

2018

# Uttarakhand World Tourism Day

Tourism and the Digital Transformation

Department Of Business Administration  
Tezpur University

## **FOREWORD**



**DR. PAPORI BARUAH  
PROFESSOR AND HEAD  
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
TEZPUR UNIVERSITY**

It is indeed great to know that like the previous years, the Department of Business Administration of Tezpur University has come up with this special issue of ‘Uttaran’ on the occasion of World Tourism Day, 2018. ‘Uttaran’ is an e-magazine aimed at reaching a wide spectrum of readers. It is published periodically in electronic form by the students of the Department of Business Administration. Contributed by students, faculty and experts, this issue has attempted to bring to the fore certain insights on Tourism. I appreciate the team work behind this endeavour, and congratulate the students and faculty mentors for bringing out the e-magazine at an appropriate time. We hope to see more issues of this magazine each year. I am sure that ‘Uttaran’ will be well accepted by the readers. The experience behind creating it must have helped the students to hone their skills and develop a better perspective for future.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Baruah".

PaporriBaruah

## **FOREWORD**



**DR. MRINMOY KUMAR SARMA**

**PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**DIRECTOR, TEACHING LEARNING CENTRE**

**COORDINATOR, MTTM PROGRAMME**

**TEZPUR UNIVERSITY**

The Master of Tourism and Travel Management (MTTM) programme, which started from 2015, is an upgrade of the very successful programme- Post Graduate Diploma in Tourism Management (PGDTM) that was offered by the Department of Business Administration from 2002. Back then the entire Northeast India did not have any tourism related courses, and sensing the immense potential of the sector the University decided to embark into the pioneering effort.

Digitisation is the mainstream of the courses run in the Department of Business Administration, and in MTTM programme also due emphasis is given on understanding and implementing the digitisation strategies in management of tourism. We are much delighted to note that this year's Theme of the World Tourism Day is "Tourism and Digital Transformation" is matching with our efforts.

I join the world in wishing all stakeholders a very happy and successful World Tourism Day!

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### **FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK**

On the occasion of World Tourism Day, 2018, our team is happy to present yet another edition of the e-magazine, UTTARAN, just like the previous years.

World Tourism Day has been celebrated since 1980 on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September. Official celebrations of World Tourism Day, 2018, will take place in Budapest, Hungary and the main focus will be on “TOURISM AND THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION”. The vision of the Secretary General, Zurab Pololikashvili on digital tourism and innovation is to create an ecosystem of government policies, funds and projects that nurture disruptive ideas and entrepreneurship.

The articles of this edition are as fresh as the morning we wake up to everyday. It covers informative content along with poems and travel memoirs. The 2018 issue comes with bigger and better insights on the theme and it is something worth your time. All the readers are therefore requested to go through this version of “Uttaran” and give their valuable feedbacks at [uttaran@tezu.ernet.in](mailto:uttaran@tezu.ernet.in).

This edition is a combined result of the efforts of both the senior as well as the junior batches of the MTTM and the MBA programme. Within a short span of time their charismatic effort and selfless contribution made this issue possible. I would like to thank all the faculty of Business Administration for their support and guidance. I would also like to thank each and everyone for their inputs and their attitude towards welcoming it. Before the final nail to the coffin is placed, I thank the editorial team for all the effort they put in.

- Angshumi Goswami,  
Editor

### **OFFICIAL MESSAGES**

#### **MESSAGE ON WORLD TOURISM DAY FROM UNWTO SECRETARY - GENERAL**



**ZURAB POLOLIKASHVILI**

This year, World Tourism Day highlights the need for investment in disruptive digital technologies that can help foster an environment for innovation and entrepreneurship in tourism.

We live in an increasingly connected and interdependent world with digital advances transforming how we inform ourselves, transforming our behaviour, and encouraging innovation. We need not only new tools but also new capacities and ways of thinking. So across the United Nations family we are designing innovative projects, initiatives and partnerships.

The sheer size of global tourism and its impact on many other sectors, and all of the Sustainable Development Goals, puts it at the forefront of social responsibility, which today goes hand-in-hand with innovation on all levels.

Harnessing innovation and digital advances provides tourism with opportunities to improve inclusiveness, local community empowerment and efficient resource management, amongst other objectives within the wider sustainable development agenda. The digital transformation is about providing benefits to all, and we are making sure that tourism contributes to this global commitment.

