobs, greater export returns, foreign investment and currencies, economic well-being of society, and social stability.

A BRIEF OF ANCIENT TEZPUR

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Tezpur is a beautiful tourist destination in the state of Assam and famous for its ancient monuments, rich cultural history and beautiful natural environment. It is the district headquarters of Sonitpur. The geographical location of Tezpur is 26°37'N latitude and 92°47'E longitude. It is regarded as the cultural capital of Assam. The love story of Usha and Anirudha mentioned in the epic of the Mahabharata was associated with this place and as such Tezpur is regarded as the place of eternal love. It is 181 kms from the capital city of Guwahati. Tezpur is well connected by motorways, railways, airways and waterways.

It has a glorious past with its golden age from the 5th to 6th century A.D. Inscriptions found in and around Tezpur shows that the Salastambhas were the first monarchs of Harupeswara (655-670A.D) which is the present day Tezpur. The Bargaon grant of Ratnapala reveals that there were 21 rulers of the family of Salastambhas; the last being Tyagsingha who was succeeded by Brahmapala, who in turn established a new line of the Pala dynasty. Sri Harsha Deva (725-745A.D.), Hajar Varma (815-832 A.D.) and Vanamala Varma (832-855 A.D.) were famous kings of Salastambha dynasty.

Archaeology of Tezpur is very rich in nature. The sites of Da-Parbatia, Bamuni hill, court building, and Mazgaon are the important places of archaeological evidence. The ruins of the door frame of Da-Parbatia temple (5th-6th centuryA.D.) are the finest and oldest specimens of stone sculptural art in Assam. The small stone door frame inscribed with Ganga and Yamuna still stands elegantly in an artistic pose with garlands in hand. This temple which is a characteristic feature of the early Gupta period has a good deal of similarity with Vishnu temple of Deogarh, Parvati temple at Nachnakuthara and the Shiva temple of Bhumra. The door frame of Da-Parbatia attracts both domestic and international tourists from around the world. The ruins of Bamuni hill are famous for antique stone temples and sculptures. Famous archaeologist R.D. Banerjee holds that the ruins of the Bamunipahar consist of seven shrines, small and big that have been dated to the (9th-10th) century A.D. These seven temples were Vishnu, Shiva, Surya, Ganesha, Shakti, and the rest are unknown.

In the past, the existence of regular schools like the *Gurugrihas* and Sanskrit *talas* is known from the archaeological evidence of stone inscriptions and copper plates found in and around Tezpur. According to a few scholars Tezpur was also known as “sapta-tirtha” because of the presence of temples like Haruppeswar, Sukreswar, Tingeswar, Mahabhairaba, Rudrapada, Bhairabpada and Bhairabi. In addition to these archaeological evidence and cultural history Tezpur possesses rich natural attractions like rivers, beautiful landscapes, hills, wildlife and tea gardens which in turn can provide ample scope for recreational and entertainment activities.

ASSAM : A LAND OF GOLDEN HEARTS

Tarun Jyoti Borah

Department of Business Administration

A few years back, the Government of Assam organised a seminar on “Branding Assam” and before participating in the programme, we, in the Department, discussed the possibility of promoting Assam as a *Land of Golden Hearts*. The idea of mapping the ethnic groups of the state from the west to the east emerged during the course of that discussion. All agreed that it would be a good endeavour to generate some tourist circuits from Dhubri to Sadiya. In these circuits, one gets opportunities to observe various ethnic groups in their traditional lifestyle. In the west are the *Boro Kachari* in Kokrajhar, the *Koch* in Gouripur, Goalpara for *Rabha* and *Hajong*, the *Tiwa* in Morigaon, the Diphu and Baithalungsu for *Karbi*, the *Mishing* in Majuli and Jonai, the *Deori* in Dibrugarh and Jorhat, the *Thengal Kachari* in Titabar, the *Sonowal Kachari* in Dibrugarh and Narayanpur, the *Chutia* in Sadiya, the *Maran* and *Motok* in Dibrugarh, the *Tai Shyam (Turung)* in Titabar, the *Tai Khamiyang* and *Tai Ahom* in Sivasagar, the *Tai Phake* in Naharkatia, the *Tai Kamti* in Tinisukia, the *Singpho* in Margherita, the *Mech* in Dhansiri, the *Dimasa* in Haflong and Maibong, the *Hmar* and *Kuki* in Haflong and the *Barmons* in Kachar are some of the important ethnic inhabitants in these respective areas. Besides these, the Assamese Sikhs in Nagaon, the Assamese Muslims in Sivasagar, the Tea garden community, the Schedule Caste population are also to be found living with the general population like

Kayastha, Kalita, Keot etc. and carry some unique features while residing within a state with a rich cultural history. These small groups with their traditional cultural lives make Assam a treasure house of human civilisation.

The kaleidoscopic lives of Assamese people are always an attraction to both national and global tourists with green hills and wildlife to complement them. During this era of globalization and technological development, the unique traditional lives of these people are very interesting in the global tourism market. The traditional way of life of these people like the indigenous knowledge system which was used in cultivation- technique of ploughing, harvesting, gardening, house building technique, crafts making and also cultural items like dance, drama, music, musical instruments are notable across different communities. Each and every community practice these techniques distinctively. The *Bagarumba*-butterfly dance of Boro Kachari, *Gomrag* dance of Mishing are quite unique and different from the *Bihu* dance or the dance of the Tiwa Community. The house building styles of the Karbis and the Mishings are different from each other. Although rice is the staple food of all communities and a major ingredient of traditional beverages, the preparation process and the taste are different from community to community. The taste of rice beer *Apong* of Mishing community is different from *Horlung* of Karbi and *Jeu* of

Boro Kachari. The weaving practice is common in all communities but usage of dye, colour, motifs and more importantly the weaving techniques are different and as a result traditional attires are distinctive across communities. These colourful settlements of various ethnic groups found in a single state like Assam really is a rare occurrence in this world. The abundant availability of both natural and cultural resources makes Assamese people simple in nature which is exactly what a tourist is drawn to. With this strength in hand, there is enough potential to develop this state as a land of golden hearts.

There remains a need for strong coordination between the government, the private sector service providers and the people of Assam for infrastructure development. Understanding the Tourism philosophy and its multiple impacts by all stakeholders is also very important in terms of sustainable tourism development.

DID YOU KNOW?

‘Almost 70 per cent of the world’s orchids are found in India’s Northeast.’

“The world’s largest riverine island, Majuli, is now India’s first river island district”

PICTURESCAPE



Deo Pahar, Numaligarh by Paridhi Brahma



Bamuni Hills; Source: Public



Borapani, Meghalaya; by Chirag Phukan

LET'S UNFURL FASHION TOURISM...



Sualkuchi Silk; Source: Public

Dr. Runumi Das

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People, after coming back from a vacation, love to share their experience and reminisce the things that they enjoyed in the destination. It is natural that people would love to choose a destination which would have enough reasons to give scope to satiate this eagerness of sharing. Talking of the North East and of Assam specifically, a destination which would meet this criterion is Sualkuchi. It is a census town in Kamrup district of Assam. It is situated on the north bank of the river Brahmaputra, about 35 kms from Guwahati that would take about an hour by car. The place has the ability to draw tourists as it happens to be a “craft village” but the desired publicity is not there to promote it as such.

People in general have a strong liking for ‘original’ dress materials and more so towards traditional ones. Sualkuchi with its essence now in handloom industries, occupation of silk rearing and reeling is a pull factor to heighten its status as a tourist destination. The rhythmic sound of the looms manifesting wowing designs on clothes; weavers using the jacquards and dobbeys manually in this age of post industrial revolution of developed technology, are a wonderful sight to witness as the designs take shape with each stroke. The exotic Muga silk, which is much sought after, is available here. It is well known worldwide because of its extreme durability and lustre. Muga silk was recognized as a protected geographical indication (GI) in 2007, and was granted a GI logo for trademark purposes in 2014.

Muga silk's glaze and lustre improves with every wash. This makes Muga silk one of the costliest silks available in the world. Muga is produced from cocoons of 'Antheraea assama.' The silk worm hatches out of eggs laid by the mother moth. Studies have shown that the worm consumes 30,000 its own weight of leaves. The life cycle of the silk worm depicts a stage of moulting where the worm changes its skin for four times. On reaching the fifth stage the silk glands in the worm become mature and spin a cocoon around itself. By this time the worm stops consuming leaves. As Sualkuchi falls in a region of tropical climate, here the larvae cycle i.e. upto the formation of cocoon, takes twenty to twenty five days. The cocoons that are produced by feeding leaves to the silk worm is known as silk rearing. Unlike the Muga

worms which are reared on trees, the mulberry worm for Paat (Mulberry) silk and Eri (Philosomia ricini) worms for Eri silk are always reared inside. The most common tree where the Muga worms are reared is Som tree (Machilus bambycina). Apart from Som trees, Soalu (Litsaea polyantha) and Mejankari (Litsaea cirata) are used for Muga rearing. These trees are abundantly found in the north eastern states of India and in certain parts of North Bengal.

As per data provided by Central Silk Board, Assam holds the monopoly position in production of Muga. The board has also undertaken three Muga projects in Assam for Muga seed development and two in Meghalaya and one in Arunachal Pradesh. Most weavers in Sualkuchi purchase Muga cocoons from traders of upper Assam, Boko and Garo hill regions of South Kamrup and Meghalaya. It has been observed in the international market the demand of Muga silk is rising every year. In the current market, even average quality Muga silk traditional attire 'mekhela chadar' or saree costs minimum Rs 10,000 in Assam. Some cloth weavers use a yarn known as Tasar while weaving Muga clothes which is less expensive than Muga yarn. Common people cannot distinguish between Muga and Tasaryarn.

The cloth dealer takes advantage of this weakness of customers and short changes them by claiming these to be Muga fabrics. The glaze of Tasar yarn is same as Muga but loses its lustre after a wash or two. As mentioned, people do have fetish for fashion and always looks for original dress materials. This aspect can be worked upon to attract travellers leading to growth of fashion tourism. Having the potential and prospects it's high time that we put into optimum utilization what has been gifted naturally to us. Perseverance will lead us in creating the aura of Milan and London. Fashion tourism is inclusive of Creative Tourism, Cultural Tourism and Shopping Tourism and hence the entire Sualkuchi will have a facelift. Travellers who would also love to purchase maybe even as souvenir can take the opportunity of watching the fabric being made in front of their eyes without getting duped. It may seem that materials will benefit only the traditional types. The reply is that these materials can be stitched up for any kind of apparels that makes the owner proud and the onlookers envy.

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TEZPUR DARSHAN**Dr. Niranjana Das***Visiting Fellow**Department of Business Administration**Tezpur University*

Hardly can any title suit better to describe the beautiful small town of 'Tezpur', which is located on the north bank of river Brahmaputra and occupies almost a central position along the length of the river having latitude of 26°63'N longitude of 92°8'E and height of 78 meters from the sea level. Tezpur is found to be rich in art, architecture, culture, sculpture and tales of Indian mythology. Tezpur has various scenic locations with a number of hillocks and slopes, natural and artificial reservoirs. The climatic conditions in Tezpur vary from 36°C in the summer months to a minimum of 7°C in winter. Tezpur has many well-known figures in state, national and international levels in the field of drama, cinema, music, modern art, politics, activism etc.

Tezpur has been known by various names during different eras. The names include 'Harupeswar', 'Purapur', 'Tizopur', 'Kanyapur', 'Hattapeswar', signifying the place was very ruled by different kings in ancient times. It is believed that the civilization of Tezpur is almost 4000 years old. Tezpur has been derived from the word 'Tizo' as per historians which means 'reptile' and the belief is that this place was once full of snakes and reptiles. However in Indian mythology, Tezpur has its own unique position which signifies its immense impact on places, societies and cultures. As per mythology, in the 'City of Eternal Romance', a horrified battle is believed to have taken place. This is where Lord Siva fought for his disciple (Bhakta) King Bana against Lord Krishna who fought to rescue his grandchild 'Aniruddha' who was kidnapped and later put into captivity by King 'Bana'. This mythological war is known as the 'Hari-Hara' Yuddha where it is believed that the entire city was drenched with blood of armies who fought the battle and so the name stands as 'Tez' (blood) and 'Pur' (city). Finally Prince 'Aniruddha' got married to Princess 'Usha', the daughter of king 'Banasur'.

Besides the heart touching mythological tale, Tezpur is also famous and well known for its places of tourist attraction. The city is famous for 'Sapta-Tirtha' means place of seven pilgrimages which includes 'Bhairabi Mandir', 'Mohabhairab Mandir', 'Haleswar', 'Sukleswar', 'Bhairab Pad', 'Rudra Pad' and 'Da-Parbatia'.

As per the 2001 census, the population of Tezpur town is 102,505. Tezpur is 190 kms away from the state capital Dispur via Nowgaon i.e. through NH-37 and it is 180km via Mongaldoi through NH-52. The nearest airport is 'Salanibari' which is approx. 10km from the town and it had started functioning back in 1942 during the days of World War II. However the places which attract tourists are 'Mahabhairab Temple' known for the biggest and highest 'Siva Linga' in South-East Asia. 'Da-Parbatia' is the place famous

for the sculpture of goddess 'Ganga and Jamuna'. The antiquities found at the 'Da-Parbatia' are inferred to have been from a temple complex built during the 5th or 6th century, prior to the 'Bhaskaravarman' period. 'Hajara Pukhuri', located near Tezpur town, is termed as the 3rd biggest pond of Assam. As per legend, the king of the Burman Dynasty, 'Harijar Varma', excavated the pond in 70 acres of land which later came to be known as Hajara Pukhuri. The 'Agnigarh park was later known as 'Kanyapur' was built by King Banasur as a residence for his daughter princess 'Usha' and the specialty of this place was that it was surrounded by a fire front so that there could be no threat from any enemies.

Kanaklata Udyan is dedicated to the brave girl Kanaklata Baruah who died after being shot by the British at Gohpur on 20th September 1942. Natural beauty of the mighty Brahmaputra especially sun-rise and sun-set and the view of Tezpur town could be enjoyed. 'Padumpukhuri' is a beautiful natural pond with a small island which is connected by two wooden bridges. The British named it as George Lake. The ruins of the Bamuni Hills are famous for its artistic beauty. The remains of sculptures found there are built during 6th century A.D. Local folks believe that there used to be seven beautiful temples which were later ruined. Bhomoraguri Bridge connecting the main lands of Tezpur and Kaliabor across the mighty river Brahmaputra is of enormous beauty. Especially at dawn, the lighting of the bridge gives a heart-touching and soothing view. The name of the bridge is dedicated to Ahom general 'Kalia Bhomora Phukan' who planned to construct a bridge over the river Brahmaputra during the Ahom period. 'Jonaki' cinema is the oldest cinema hall in Assam. Jyotiprasad Agarwala established the first auditorium cum hall 'Jonaki', specifically constructed for the purpose of screening films on a regular basis in the year 1937. Tezpur Mental hospital established in 1876 is the oldest hospital in the history of Assam.

Tezpur University is a central university located in Tezpur established by an act in Parliament of India in 1994. The establishment of Tezpur University is considered to be one of the outcomes of the Assam Accord. Tezpur University (TU) bagged the Visitor's 'Best University' award in 2016 and also has achieved another feat by having been ranked 5th among the universities in an assessment of higher education institutions in India conducted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India, through the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF). World Health Organisation (WHO) declared Tezpur stands first among the 'Least Polluted' cities in India in 2016. Tezpur 'Litchi' has got the coveted 'Geographical Indication (GI)' tags (by the Office of the Controller General of Patents, Design & Trade Marks, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt. of India), making these items an incontrovertible proof of their origins in the state and protecting them from production elsewhere. And we can go on and on talking about our city of Tezpur, 'The City of Eternal Romance' the 'City of Hidden Past'.

The Treasure Troves of 'Awesome Assam'

Tourism for All...

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Awesome Assam!- Splash of Nature



Source: Indian Express article, 4 Sep 2016

Awesome Assam, the newest logo of Assam Tourism resonates well. It is catchy, colorful and arrests attention. Assam is awesome. The land of Kamakhya with the river Brahmaputra is awesome. It bustles with natural splendor. It has beautiful valleys, crackling with small rivulets and streams down every lush-green hill. The rough and tough terrains that once protected Assam from its invaders in the past are now being transformed into the latest adventure tourism offerings. Simhasana hills in picturesque Karbi Anglong and adjoining hills and hillocks of adjacent Dima Haso are unique indeed for mountaineers and rock-climbers. Hemptieupit, the state's tallest peak and the Elephant Rocks in Morigaon are perfect for die-hard adventurers and trekkers. Globe-trotting paragliders can enjoy sailing beneath the clear blue skies near the sandbars at Guwahati. The turbulent tributaries of Kopili, Manas and Jia-Bhorali give the thrills of river-rafting. One need not head to Kerala

to enjoy kayaking. Assam has its own homegrown canoeing sites at Charanbeel in Morigaon.

For nature lovers, Assam, the land of red rivers and blue hills, is no less than a paradise in the North-East. It has its own considerable blessings of natural bounty. Its deep and dense forests and the songs of harmony in the thickets invite for a definite stay in its several eco-camps at Kaziranga and Nameri National Parks. The melodious chirpings of hundreds of bird species and sights of rare fauna and wild birds invigorate even the most fatigued minds. If Africa is home to the largest number of wild elephants, Assam also has its share of the rarest one-horned rhino species in the world. An early morning peep through the wild grass carpets on tamed elephant backs gives chills at the sight of the one-horned rhino herd.

Nature's bounty does not end here. Assam has its own hotwater spring at Garampani in Karbi Anglong. Geographically much smaller and relatively less known than the famous Yellowstone National Park, it is a natural sauna right in our backyard woods. Its adjacent Nambhor Sanctuary and Garampani Wildlife Sanctuary is spread across 6.05 square kilometers in a lively zone of flora and fauna for wild life photographers and enthusiasts. With 51 different varieties of orchids, it provides relief to the sore eyes. Sambars, Gibbons, Dears, Rhesus Macaque and mammals like tiger, gaur and elephants are frequent sightings at this place. And

if that is not enough, several other colorful orchids and roaring species are there in the 650 square km Dibru-Saikhowa Sanctuary in the Brahmaputra valley upstream. Its tropical monsoon climate is a perfect breeding place for feral horses, leopards, jungle cats, Sloth Bears, Small Indian Civet, Chinese Pangolins and many more varieties of species. Bio-diversity unfolds itself in a blend of deciduous, semi-evergreen forests and marsh lands with a perfect habitat for several reptiles, fishes and bird species. For simple long-drive revelers, vast tracts of emerald green tea gardens deck both sides of the highways in upper Assam and blanket the air with freshness and vigour. Nature rebounds in every nook and corner of Assam. Hectares of lush arboretum in Diphu and several other botanical reserves await vacationers providing spectacular sights whenever wished.



The Taste of Rural lifestyle

If one wants to get lost in time and enjoy the rustic life, many villages readily welcome curious visitors to sample their simple life-style. Some extraordinary meals at Dhuba-Ati village at Kaziranga cooked wrapped in kol-pat (banana leaves) and smoked rice in hollow bamboo tubes (shunga-saul) and other delicacies will tickle the taste buds for a lifetime. The women of the villages will invite you with all the traditional welcoming.

They offer the most artistic phulamgamosas(towels) around your neck and serve you in traditional heavy brass and bell metal platters which no KFC or McDonald's presentations can compete. A visitor will never forget the kingly aura the villagers create for their guests. Then for entertainment, they will dance to the dhol (drum) beats and the pepa-gagana (musical) tunes and present before you the vigorous and graceful choreographies of their native dance forms. Several *Mishing* tribal villages near the Dikhow river-bank in Sivasagar provide glimpse of sturdy living yet peaceful way of life. It's a unique experience of staying in a stilt bamboo house with some cups of indigenous rice beer 'Apong'. Added to that, the *Mishing* women working to the tune of the click-clack of the looms while weaving their traditional clothing below the stilt houses, is a unique charm.