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### **MESSAGE ON WORLD TOURISM DAY FROM UN SECRETARY-GENERAL**



**ANTONIO GUTIERRES**

The wide reach of tourism into many sectors, from infrastructure and energy to transport and sanitation, and its huge impact on job creation, make it a vital contributor to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At the same time, tourism plays a pivotal role in advancing cultural understanding and bringing people together.

Yet tourism needs innovation in technology to realize its potential contributions. Its benefits need to flow to host communities. Governments can help to connect startups with investors to facilitate innovation, entrepreneurship, employment and a truly inclusive tourism sector.

Digital technologies have brought positive momentum to societies and economies around the world. They have connected us on a global level, helped to empower the most vulnerable and become our crucial allies for sustainable development. Our challenge is to continue harnessing this power for good while safeguarding against the risks.

On World Tourism Day, I call on governments to support digital technologies that can transform the way we travel, reduce the ecological burden of tourism and bring the benefits of tourism to all.

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### **MESSAGE ON WORLD TOURISM DAY FROM HOST COUNTRY - HUNGARY**



**ZOLTÁN GULLER**

For me and for the whole Hungarian tourism industry it is a great honour that, on 27 September, Hungary and our wonderful capital, Budapest, will host events of World Tourism Day. We are especially happy to have the opportunity to show UNWTO the Hungarian hospitality and the development that has helped both Hungary and Budapest to increase their visibility on the tourism map of the world and allows us today to refer to Budapest as the ‘Spice of Europe.’

Travellers today wish to spend their time differently to the way they did in the past, seeking out experiences rather than just places, while digitalization has transformed the decision making processes of travel just as the opportunities for tourism marketing. That is why it is of great significance that the theme of World Tourism Day is ‘Tourism and the Digital Transformation’. We believe that the transformation of the world, alongside its challenges, also provides new opportunities and that the sector must put the changes and the accompanying trends and digital development to its own service. Every day now in all areas of our lives, tourism included, we see and use technologies of which, only a couple of decades ago, we could barely have dreamed.

The Hungarian Tourism Agency prepared its ‘National Tourism Development Strategy 2030’ document in the spirit of long term strategic thinking, to provide a yardstick for every participant in the sector over the coming decade and a half. Digitalization and sustainable tourism form outstandingly important parts of the Strategy, therefore we can be seen to be preparing for the challenges of the upcoming decades.

On behalf of the Hungarian Tourism Agency, I would like to express my gratitude to UNWTO for granting Hungary the opportunity to host this year’s World Tourism Day and that, in Budapest, arm-in-arm with the experts of the tourism profession, we will be able to highlight the challenges and opportunities of digital development.



Photo credit: Madhurima Mukherjee

## TRANSITION FROM PHYSICAL TO DIGITAL-

## AN INEXORABLE REALITY FOR TOURISM INDUSTRY

Written by:

**Prayash Baruah,**  
**Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration,**  
**Tezpur University**

*On a breezy wintry morning while sitting in his cozy office desk in a Manhattan highrise, Dr. Dawson, a seasoned archaeologist, takes a sip from his freshly brewed black coffee and ponders about his next tryst with archaeological marvels across the globe. The sunrays meandering through his office create a lustful hue of colors and incidentally the rays seem to bounce from the shining chandelier to a globe placed on his table. The shining spot on the globe seems to spellbind Dr. Dawson's attention and he tries to concentrate on the bright spot— 'Hallelujah! He sees the Indian subcontinent of forts, temples and ancient universities'. Undoubtedly, the mystical land of India is an archaeologists' delight and more so for someone from the far west. Immediately, Alexa is summoned for information and the projector in the room beams up with an interactive website of*