Testament to a Glorious Ancient Past



Assam is Shangri-la for the architectural and heritage lovers. Formerly known by the name Kamrupa, Assam is shrouded in mysticism which garners much attention. Its ancient name of *Pragjyotishpura* mentioned in Ramayana and

Mahabharata draws testimony to its connection to India's ancient past. The Fort of Agnigarh in Tezpur narrates the story of Princess Usha's love for Lord Krishna's grandson Aniruddha making them immortals for eternity. Other architectural ruins scattered across Da-Parbatiya nearby, with its famous Ganga-Jamuna stone sculptures, echo the majestic period of great king Bhaskaravarman of the 5th-6th century.

Assam is an abode for religious pilgrims. In its heart lies the famous Shakti temple of Goddess Kamakhya gracing the Nilachal Hills in Guwahati. Its magnificence and power draw lakhs of tourists and pilgrims to its complex every year. There are many more attractions for heritage seekers. On a forest clad hillock is the Madan Kamdev complex with beautiful sculptures depicting the story of Kamdev, the god of desire and his wife Rati. It is the Khajuraho of the North East.

The Shiva temple, known as Shiva Dol, in the historic Sivasagar town, is the pride of the district and Assam indeed. Its monumental grandeur is for all to see and it is one of the tallest Lord Shiva temples in India. Charaideo, the first capital of the Ahom rulers of Assam, is a symbolic center containing sacred burial grounds of the Ahom kings and queens. The wonderful domical structures covered with earth known as *maidams* are comparable to the pyramids of Egypt. Several other majestic structures, representing architectural excellence, lie scattered across the state. The architectural style of each of the monuments speaks of the existence of many great dynasties. Unique in their style and form, Assam's architectural inheritance presents an aura of the

great Indian heritage as well.

Thriving Arts, Crafts and Culture



Source: Internet

Assam's cultural manifestation is a medley that awes every onlooker with its beauty and perfection. Many of the tribal jackets have become a fashion statement with the local public of Assam during various festivities and occasions. Tourists to Majuli Island can be seen donning the colourful *Mishing Mibu Galuk* while enjoying their tour in the island. This men's jacket comes in various shapes today having artistic influences from other co-dwelling communities of the land. But it presents the essence of *Mishing* weaves. Other than that, several other garments, like the *Gero* (a kind of revered women's dressing) are good buys for the visitors. Similarly, *Choi-Ang*, a traditional *Karbi* jacket for the men, is also famous garment piece from the Karbi community of Assam.

When talking about Assam, one cannot forget to mention the famous Pat-Muga silk fabrics. Sualkuchi village in Assam takes the due credit for the upkeep of this centuries old tradition. Its numerous artisans vigorously rolling beautiful fabrics on their looms are a sight to see. A genuine craft village and a perfect destination for traditional craft seekers, Sualkuchi offers the most exotic and purest of Assamese silk. Assam also marks its

distinction in soil craft preserved in terracotta and pottery of Asharikandi. Simple toy items like the *Hatima* doll is enough to generate curiosity for its stark resemblance to the terracotta figures dug at the early human settlements of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. The brass and bell metal items are equally unique for its ancient connections. Small bamboo products are interesting souvenirs drawn out of the simple day-to-day used objects in rural life. Once used as a headgear adorning the nobility, decorative bamboo *japi* has translated into a symbol of Assamese pride as well as an object of decoration today. A phenomenal world of celestial, human and animal forms unfolds in the famous mask art of Majuli district. The many colorful masks of animal gods Hanuman, Garuda and Varaha apart from demonic ones sold in the riverine island bring Indian mythology to the real world. This 600 year old Vaishnavite art preserved in the cultural capital of Assam is one of the many art forms that Assam harbors.

Awesome and Splendid Assam!

The world of arts, crafts and heritage is so fascinating in Assam that it can make a person wonder being in a time warp. Its history linked to ancient world and its heritage associated with the recorded medieval epoch leaves an oasis in the midst of modern civilizations of our time. Assam is truly an assemblage of every type of tourism products for all categories of curious travelers of the world. The exotic images from the sandy river banks, picturesque valleys and forests, a gamut of colorful handicrafts, the great architectures and the cultural settings gets etched in mind, so much so, that one cannot escape visiting this paradise time and again.

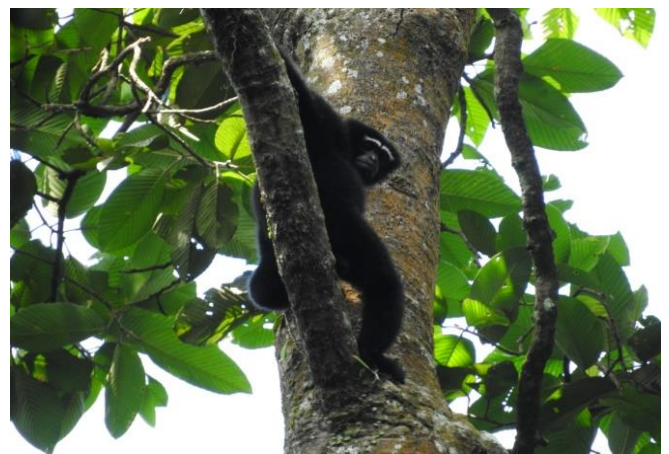
PICTURESCAPE



A Slender Billed Vulture ; Clicked by: Paridhi Brahma



Manas National Park ; Clicked by: Pariksheet Hasda



A Male Hoolock Gibbon ; Clicked by: Paridhi Brahma

TEZPUR - AN OVERVIEW

Dip Kumar Kalita

Travel writer, Cultural Activist and Journalist, Tezpur

The recorded history of Tezpur is available since 829 AD. From the stone inscription discovered by Sir Edward Gate (1897) on the bank of the river Brahmaputra, it was inferred that Harzarbarma was a king of Tezpur during the first half of the 9th century. Historians have found concrete evidence of King Ratnapal giving a convincing description of his predecessor Harzarbarma. According to that, Alastambha became the King of Tezpur, dethroning the last of the successors of Naraka. He transferred his capital from Pragiyotishpur to Haruppeswar. The Salastambha dynasty ruled Tezpur from the seventh to the tenth century AD. The most widely known king of Salastambha dynasty was Tyabsingha. He had no son to succeed him and his subjects enthroned one Brahmapal. The remnants of the sculptures and architecture found in and around Tezpur date back to the 8th - 9th century AD during the Salastambha and Pal dynasty.

The Ahoms defeated the vast army of Mughals in the Bharali and recovered Darrang and Kamrup from the Mughals. The Ahoms ruled the eastern part of Darrang (present Sonitpur district) through a Gohain who was stationed at Koliabor. In 1826, the British took over Assam and converted Darrang into a district with headquarters at Mangaldoi. Tezpur was uplifted to the status of a district headquarters in 1835. Since then, it has become vibrant with social, political, cultural, literary and academic activities as if it has awoken from a long, deep prehistoric slumber.

A heavenly dreamland delicately curved by Mother Nature with her own hands, the place is surrounded by beautiful lakes, rivers, mountains, forests, rich flora & fauna and much more. Another name for a paradise on earth would be Sonitpur district. A visit to this land would get one enchanted by the exotic beauty of nature. The pre historic place of Agnigarh, the story of the great Demon king Bana, the eternal love story of his beautiful daughter Usha and Aniruddha, the grandson of Lord Sri Krishna, Chitrlekha, the mystical friend of Usha, the great war between Lord Hari (Krishna) and Lord Hara (Shiva) and other romantic stories at once strike a chord in one's mind whenever one hears the name of Sonitpur. Taking cues from these, scores of stories, novels, dramas, songs and poems have been composed. These are, after all, myths and are never supported by any available inscription. However, the historians have made mention about Kalikapurana as an authentic source of information of Bana, who took birth in Sonitpur city on the bank of the Lauhitya, now called the Brahmaputra, at the beginning of the Dwaparayuga.

King Bana was a great friend of King Narakasura who lived at Pragjyotishpur in Kamrup. What is found in Kalikapurana is the story of mutual friendship between Bana and Narakasura. Bana's reference has been made in the context of Narakasura and not in the context of Usha-Aniruddha. It is said that Bhalukpong, now the border of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, was the capital of King Bana and Tezpur

was the residence of his daughter, Usha. According to some, Usha resided in Bamunipahar. Some of the ruins at Bamunipahar are imagined to be the parts of the loom used by Usha. King Bana castled the residence of Usha by constructing a fire-wall (Agnigarh) for the safety and security of his young daughter. The narration of the stories is so realistic that it tempts one to accept these as truths without any evidence. According to legend, Sonitpur was the capital of King Bana and he was also a great devotee of Lord Shiva. Usha, the only daughter of King Bana, fell in love with Aniruddha, the grandson of Lord Krishna. Usha's friend Chitrlekha helped them to get married secretly. King Bana, found out about the marriage and therefore arrested and imprisoned Aniruddha. This led to a fierce battle between Lord Krishna and Lord Shiva which resulted in a bloody battle. Later on, this place came to be known as Sonitpur or Tezpur. 'Sonit' / 'Tez' meaning blood and 'pur' meaning city. Innumerable relics and temples of the past can be seen in and around the city. However, the Archeological Survey of India does not have a solid supporting view. The District of Sonitpur is dotted with a large number of temples. It has religious, historical and archeological importance. Devotees throng the temples to pay obeisance, while the Archeological Department's effort is to bring out the origin and the information related with it. Very large number of remains of the magnificent stone-works of archeological value, with admiring artistry, is found in abundance and scattered in and around Tezpur and have been estimated to be of the 8th-9th century period.

By: Paridhi Brahma



THE MULAI FOREST AS A TOURIST DESTINATION

Uttam Roy

PGDTM, 2007-08

Years ago, a man was walking along the banks of the mighty river Brahmaputra when he arrived at a big empty place without trees. He found the river bank very hot with its powdery and striped sand. This was a place that caused the death of many snakes and frogs. The man became very sad and felt unhappy on observing this picture. He decided to plant trees to save nature for the future generations. This man was none other than Padmashree Jadav Mulai Payeng. He is also known as the Forest Man of India. He single-handedly created a forest which is named after him and nowadays it is known as the *Mulai Forest*. Locally it is known as *Mulai Kathani*.

The total area of the forest is 1,359.08 acres i.e. 5.5 square kilometres. It is located in Kokilamukh which is 10 km away from Jagannath Baruah road of Jorhat town in Jorhat district. The Jagannath Baruah road to Kokilamukh is close to the Inter State Bus Terminus of Jorhat. Small hired vehicles and auto rickshaws are available throughout the day to Kokilamukh. At a little distance from Kokilamukh, lies a small river island in the Brahmaputra and that is the exact location of the Molai Forest. The east side of the Island is Kartik Sapori and the west side of the island is Aubona Sapori. The boundary of the forest comprises the districts of Lakhimpur in the north, Sibsagar in the east, Jorhat in the south and Sonitpur in the west.

The forest, which came to be known as the *Molai* forest is now home to various flora and fauna. Royal Bengal tigers, deer, elephant, Asiatic wild buffaloes and one horned rhinoceros are frequent visitors to this forest. Varieties of birds and common reptiles are also to be seen within the vegetation. The forest is also home to several thousands of trees, including *shimloo*, *shishoo*, *bhelo*, *gamari*, *segun*, *jamun*, *aam*, *kothal*, *shirish*, *dimoru*, *amora*, *banana*, *koroi*, *arjuna*, *amla*, *kadam*, *krishnachura*, *bamboo*, and *aizar* etc. This forest has now become an attraction for both Indian and foreign tourists and also for students, researchers and scientists. This man made forest has become a symbol of love towards the environment, nature and animals, and shows the importance of natural resources to this chaotic earth dominated by man.

LINKING TOURISM AND HERITAGE

A way forward to preservation of heritage resources

Annesha Borah

PGDTM , (2009 Batch)

Department of Business Administration

Heritage has become the most significant and fastest growing components of tourism in recent years. Heritage treasures like antiquities, famous ruins, castles and cathedrals, temples and museums are important attractions around the world for tourists. Modernisation has led to rapid development of heritage tourism as contemporary tourists seek to communicate with both nature and history.

Heritage tourism involves travel to sites that in some ways represent an area, community, or people's history, identity, or inheritance. Heritage tourism gives people the opportunity to understand others: where they live, their history, how their society evolved over time, and how and why they preserve their identity to uphold their honour, prestige, and pride for their traditions and culture.

Visiting historic and cultural sites is one of the most popular tourist activities today. Destinations are paying attention to one of the fastest growing niche market segment in the travel industry today i.e. Heritage Tourism. Heritage tourism uses assets—historic, cultural, and natural resources—that already exist. Rather than creating and building attractions, destinations look to the past for a sustainable future. Indeed these assets need preservation and often restoration as well as interpretation. Tourism is a major way by which heritage resources can be re-evaluated and used gainfully. Therefore during the past three decades, heritage and tourism has been inextricably linked throughout the world. Tourism is used as an economic justification for heritage preservation.

Heritage resources are fragile, non-renewable, and irreplaceable. These resources can be preserved when one rediscovers their importance and commercial demand through tourism. In other words, heritage tourism is a positive force for the preservation of heritage resources. If heritage tourism is developed keeping in mind the sustainability aspect, it can lead to the enrichment of culture, resources and the entire setting of the destination. Touristic activities at heritage places can provide better chance for nations to control the deterioration of cultural heritage and to make efforts for its preservation. Preserving and protecting the heritage is essential for cultural heritage tourism because the commodity to be offered has to be secured for its sustainability.

Sustainable development in heritage tourism is not possible without local communities as the indigenous resources play a central role. Sensitization and training of the local people in asset management is essential to attain sustainable development in heritage tourism. Besides value addition with ecotourism including nature trails, the proper documentation of artifacts, myths and legends and the development of

indigenous cuisines using indigenous fruits, vegetables and other native recipes can be made. Therefore, linking tourism with heritage and culture is the most sustainable way to preserve heritage resources and boost local economy.

In India, there is ample existence of heritage buildings mainly forts, palaces and havelis, temples, mosques etc. Yet the number of tourists visiting the country especially to acknowledge and appreciate these rich sources of heritage is negligible to the potential available. Even those monuments which are now under the protection of the government lack proper management as the local people are ignorant of their significance. It must be made known to all that development of heritage tourism can propel growth, contribute to foreign exchange, enhance employability, community development and result in preservation of the heritage resources of the country. However, it should be understood that heritage tourism must not be concerned with mere promotion and protection of heritage values; it must also be involved in understanding the impact of tourism on communities and regions, achieving economic and social benefits and providing financial resources for protection.

DID YOU KNOW?

“It is believed that the game Polo have originated in Manipur.

The British made it very popular worldwide.”

“The hottest chilli in the world, the Bhut Jolokia, comes from North-East.”

“Seven of India’s major national parks are located in Northeast.”

SEVEN REFRESHING HUBS OF NATURE TO TRAVEL IN AND AROUND GUWAHATI

Neelkamal Kumar

M.B.A 2015-17

Travelling is the one thing that comes to our mind when we are free to do anything; it also has the ability to reenergize us when our daily schedule starts to feel monotonous. Visiting quiet and lonely places of serene beauty filled with tranquil landscapes can induce a great deal of joy and energy to our mind and body. So here are some of the quick getaways in and around Guwahati even when the hustle and bustle of the city cannot be avoided for long trips. The quirks and charm of the city are worth experiencing but with the verdant hills in the background and the slow meandering mighty Brahmaputra as its lifeline, there are many places in and around Guwahati that are usually left unexplored.

KAMAKHYA TEMPLE: One of the most sought after places in Guwahati, the Kamakhya temple sitting atop the Nilachal hills is a favorite destination for tourists in Guwahati. But the journey through the main road of Nursery, Maligaon to the top of the temple is equally fascinating. The trip is filled with freshness at every turn on the curvy road and the view it offers is a picturesque delight. It is located just 7 kms from the main road, but a short trip in the evening with the sun setting down can give immense joy when the pleasing view of the city at its splendid viewpoint can be seen and the blessings from Maa Kamakhya is always there to make the trip a little

more magical.

BELLE VUE: Mostly popular among the trendy youth of the city, it is a hub for morning walkers and for the lazy college goers who usually visit it once in a while. It is also a popular dating spot with the river Brahmaputra flowing by its side. It has immense scenic beauty. Moreover the approach road from Uzan bazaar ghaat is also mesmerizing; the place can also be reached from the sector 1 Noonmati side through the Kharguli road. This trip is a must for every Guwahatian.

DEEPOR BEEL: Although an integral part of the city, the place has become popular in recent times only. Over the last 2-3 years, the place has blossomed with selfie lovers and photographers. The place has plenty in store for the bird lovers as a number of migratory birds come here. The approach road from the Rani gate and Garchuk Chariali have a lot to offer in the 8-9 km trip.

POBITARA WILDLIFE SANTUARY (via Mayong): The wild life sanctuary famous for its dense rhino population has also lot to offer during its 30 km trip through the Chandrapur road via the mysterious town of Mayong known for its ancient magic and all. The trip starting from Narengi through Chandarpur is full of twists and turns through the patches of hilly roads to roads of

dense trees on both sides. The trip is worth the time and money spent on it.

CHANDUBI LAKE: More famous for its creation after the 1897 earthquake of Assam, the lake is situated approximately 50 kms from Guwahati city and is a treat to watch out for. Although it can be reached via the main highway through the town of Mirza in South Kamrup, the road less taken through the village of Rani is the better one to explore. It is a great option for some adventure travel near the city as the trip after crossing Rani is a memorable experience through the small jungles in the remote area with plenty of silence and natural beauty. The road is less travelled and hence needs to be explored by travelers. Also one can go to the state of Meghalaya by taking a left turn just after crossing the village of Rani which can be a fruitful experience, though the road to Chandubi is advisable to take in the winter season.

POA MECCA: Just like Kamakhya temple, the Poa Mecca also known as the (1/4 th Mecca) is an important destination for Muslim pilgrims. It is situated at Hajo, about 25 km from Guwahati city. The approach road from Hajo to the mosque is quite an amazing affair and the trip offers cool and fresh air mixed with the serene view of the panorama through the hilly way. The half hour drive from Hajo does not have the popular reviews like the Kamakhya temple has, but it is a must for the travel lovers just for the beauty of the Mother Nature. The place is a hit in Hajo town and must be explored by everyone.

SONAPUR (GUWAHATI-NAGAON HIGHWAY):

Located just 12 km from Guwahati on its outskirts, it is the most common destination of city people for their weekend trips. The area is filled with roadside dhabas and resorts. Blessed with true natural beauty and small tea gardens, the area Tepesia has the most to offer with the most famous resorts like Spring Valley, Brahmaputra jungle, Aarian woods to name a few. It offers the much needed weekend break to all age groups and is the most popular travel site near the city.

DID YOU KNOW?

“The Ahom Dynasty of Northeast is the longest unbroken dynasty in India’s entire history”

“Except Mani Ratnam’s ‘Dil Se’ no Bollywood film has had Northeast as a major setting”

“The Northeast is India’s cleanest region”

MARKING THE THRILL

(A brief outlook on the adventure tourism market in India)

Deepankar Das

M.B.A 2012-14

If we go by the definition of adventure, it means involvement in some type of outdoor activities around the natural environment, with the outcome of the activity remaining unknown, but we know there's much more to it. These few words fail to describe the thrill, excitement and feeling of those extreme moods.

Why Adventure Tourism in India

When we talk of the Indian subcontinent, it is truly blessed with a unique topography to the delight of the fearless adventurer. Due to this natural blessing, adventure tourism has reached new heights in India. Every month, new portals are coming up with great adventure packages to offer. They are all contributing to making India a "One Stop Adventure Shop". Government initiatives and startups are together trying to develop more adventure tourism destinations across each state in India. The North East, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are emerging as the favorite destinations for the adventurers. It is only in India that a person can indulge in a camel safari in the hot deserts of Rajasthan, heli-ski in the Himalayas, raft down the mighty Ganges and trek in the Garhwal Himalayas; all in the same month.