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*Incredible India. An interactive image of a lady in traditional Indian Attire with her hands joined in a ‘Namaste’ welcomes Dr. Dawson and soon after, the cookie and content filtering based chatbot pops in with a question ‘Welcome to India Sir! How may I help you?’. Based on his browsing history and preference, the AI powered interactive India Tourism website provides the archaeologist a custom backdrop of the mighty Kumbhalgarh Fort flanked by the Aravalli Hills. The inquisitive Dr. Dawson clicks on a link ‘virtual tour’ and it opens to a series of options among which he selects ‘archaeological sites’. Soon after, he becomes engrossed taking virtual 360° tours of the famous Indian forts, palaces and temples while sitting thousands of miles away in Manhattan. The virtual tours seem to have a profound impact and he immediately navigates to the ‘Plan Tour’ section where an AI based Chatbot records his requirements, processes the same in an optimization engine to provide him with alternatives of best fit itineraries. The results page also has redirecting links connecting him with Travel desk for flight tickets and local cab, Hospitality Desk for hotel bookings, Consulate desk for e-VISA, Exchange Desk for Indian currency, Travel Smart Card Desk and so on. Dr. Dawson selects an itinerary spanning major archaeological sites, books the best available flight tickets and cab services, applies for an e-VISA and loads Indian currency onto his Travel Smart Card using his e-Wallet. An avid archaeologist Dr. Dawson prefers homestays and using the India Tourism mobile application, he browses through the various listed and certified homestays near the archaeological sites, reads the location based traveler reviews, checks out the facilities using the virtual tour option and does quick bookings using the QR code of his Travel Smart Card. Almost immediately, the mobile application dashboard uploads travel advisories and estimated weather conditions based on his itinerary dates. Even before finishing his customary cup of black coffee, Dr. Dawson is ready with all the preliminary bookings for his maiden expedition to the Indian Subcontinent. The stamped e-VISA arrives by evening and he is ready to board the next day early morning Jet to India. Just after checking in at the JFK International Airport, based on the GPS location, the Incredible India mobile application updates him with the Cab-Chauffeur details expected to pick him up at Delhi International Airport. To his delight, the mobile app even prompts him with food eatery options along Delhi Jaipur route based on his food preferences. While waiting in the security hold area for boarding announcement, he decides to get entry tickets for next day’s visit to Kumbhalgarh Fort and the same gets loaded on his Travel Card. With the interactive mobile app as his cabin companion and the QR code embedded travel card as his facilitator, Mr. Dawson finally boards his flight to experience the appealing visuals as seen in the virtual tour.*

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Although the above narrative seems to be right out of an Issac Asimov plot, this piece of fiction is soon to become a reality in the coming years. Businesses worldwide have seen pathbreaking innovations and interventions powered by the quantum leaps in science and technology. Industries are beginning to rethink the way they carried out businesses and the present focus is on shifting from the physical to the digital world. The tourism industry is no exception, and, in this regard, the startup revolution is taking giant leaps in catalyzing the transformation process. In the Indian context as well, there has been a spurt in the tech-based startups offering digital solutions for the tourism industry. According to a recent BW Business World survey, India is expected to move up five spots to be ranked among the top five business travel markets globally by 2030. The enormous potential for growth must essentially be supported by technology and tourism infrastructure. An easily accessible integration platform connecting all travel facilitators/partners with the tourists will become a bare necessity in the coming years. Virtual reality solutions, QR code-based information display, secure digital wallets, personalized navigation applications and customized services are very soon going to be order of the day. However, all these technologies must be integrated using IoT and the customer must be able to seamlessly enjoy the services as a complete package. *Would Dr. Dawson be interested if he had to open up individual websites/portals for accessing each facility?* Definitely, it would have been a major turn-off.

Given the right investments, the proper conditioning and an ambient environment, the tourism sector is undoubtedly going to be a major contributor in the nation's economy for the coming years. In the context of appification and gamification, there is bound to be a significant increase in the requirement of technologists, domain specialists and consultants for the tourism sector and this is already beginning to reflect in terms of increased talent hiring for hospitality and traveltech-based startups. Individuals with a blend of tourism expertise and technological skills are expected to be in high demand during this turbulence of change- the transition from the physical to the digital world.

However, since the tourism industry is based on the fundamental pillars of the real life 'touch and feel' and personal experiences, a poignant question arises in my mind as reflected in the following quote.

*"I see my path, but I don't know where it leads. Not knowing where I'm going is what inspires me to travel it."*- Rosalia de Castro

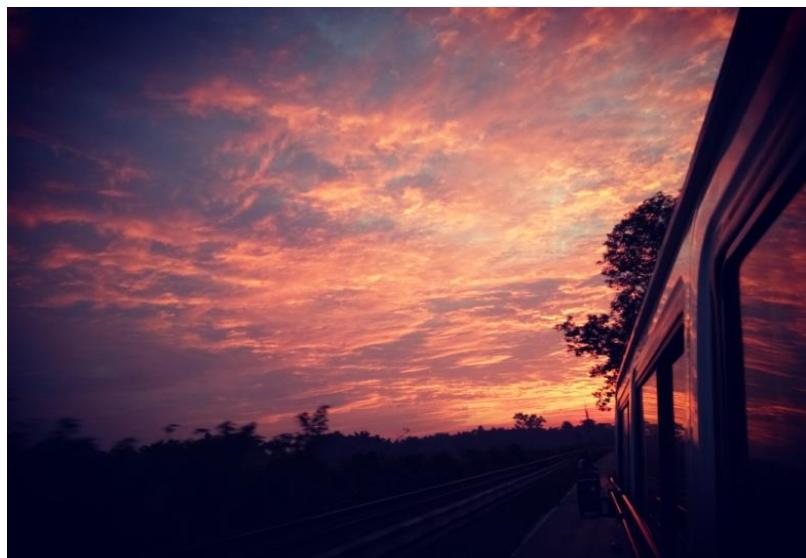


Photo credit: HimadriKonwar

## REMINISCING THE TASTE OF THE OLD CITY

Written by:

**Ashifuddin Ahmed Saikia  
Research Scholar, Dept. of Business Administration,  
Tezpur University**

Swarms of people. Hordes of flocking peddlers and roadside vendors. Crowds moving briskly. Some having their morning cup of Chai at the local tea shops and some eating dosas and idlis at the road side bandis (stalls). Buzzing sounds of heavy traffic. Big buses, lots of them. The auto rickshaw drivers competing among themselves to pull customers. Railway security guards, shouting and whistling, trying to manage the hive of vehicles and the constant footfalls. I could smell the stench of the morning heat and the

sweats of the people. That's how I remember my first day in the city as I came out of the Secunderabad station.

I saw the popular Alpha House adjacent to the station. A bakery and restaurant, it is a name out there and everyone knows about it but I came to know it only after a while. In my next few years I came to know a lot about the city, about Hyderabad. The old city of Nizams to the new modern Cyberabad, the city does give you a lingering feeling of its colourful

history. The aura of the place has still not faded away among the tall buildings, large roads and the infinite city lights. It is still there, reminiscent of its rich glory and heritage. The city is an industrial and I.T. hub. It even has an area called Hytec City. It has numerous malls and multiplexes. It has one of the best airports in the country. A big film industry continuously churning crowd-pullers that inspire even Bollywood movies. It has one of the largest housing boards in Asia. Also known as the city of pearls and the genome valley of India, it is one of the largest contributor to the GDP of the nation. And despite all that, the old charm and splendour of the Charminar, the QutubShahi Tombs, the Golconda Fort, the Chowmahalla Palace, Salar Jung Museum, Mecca Masjid and so many others still carry the image and grandeur of the place. The impressive architecture of India's Islamic era continues to loom over the urban city.

However, Hyderabad is famous for one more thing, something that made me fall in love with the city. Something that will always keep calling me back. It is its food. Yes, nothing can beat the rich flavours that it offers to food lovers like me. Hyderabadi cuisine is something that talks for itself. It is an experience that you will savour all your life. A striking fusion of Nizam's era of delicacies

with the spicy Andhra style of cooking has created some of India's most mouth-watering dishes of all time.

The most popular dish that one will encounter in Hyderabad is the Hyderabadi Biryani. With its unique aroma and flavour, it is unlike all other kinds of biryani found elsewhere in the country. Served with raita and mirchikasalan and garnished with pudina and ghee fried onions and topped with boiled eggs, you get this beautiful bowl of basmati rice hiding the layer of soft and finely cooked meat beneath it. And you can literally smell the dish from quite a distance. I had my first biryani in Paradise Restaurant, one of the best in Hyderabad with many branches. I ended up trying so many places afterwards. The Bawarchi in Baghlingampally, to Shah Ghousé café near Tollichowki, Alpha house, Hotel Shadab, and so many others. Wherever you go, you will be served with biryanis that you will remember for lifetime. Biryani comes in many varieties, like chicken biryani, mutton biryani, kalyani biryani (beef), keema biryani, prawn biryani and so on. Another form of biryani is the dum biryani where the meat is marinated and cooked on slow flame along with the rice. Biryani is equally popular among vegetarians also. The veg version of biryani also known as tehari or tahariis served at almost all the restaurants now a days.

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But biryani is not the only unique thing that you will love to eat there. There are tons of food options that you may try while in the city. One such dish is the haleem. If you are lucky enough to visit Hyderabad during the Ramadan season, you will find the streets filled with vendors, from major outlets like Paradise and Pista House to small hotels, selling this delicious paste like dish which is made from chicken and various pulses or cereals slowly cooked the whole day with lots of ghee and spices which makes it very rich and filling. It is so popular that it is exported outside the country as well. It is basically an Arabian dish and is sold only during the auspicious month of Ramadan. However, there may be few places which serve haleem in other times of the year. Biryani and haleem is also a must serve if you are attending any Hyderabadi Muslim's marriage. There you can forget the western style buffet or dishes that is now so popular in our so called modern society. They take pride in their own dishes. I have had the good privilege of attending quite a few Hyderabadi feasts and I was never disappointed.