Who are doing it

A Government recognized body, ADVENTURE TOUR OPERATORS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA was founded to promote adventure tourism in India and to create awareness overseas about the potential of adventure tourism in India. Apart from this, they also have a new generation of operators who are taking adventure tourism to the next level.

Thrillphilia, a Bengaluru-based company, is an online marketplace for tours and activities, where one can compare and book products and services from across a range of suppliers, is a top favorite among the urban youths. A Gurugram based company, **Adventure Nation**, is also quite popular for activities like camping, skiing, rafting, scuba diving, off road motor biking, etc. across India. Many similar portals are coming up with innovative ideas to serve the same purpose. A few of them like **Countryside**, **Flying Fox**, **Help tourism**, **inme**, **Orca Dive club** and **Snow Leopard adventures** are worth mentioning.

Where and what are they doing it

Adventure getaways are the latest in terms of experiential holidays and no place could be better

than the Indian Subcontinent. From the Andamans to the North East, India is a land full of adventure. If a hotlist of the most popular destinations and adventures are to be made, this is what it would look like the most:

a. **Shimla to Leh Motorcycling** trip. It also can be alternatively tried on the Spiti Valley, Kochi-Munnaror, Guwahati- Shillong Trail. One of the biggest events celebrating this is the 'Raid De Himalaya' starting from Shimla and all the way to Leh.

b. The next destination is Goa but not the lazy beaches and the sunshine. Goa is a host to a number of water sports adventure and the most happening thing right now is **Flyboarding**.

c. When we picture the North East, it seems quite exciting and that's where we can expect a lot of adventures. One of the most exciting adventures among the youth is **Caving** in the famous caves of Meghalaya. Nestled among the waterfalls and green forests, Meghalaya's caves will definitely enthrall the adventure lovers.

d. The old yet classy Rishikesh has become one of the favourite adventure destinations of India recently. With rafting, cliff jumping, rock climbing, rappelling, camping and many more activities at its disposal, it is the only destination in India where hard-core fans of adventure can have the adrenaline rush of **bungee jumping**.

e. Moving all the way to the south, serene and secluded Barren Island in Andaman and Nicobar Islands offer adventurous **scuba diving** experience. The crystal clear pristine waters and the view of the coral gardens and fascinating basalt formations are the best parts of this experience.

The way forward

Though the current scenario of adventure tourism looks promising, yet there is a lot of scope for development. Countries like New Zealand, Australia, and Canada are still a favorite for adventure lovers across the globe. India needs to promote and package the existing offerings and make the best use of the gifted topography and provide all adventure lovers the thrill of their lives, be it in the deserts of Rajasthan, the waters of Andaman or deep down in the North Eastern Hills.

Reference: with inputs from websites of ATOAI, Travel Triangle, Outlook Traveller, TourmyIndia.

IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN A DEVELOPING ECONOMY

Dhruva J Sharma

M.B.A 2012-14

Tourism is a noteworthy socioeconomic phenomenon of the 21st century which can be attributed mainly to rising living standards and discretionary incomes, falling real costs of travel, expansion and improvement of various transport modes, increasing amounts of free time and other factors. Countries and regions where the economy is driven by the tourism industry have become increasingly concerned with the environmental as well as the socio-cultural problems associated with unsustainable tourism.

While aggressively promoting and planning tourism, government policies should take into account the environmental, economic and socio cultural aspects of the host community as India is a developing economy. A large chunk of the demography of a developing economy is characterized by economic exclusiveness and low Human Development Index (HDI). This underprivileged section of our demography is dependent mainly on the natural resources available in the surroundings for survival. Thus they are very vulnerable to the negative impact of tourism which can result in over-exploitation of natural resources and damage to the ecosystem.

As a result, there is now an increasing agreement on the need to promote and develop sustainable tourism to minimize its environmental impact and to maximize the overall socio-economic benefits at tourist destinations. In the context of a developing economy sustainable tourism will engender a wide spectrum of socio-economic benefits.

Capacity building among local communities can generate and initiate a system that enables them to gain skills, exposure and experience for income generation through local tourism. Facilitation of entrepreneurship development programmes (EDP) to develop local entrepreneurs, mapping of the disappearing local handicrafts and artworks for better promotion etc. as well as the development of communication through Information, Education and Communication (IEC) systems will disseminate the required awareness for adopting sustainable behaviour while exploring various avenues of employment opportunities created due to tourism.

Marketing the folk culture of various communities with a garnishing of globalised socio-cultural trends will help in reviving many folk cultures of many communities that marginalized due to the onslaught of rampant westernization and thus ensuring economic benefits as well. Thus for a developing economy with a huge demography, a sustainable approach will ensure a collateral development in the socio-economic sphere and cushion the negative environmental impact.

TEZPUR - A PLACE OF RELIGIOUS IMPORTANCE

Prateek Raj Goswami

MTTM 2016-18

Tezpur is a city of antiquity and has been there since the early days of Aryan settlement in the kingdom of Pragjyotisha-Kamrupa. It is enriched with the sites of architectural, sculptural, cultural treasures with ruins in and around Tezpur that are mostly of religious importance. Following are some of the places of religious importance in and around Tezpur:

Mahavairab temple: Mahavairab temple is located on the top of a hillock and adds charm to the beautiful town of Tezpur. Devotees from all over the world visit this famous temple. Banasura, the demon king, introduced Linga worship. Mahavairab temple has the largest 'Shiva-Linga' in this world. The temple was heavily damaged by the catastrophic earthquake of 1897.

Ketakeswar Devaleya: It is one of the holiest Hindu shrines in the North-Eastern region. The entire temple is dedicated to the worship of Lord Shiva. Development and maintenance of the temple is done by a local committee. The temple has two parts—the first part comprises an area where the original Shiva Lingam was supposed to have been enshrined. The second part is the area where the Lingam is located at present.

Haleswar temple: Haleswar temple is the oldest temple built by the Mlecha king. This temple is dedicated to Shiva. A cultivator (hallowa) found a

Linga while ploughing in the field. The name Haleswar comes from hallowa. Later, the Ahom king, Rudra Singha, constructed the temple in 1705 AD.

Rudrapada temple: It is also dedicated to Lord Shiva and is said to house the foot-print of Lord Rudra. This temple is located on the banks of the river Brahmaputra. The first Rudra temple was eroded by the Brahmaputra and therefore, another temple was built by Shiva Singha in 1730 at the same site.

Bhairabi temple: This temple is dedicated to Goddess Durga. This temple is also known as Bhairabi Devalaya and Maithan. Sacrificial offerings of goats, bulls and birds are still performed on the eve of Durga Puja. The Kolia Bhumura bridge can be seen from behind the temple.

Da-Parbatia temple: The ruins of Da-Parbatia can be traced back to the 5th century. The ruins resemble the great Gupta School of Architecture. Some of the remnants of this temple have survived for 1500 years and are available for viewing at the same site which is currently under the care of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Even now, the doorway of this temple seems intact. The doorway post has two sculptures of the two goddesses - Ganga and Jamuna.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE TOURISM PROSPECTS IN NORTH EAST INDIA



Photo Source: <http://www.nelive.in/north-east/food/top-27-dishes-north-east-india>

Rekha Talukdar

MTTM 2016-18

The emerging paradigm of a modern day tourist is no longer of one who simply goes on a holiday, but one who seeks new cultural experiences and is looking for opportunities to imbibe, as much as possible, what the destination has to offer. As an important content of any destination, the role of ethnic cuisine and traditional culinary offerings are of great value. Even though cuisine has always been an important part of most travel experiences, the growing affluence of the population is having a profound impact on consumer spending which in turn has given a robust fillip to the ethnic food & beverages scenario. The Food & Beverage (F&B) business is mostly carried out by the host community as a result of which it boosts the local economy as well.

North East India has a lot to offer in this context. Each state in the North East has something special to offer to the culinary landscape of India. Most of the dishes are made of locally sourced ingredients and therefore make a wonderful change of taste to the average jaded palette.

- Khar from Assam
- Pitha from Assam
- Smoked pork from Nagaland
- Tenga Fish from Assam
- Pigeon Meat with Banana Flowers/ Koldhil Paro Manghose from Assam
- Thekera Tengar Hoite Mass from Assam
- Jadoh from Meghalaya
- Zan from Arunachal Pradesh
- Bai from Mizoram
- Thupka from Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim
- Sungat Diya Maas from Arunachal Pradesh
- Misa Mach Poora from Meghalaya
- Bamboo Shoot Fry in Meghalaya
- Egg Daal from Meghalaya
- Gyathuk from Sikkim
- Naga Pork Curry from Nagaland
- Poora Haah from Meghalaya
- Wines from Sikkim

The rich cultural heritage of the destinations embedded all over the North Eastern part of India is complemented by the equally exotic cuisine and culinary offerings. The local communities of most of the destinations are engaged in this business, though mostly in an unorganized fashion. The tourists from Commonwealth countries and European countries prefer ethnic food & cuisine and traditional beverages and could be the potential target segment. Along with the conventional exotic cuisine, this region also offers traditional alcoholic beverages. Though studies indicate a gap between the service expectations and service perception of F&B quality of the ethnic tourist spots of North East India, there is enormous room for improvements and opportunities. In this context, the media and government can play an important role. The media and celebrity chefs have tremendous influence in determining food product selection.

With the correct marketing strategies and support from the government, the rise of mainstream interest in F&B can be leveraged to transform it into a blooming business venture which will have a tangible and branding impact on both the tourists as well as the host communities. Endemic food, ethnic cuisine and traditional beverages have the potential to transform North East India into a culinary hotspot of India.

TRAVELLING : ‘THE ESSENCE OF LIFE’

Poppy Gogoi

M.B.A 2016-18

What do we need for travelling: Money or Time or Company. Well, all we need is a strong desire to travel! The strong desire to travel is so powerful that all other things are bound to work out. Travelling is the most delightful thing in this world. It gives us inner peace, a chance to appreciate the beauty of the world and most importantly, it gives us happiness and this happiness is the right of every individual on earth, irrespective of any and all barriers.

Travelling rejuvenates our mind and body. It can change our approach towards life. It makes us more independent and strong and can change us for the better. It teaches us a lot about what we are capable of and to face our fears too. One can learn to be spontaneous and adapt to new situations. Meeting new people and knowing different cultures are two of the most exciting parts of travelling. It also helps a person to become minimalistic. Material possessions become less important, which is incredibly liberating and helps to keep our lives organized, focused and refreshed. Travelling connects us with nature. One starts appreciating nature for its beauty and the precious life, which it gave us, instilling a sense and responsibility that we owe nature.

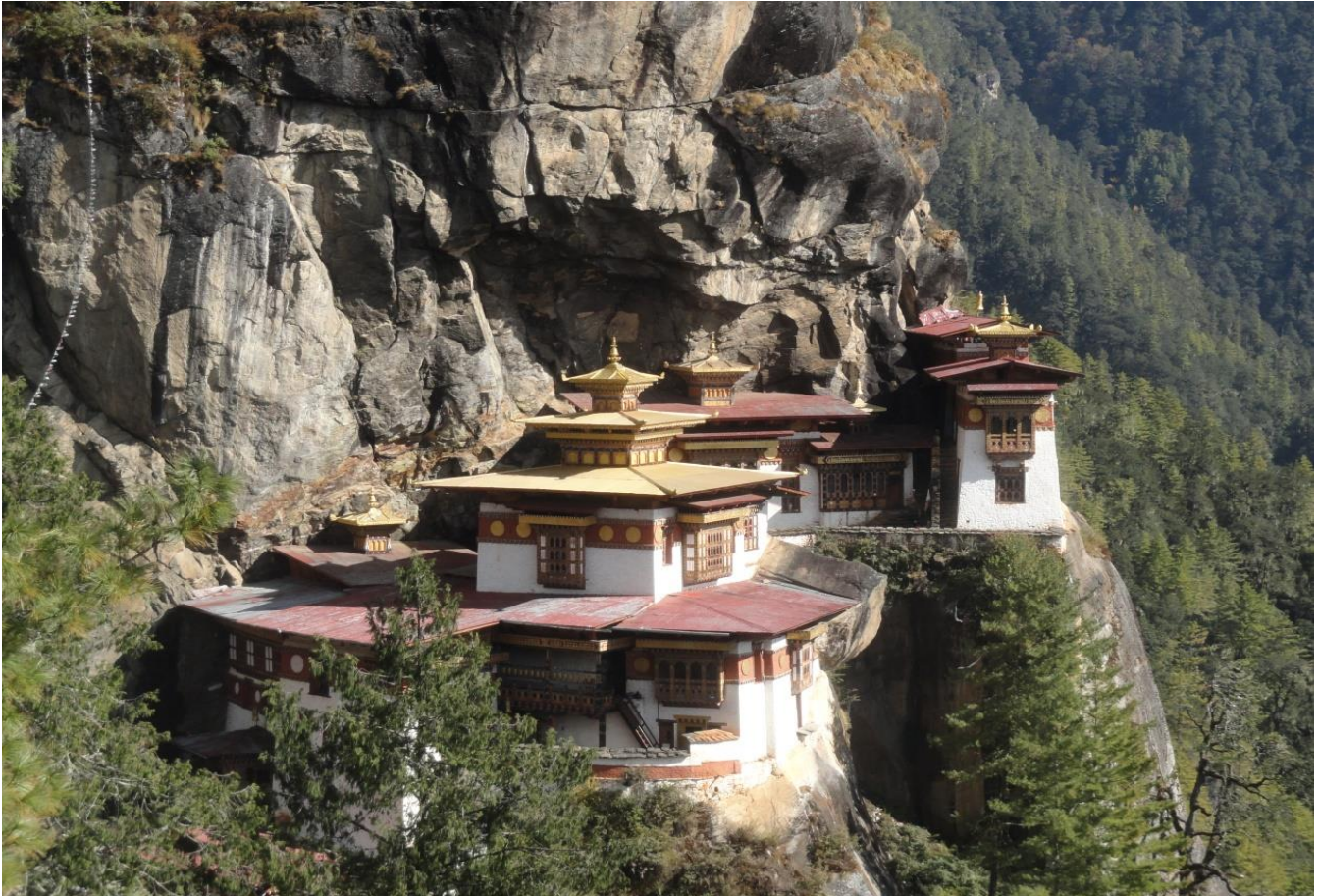
The coolest thing about travelling is that it lets you forget the hustle and bustle of a monotonous life. Travelling is a true stress buster. You learn to appreciate the good things in your life. You learn the ability to put aside your cares and simply live in the moment. The joy of life comes from the encounters we make with every new experience.

Whether you are a person with wanderlust or not, a good travel experience will always leave you mesmerized. Wherever you go, you will make memories of your adventure, which will last a lifetime. All you remember in the end are the good memories that you make. So, do not let the desire and enthusiasm to travel fade away. It is the very essence of a beautiful life.

“One’s destination is never a place but a new way of seeing things”

-Henry Miller

TIGER'S NEST MONASTERY



Bitunjal Bora
M.B.A 2015-17

Taktsang Palphug Monastery, popularly known as the **Tiger's Nest**, is a prominent Himalayan Buddhist holy site/ temple complex and is located 3120 meters above the sea level on the cliff-side of the upper Paro valley in Bhutan. A trip to Bhutan will not be complete without visiting Taktsang Monastery, a place that is affectionately regarded as an important cultural icon of the country and also as a famous tourist destination. The isolated location of the monastery is its prime uniqueness, which is accessible only by hilly paths. The sights of neighboring royal mountains and the bright green valleys make the climb to this destination an amazing relaxing experience. When anyone looks up at the monastery from the bottom of the cliff, it almost seems like an impossible to reach destination. But once we start our journey through the pine forest and start climbing up the steps, the excitement grows with every step put forward to reach the monastery because the beauty of the place seems out of this world. The whole route is decorated with prayer bannerettes, which symbolizes advancement with positive energy and protection against evil forces. It takes around 2 to 3 hours to reach the monastery and by the time we do arrive at the final destination, we are rejuvenated with the fresh air over there. The monastery is shaped in Buddhist tradition with white buildings and golden roofs. It consists of 4 main temples that are interconnected by staircases carved into rocks. The interior design of the temple is quite luxurious with a gold plated dome

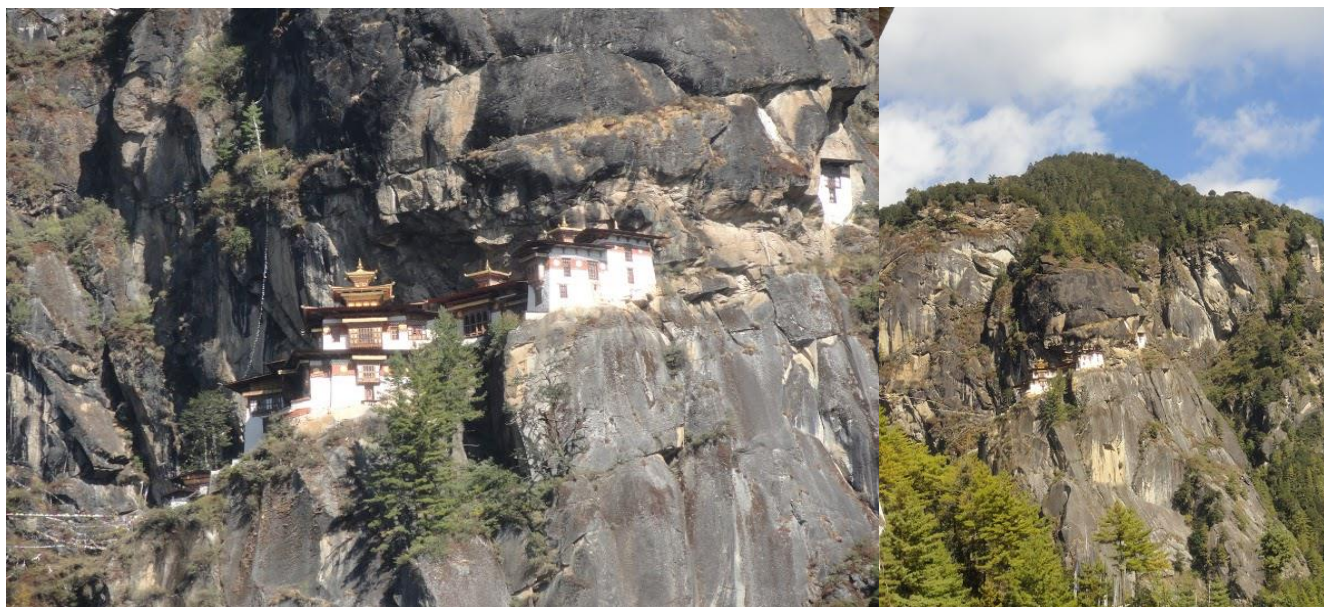
and in the hall of the thousand Buddhas, a large imposing statue of a tiger is to be found.

According to legend, this location of the monastery was chosen by a tigress and the founder of Bhutan's Buddhism "Guru Padmasambhava" was brought here by the tigress on her back. That is why this monastery is popularly known as the "**Tiger's Nest Monastery**". A temple complex was first built in 1692 around the Taktsang cave, where Guru Padmasambhava is believed to have meditated for 3 years 3 months 3 weeks 3 days and 3 hours in the 8th century. A monastery was built near the famous holy caves and it was completed at the end of the 17th century. The Paro Taktsang Monastery was almost completely burned down due to a fire in 1998 and it was again re-built to its original form by the year 2005.

How to reach:

- Paro International Airport is very close to the city of Paro
- The city is only 10 km from the parking lot of the monastery at the bottom of the cliff from where the trekking starts
- The remaining trail up to the top of the cliff is either on foot or on horseback
- Visitors can take a break in the middle of the way, where there is a cafeteria
- It takes around 2-3 hours to reach the monastery on foot
- The whole trekking path and its surrounding area is a beautiful place for taking photographs of Taktsang.

Additional Photos (taken by Bitunjal Bora):



MY TOUR OF EUROPE

Sibasish Bora

M.B.A 2016-18

There are many things a person can't get over in one's life. Of late, a trip to Europe I undertook while I was in the UK is one such thing that I would never forget. I am an ordinary Indian IT guy, currently employed with Tata Consultancy Services. The distributed nature of work in TCS needs its employees to be flexible enough to be ready to travel to the different geographies it operates in, should such a need arise. In my case, I had to be at a client location in the UK, within fifteen days after I was officially briefed about the requirement. I promptly accepted the offer and off I went to the UK for a Year (July'14 – July'15). Towards the end of my stay in the UK, I decided to embark on a trip of Europe. This was due to my long-standing desire of viewing the majestic continent in its full beauty.

Being a citizen of non-European origin, I would need a visitor visa to enter other European countries from my host country, which was the UK at that time. Again, for availing the visa, a travel itinerary was necessary. I almost decided to drop the plan, as my UK visa was about to expire and because of the underlying complexities in obtaining a visitor visa. But I decided that since I had already made up my mind, there's no turning back from this point. Being a newcomer in the UK and having very limited knowledge about how things worked in Europe, I decided to undertake the trip through a professional company, specializing in organizing conducted tours. Hence, considering all options at my disposal, I zeroed in on Star Tours.

Star Tours is an organization owned by a few Indian gentlemen originally hailing from the Indian state of Gujarat and their office is located in Wembley, London. They generally conducted tours for the Indian expat community. This meant Indian food, music, movies and interaction for the entire trip. There could not be anything better. Thus I booked Star Tours for a tour of 5 days and 4 nights and produced the travel plan to the French embassy at London, as France was supposed to be my first point of entry outside the UK. I received the visitor visa known as Schengen visa, through courier within one week of applying. It was time to pack my bags and buckle up; I was finally going to Europe. I was very excited at the prospect.

It was the 3rd of April '15; I started my journey along with other co-passengers from Wembley in London. We were flagged off and our buses left for Calais.

Day 1(3rd April'15)

London - Calais – Brussels

From Calais, we crossed the English Channel via Eurotunnel. My passport was stamped at Calais, which was our point of exit from the UK. We reached Dover in France and again my visa was checked and

the passport stamped, as it was our first point of entry. As per our travel plan, our itinerary for that day was Belgium. We started our journey towards the capital city, Brussels, on our buses which were already waiting for us at Dover. On arrival, we were served lunch. Brussels was a small city that housed the most iconic structures of Belgium. The Atomium, the famous Mannekin Pis Statue and the Grand Place at the heart of Brussels are a few of them. We stayed in a little landlocked country known as Luxembourg for the night, at a hotel arranged by Star Tours.

Day 2(4th April'15)

Black Forest - Rhine Falls – Lucerne

We started early in the morning and reached the Black Forest region in South Germany; home to the well-known Black Forest gâteau and the world famous cuckoo clocks. We enjoyed a live demonstration of how cuckoo clocks were constructed and were also given the opportunity to purchase one along with other souvenirs. Later, in the afternoon, we travelled to Switzerland and were treated to the majestic sight of the largest waterfalls in Europe, the Rhine Falls. Towards the evening, we reached Lake Lucerne; here, we viewed the Lion Monument and one of the oldest wooden bridges in the world, the Chapel Bridge. All the monuments and sites were located quite close to each other. We stayed at the hilly city of Engelberg in Switzerland for the night.

Day 3(5th April'15)

Mt.Titlis - Interlaken – Geneva

Mount Titlis was quite close to Engelberg. When we had reached the place, we were taken to a height of 10,000 feet, to the summit of Mt. Titlis, by the world's first revolving cable car: the Titlis Rotair. We enjoyed the breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding Swiss Alps. At Mt. Titlis, we found time to play in the snow and visit the ice caves as well as for a photo session in traditional Swiss costumes. After that, we departed for Interlaken where we enjoyed a little bit of shopping and scenery. The late Indian director and producer Yash Chopra is known as the ambassador of Interlaken as he made the place popular through his films. Towards the evening, we departed for Geneva to see the United Nations building and the Flower clock. We stayed in Geneva for the night.

Day 4(6th April'15)

Geneva – Paris

We departed for Paris early in the morning. On arrival, we enjoyed a cruise along the River Seine. The cruise is perfectly designed to discover and admire the rich architecture of Paris such as the Eiffel Tower, Musee d'Orsay, Notre Dame Cathedral and more. Later, we had a short orientation tour in the evening to admire the amazing architecture of Paris. We stayed for the final night of our tour in Paris.

Day 5(7th April'15)**Paris-Calais-London**

We checked out from our hotel in Paris and embarked on a journey to the top floor of the Eiffel Tower - the most famous monument in France, for which all of us were eagerly waiting. From this vantage point, we enjoyed breathtaking views of the amazing city of Paris. In the early afternoon, we drove back to Calais for the channel crossing through a ferry this time; finally bidding farewell to the group before arriving at the drop off point.

The overall trip of Europe was a hugely successful one on a personal level. I was very satisfied that I could finally make it. The memories of those five days will be treasured in my heart and will always be cherished. Europe has a lot to offer, ranging from mountains, lakes, sceneries, monuments etc. While it would be difficult to compare what one country has to offer with another, because it is a matter of personal preference; I would definitely recommend a Euro trip to every travel enthusiast. Travelling surely allows us to relax, reduce stress to a great extent and also helps to re-invent oneself. Hence, I would request those interested in exploring new places to go and see for themselves as we can never be sure what the future holds for us.

A few photographs from the trip:

(Photographs were taken from personal collection or from those available in public domain)



THE BANKS OF THE LUIT

Himashree Sarma

M.B.A 2016-18

The Luit, being one of the longest rivers in India, is ineluctably mentioned in many of the story-telling addas. People laugh, cry, live and die on the banks of the Luit. Originating from a glacier in the northern side of the Himalayas of Tibet, it drains down to the Bay of Bengal crossing Bangladesh and in its course gains affectionate pet names in different localities. I am one among the lakhs of admirers of the mighty Brahmaputra. It gives me vivid and diverse feelings every time I catch sight of it.

Among the various entrances to the river bank, let me take you to its magnetic stretch around the village of Soalkuchi, popularly known as the Silk Village of Assam and my homeland. My family and I used to visit my village once in a year during my school days. During our stay of around fifteen days, my mother took the occasion to complete all the auspicious ceremonies for our wellbeing which was generally kept pending the whole year. It was at that time, when I along with my father visited the Brahmaputra ghats to take a break from the hustle and bustle at home.

At a distance of three and a half kilometers, we reached the most amazing sight of the river. At the mouth of a hill it was an unornamented temple of goddess Kali spreading an aura of purity and soulfulness. Adjacent to the temple and beneath the lean trees, we saw the river with its lazy afternoon movements. Over it was the sun in all its majestic shiny glory. Between the temple and the

river was a narrow grassy way leading to the top of the tiny hill. The hill was revered by the locals for its past associations with saints and sadhus. We started moving along the way after having enjoyed the first glimpse of the river with a soft cool breeze blowing throughout the place. With the river following us on our right and small uneven fields along our left, we saw small boats, some idle and some with their owner on them eagerly waiting to feel a load on their fishing rods.

As we started climbing up, supported by rough steps made of gravel, we saw huge rocks painted in red and white and engraved with scriptures in Sanskrit. We saw a few priests hovering around the place, the sight making us expect another temple on top of the hill. Another few minutes of walking and we had reached a locked temple belonging to the same goddess. We came to know from the priests that the temple door remained closed throughout the year except for the great "Kali Puja" organized during Diwali. I saw the statue of the goddess behind the railing. She was beautifully carved and colored and her delicate contours gave the sense of an ethereal beauty. But she seemed trapped and sad. With a few birds chirping around, the divine aroma of incense sticks carried everywhere by the river winds, the distant tinkling of bells from the temple down the hill, and with the silence of the afternoon, we sat on a rock enjoying the view of the mighty river with a distant unclear sight of the Saraighat Bridge located in Guwahati, not far from Soalkuchi. The ghat, since then, has become a place where I visit regularly to heal my worn out soul, to rejuvenate my spirits and simply to feel

alive. Every time I go there, I find the huge rocks speak out, “Aah! You have grown up too early” and I find myself saying “And you are still the same big rock”. Then I sit there slouching and heaving out my tired breath, embraced by the wind, protected by the rock, and looked at by the statue of the goddess in the shadow, behind the shutter bars.

CULINARY TOURISM

Ananya Kumari

M.B.A 2016-18

People do not travel simply to limit their experience to adventures or sight-seeing but also for food. A good example would be the movie “Eat, pray, love” featuring Julia Roberts, where she embarks on a culinary adventure to Rome. It is also the same reason why millions flock to France to visit its beautiful vineyards. In fact, vineyard visits are so popular in France that it has given rise to the term “Wine Tourism”.

Let me start by asking how many authentic Assamese restaurants do we know in India? How about in Guwahati? Doesn't help, right? Doesn't it ever bother you that the so-called multi-cuisine restaurants of your city serve every other cuisine but Assamese or North-Eastern? Where is the problem? Well, I guess it is a lack of promotion.

Although the current scenario in metros is improving, thanks to a chosen few, but 7 years ago, there was one person who did the unthinkable and will put many of us to shame because it was a Brit named Gordon Ramsey and not any Assamese.

It was 2009 and Ramsey had landed in India to film his show “Gordon's Great Escape: India”. Cutting to the chase and talking about the time he had finished shooting for his episodes in Delhi, he landed in Kolkata to know not about Bengali cuisine but about north-eastern cuisine. Strange, right? When he was in Kolkata, he had interviewed a prominent Bengali food blogger about his views on north-eastern cuisine and the reason why it wasn't available in the rest of India. The reply confirmed the orthodox views of the rest of India about north-eastern cuisine, but Ramsey had to test it for himself to uncover the hidden gastronomic gems.

His first stop was the district of Dibrugarh in Assam near the Assam-Nagaland border from where he was escorted by a lady, who was the only English speaking person in the village, to a remote Naga village which sustained itself on hunting. It was in this village where he had his first rendezvous with spicy black pudding, which was a stark contrast to any other black puddings from the west. He also had his maiden introduction with fermented bamboo shoot, which was used to flavor the pork curry. Ramsey was amazed to find how only two spices, chilli and bamboo shoot, could flavor a dish so much, while the rest of the Indian curries used an array of spices. His next destination was the river island Majuli, where the popular Assamese chef, Atul Lahkar taught him to prepare “masortenga with elephant apple”. Not only had that, Lahkar's wife in Guwahati, where he visited next, also taught him to prepare “chicken with sesame paste”.

With this meager knowledge about Assamese food, Ramsey went on to compete with a

bunch of Assamese housewives in an ultimate cook off challenge in Guwahati where he bagged the 2nd prize by cooking the dish which Lahkar's wife had taught him. The dish that bagged the 1st prize was chicken with papaya. He then flew back to Kolkata and did the unimaginable. In the hustling and bustling streets of Kolkata, he prepared 3 Assamese dishes and served it to the passersby and the responses were overwhelming. The dishes Ramsey prepared were namely "Assamese vegetable curry with sesame paste", "Assamese fish curry with bamboo shoot" and "Assamese chicken curry with papaya", the winning dish that he lost to, in the competition. This shows what a talented chef Gordon Ramsey is and how he promoted Assamese food in a fairly unknown territory. His effort showed the world what a typical Assamese could not. These stunts not only popularize the food but also the place, as people want to explore the unknown. Assam is a tourism haven but its food is not so popular. Its khorisa, Khar, Pitika, Xaj has as much power to woo travelers as the lasagna, Pizza and bruschetta of Italy and maybe, it is time that someone did so.

MUSIC AND TRAVEL

Agastya Hiloidari

MTTM 2016-18

Travelling has been an important part of people's lives since time immemorial. Everyone is aware, to some extent, of the various reasons as to why people travel around the globe. But has anyone given a thought that music can also be one of

them? Yes, it is so. But unfortunately a lot of us have never noticed that. Music can indeed lead to wanderlust. The facts and figures are there for all to see. It has been one of the major factors that contribute to the economy of the country via inbound tourism.

There are many popular music festivals around the world. Believe it or not, but they have contributed to the economic development of the country as well as the overall development of the region. Some of the famous festivals are the Glastonbury festival, the Woodstock festival, Rock am ring, Rock in Rio etc. Each of the festivals mentioned above has contributed to a great extent in attracting tourists and developing inbound tourism in their respective regions.

Let us have a look at some of the facts associated with famous music festivals in the UK. We are going to understand why music can be an important factor in tourism by taking an example of one of the country's many famous festivals: "**THE GLASTONBURY FESTIVAL**". It is an event that attracts music lovers and some of the best musicians and artists from across the globe. The Glastonbury Festival is nearly five decades old. Ever since it was inaugurated in the year 1970, Glastonbury has been continuously growing. From the initial 1500 sold tickets in its inaugural year, its numbers have increased to 13500 in 2016. Britain has set itself the target of attracting 40 million visitors by the year 2020 and the country also hopes to earn around 31.5 billion dollars from inbound tourism. A significant number of these targets would be fulfilled by tourists flocking to events like Glastonbury. Music tourism is also

helping Britain promote their new musical talents who are not getting attention overseas. The British saw this vision and potential of music tourism a long time ago. Since then, they have been able to remain a step ahead.

This process can be used in North East India to attract tourists as well as for promoting the region's potential because of its rich musical legacy, both in traditional and western forms. There are already a few festivals from the North East that are making headlines around the country: the Ziro Festival of Music, the Hornbill festival, the Monolith Festival, the Shillong Autumn Festival and many others. Hence, if the authorities can manage to support these already existent platforms and integrate them successfully into the larger vision of tourism of North East India, it will be very helpful in attracting tourists and promoting the local culture to the world via these festivals. Globally acclaimed music artists to headline these festivals might even become a reality.

INSIGHT ON NON-CONSUMPTIVE WILDLIFE TOURISM

Paridhi Brahma

MTTM 2016-18

Non-consumptive wildlife tourism means visiting any destination to watch wild animals in their natural habitat without harming them in any way. Bird-watching, scuba-diving, wildlife video-recording and photography are some of the common forms of this type of tourism.

Non- consumptive wildlife tourism has many pros such as the many eco-lodges that develop around wildlife attractions that helps in preserving the natural and native habitats on their properties; wildlife attractions draw people of interest from both international and domestic origins leading to invisible export and direct earnings; regular flow of tourists in a wildlife destination in a sustainable manner helps in giving proper attention to its security and management. In small sized wildlife destinations, the flow of tourists also helps in keeping poachers at bay; the local people around such tourist attractions get ample scope to initiate tourism related livelihood which raise their living standards that then leads to flow of goods and services that ultimately adds to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Generous donations from wildlife tourism contributes to monetary assistance for doing in-situ conservation activities, tourists from nearby places and locals develop a sense of ownership and better understanding of their natural heritage.

Though non- consumptive wildlife tourism doesn't involve catching and/or killing of wildlife, it has some bad impacts on the ecosystem when done unsustainably. Some developing nations where this form of tourism has grown in recent days has led to exponential growth of accommodation facilities such as hotels, resorts, eco- lodges etc. in the buffer zones in an unsustainable way. Such activities leads to destruction of forest resources, for instance cutting down of trees for the construction of buildings and roads cause habitat fragmentation of different species of birds and animals, blockage of animal migration corridors and migratory bird

flyways respectively, to habitat abandonment, to energy depletion i.e. consumption of energy in fleeing than feeding, unsustainable safaris leads to traffic situations in such destinations that gives birth to hazardous situations for both man and wildlife; unregulated non-consumptive wildlife tourism in an area leads to disruption in mating and breeding patterns of wildlife species; parent and offspring bonding may also get affected by such tourism due to regular interaction with the tourists or their portable equipments; it can also decrease the gap of man-animal relationship as decided by nature, making the offspring vulnerable to future threats from poachers; frequent sighting of vulnerable species may make them unnaturally prone to predators and on the other hand predators may lose their prey due to the disturbance; the competitive behaviour of man has led to exploration of sensitive ecosystems in search of new species of floral and faunal diversity disrupting natural habitats, secluded nesting grounds of birds and animals etc. in the process.

It is clear from the above discussion that wildlife tourism as a whole when done sustainably can help in developing a destination and its surrounding effectively and efficiently but when done unsustainably can cause drastic impacts on the same leading to loss of potential tourism attractions. Moreover we have to do SWOT analysis of the destination on a global basis to be successful as this form of tourism is nature based and nature is facing threats of different magnitudes and dimensions starting from localized destruction in the form of poaching, logging, environment loss etc. to global warming which can cause extinction

of species, submergence of species habitats, and may even lead to shifting of suitable habitats of wildlife further northward and southward of the Equator in the days to come. There are many things to explore, know and learn for man on this planet but the thing is, it must be done productively, professionally and sustainably for which this is the time to act because..

“The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it” – Robert Swan OBE

Reference-Ramesh Chawla, “Wildlife Tourism and Development”, 2006

NATURAL JOURNEY

Anupam Chetry

MBA 2015-17

Having the thought
to reach you someday,
O beauty! Never ever I
wished it to be the day.
Bow to nature, for the kind
to make it success with your presence,
Thanks JOURNEY! To make it realize
how great is the essence.

WORLD TOURISM DAY THEMES (1980 - 2016)

- 1980 - "Tourism's contribution to the preservation of cultural heritage and to peace and mutual understanding".
- 1981 - "Tourism and the quality of life".
- 1982 - "Pride in travel: good guests and good hosts".
- 1983 - "Travel and holidays are a right but also a responsibility for all".
- 1984 - "Tourism for international understanding, peace and cooperation".
- 1985 - "Youth Tourism: cultural and historical heritage for peace and friendship".
- 1986 - "Tourism: a vital force for world peace".
- 1987 - "Tourism for development".
- 1988 - "Tourism: education for all".
- 1989 - "The free movement of tourists creates one world".
- 1990 - "Tourism: an unrecognized industry, a service to be released".
- 1991 - "Communication, information and education: powerlines of tourism development".
- 1992 - "Tourism: a factor of growing social and economic solidarity and of encounter between people".
- 1993 - "Tourism development and environmental protection: towards a lasting harmony".
- 1994 - "Quality staff, quality tourism".
- 1995 - "WTO: serving world tourism for twenty years".
- 1996 - "Tourism: a factor of tolerance and peace".
- 1997 - "Tourism: a leading activity of the twenty-first century for job creation and environmental protection".
- 1998 - "Public-private sector partnership: the key to tourism development and promotion".
- 1999 - "Tourism: preserving world heritage for the new millennium".
- 2000 - "Technology and nature: two challenges for tourism at the dawn of the twenty-first century".
- 2001 - "Tourism: a toll for peace and dialogue among civilizations".
- 2002 - "Ecotourism, the key to sustainable development".
- 2003 - "Tourism: a driving force for poverty alleviation, job creation and social harmony".
- 2004 - "Sport and tourism: two living forces for mutual understanding, culture and the development of societies".
- 2005 - "Travel and transport: from imaginary of Jules Verne to the reality of the 21st century".
- 2006 - "Tourism Enriches".
- 2007 - "Tourism opens doors for women".
- 2008 - "Tourism responding to the Challenge of Climate Change and global warming".
- 2009 - "Tourism – Celebrating Diversity".
- 2010 - "Tourism & Biodiversity".
- 2011 - "Tourism Linking Cultures".
- 2012 - "Tourism and Energetic Sustainability".
- 2013 - "Tourism and Water: Protecting our Common Future".
- 2014 - "Tourism and Community Development".
- 2015 - "Millions of tourists, millions of opportunities".
- 2016 - "Tourism for All – promoting universal accessibility".