Apart from these two, I got to try many vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes ranging from Kebabs to Khormas, Paya to Talawagosht, Keemas to Tandoor items, Roomalirotis to Shawarmas etc. Idli, dosas,

upmas etc. will become your regular breakfast meals and they are so cheap and healthy and are almost always available. Do try the Irani chai out there. A little sweeter but it goes well with the Osmania biscuit. Just go to any local chai shop or café and give it a try. You could also try it with the mirchibhajjis or bondas or wadas in the evenings while hanging out for a light snacks. Karachi Bakery, which is one of the most popular bakeries in India, is a good place to visit. You can buy from the various kind of biscuits and other products in offer for your journey back home. They could be very good gifts for your friends or relatives. The products are nicely packed and are convenient for long journeys too. My personal favourite is the fruit biscuit but now-a-days you can find various combo packs also.

There is a very famous roadside stall at Nampally called Ram ki Bandi serving various kinds of dosas from butter dosas and paneer dosas to even pizza dosas. The stall is opened only between 3 am to 8 am. Despite the odd timing, the people still come in numbers to try its food. The stall is a great example of success through word of mouth publicity. Now the owner has also started a restaurant in Banjara Hills, one of the posh areas of Hyderabad. But the bandi is still there where he continues to serve dosas to his customers after midnight.

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One thing I found is that the Hyderabadi people are fond of spicy foods. Being an Assamese, too much spices and red chilly was not part of my food habit. Although, we do eat our share of hot dishes and we do have our Raja Chilly to give them complex, adjusting to the super spicy food there in the south Indian weather took me some time. People from North-East will definitely relate with me on that part. In the first few months, while visiting restaurants, I would always request for adjusting the spice level in my food and the waiter would always nod with agreement. But never did I end up with a less spicy plate. I always felt that my request seem odd or funny to them. Maybe they don't themselves realise that their food is a bit heavy on the spice department. But instead of speculating about all the reasons that could be, I just stopped requesting eventually for convenience sake. Later I realised that the reason they acquired their spicy taste is because of the temperature in that part of the country. Eating spicy and tangy food helps the people to acclimatise with the excessively hot weather. They do compliment their meals with curd, if that gives you some sort of relief. I remember the curd-rice there which is a south Indian dish that I don't know how they prepare but it's so different and so good that I had almost forgotten our Assamese doi-bhat.

As much surprised as I was with the spicy generosity, I was as surprised to find the sweeter side of Hyderabadi cuisine. If you have a sweet tooth and if you are weak towards desserts and sweet dishes, you wouldn't be disappointed at all. Popular ones are Double kaMeetha (also known as shahitukda), KhubanikaMeetha, Kaddu Kheer, Sheer Khurma, Ariselu, and Pollelu etc. Double kaMeetha is a kind of Indian pudding made with fried bread, ghee, milk and dry fruits while KhubanikaMeetha is made with apricots, almond and malai or cream. Ariselu and pollelu are south Indian sweet dishes popular during festivals, something like our Assamese pitha during Bihu seasons. Not to forget Pootharekulu, popularly known as paper sweet, which is a wafer like sweet stuffed with finely powdered jaggery, sugar or dry fruits. It is surprisingly delicious. My favourite is the Kaddukheer, especially when served cold. And last but not the least, it would be an injustice if I don't mention Falooda? A dessert or a drink, it is futile to argue, but this colourful sweet refreshing and cool dish made with sabja/basil seeds, milk, rose syrup, vermicelli noodles, ice cream and dry fruits is a feast in itself with every bite tasting new and sinfully delicious. There are multiple versions of it and each one is perfect in its own way.

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I hope I could present a good picture of Hyderabadi food. This is by no means a complete list as there would be so many other dishes to try. But I think this will at least serve as a good reference if you travel to the old city of the Nizams for the first time. Travelling is something everyone loves. But for me, going to new places also brings in the desire to eat new foods. Trying out new food is an adventure in itself and I make sure to experiment whenever I travel. Food travellers like me aren't rare. We are all travellers in our own way. If you make sure to eat well while you travel or even if you just travel in your

own town or nearby places searching for the best places to eat, you are still a food traveller. Food tourism is now a genre in itself. In fact, it has great potential to boost the tourism and hospitality industry. Knowing the taste of the local people is also one way of knowing their culture and their history. A big part of their identity is in what they make and how they make it, whether it is food or anything else. So, probably the next time you visit a new place, you might just want to try connecting to its culture through its flavour... if at all you have the stomach for it. Bon appetit.

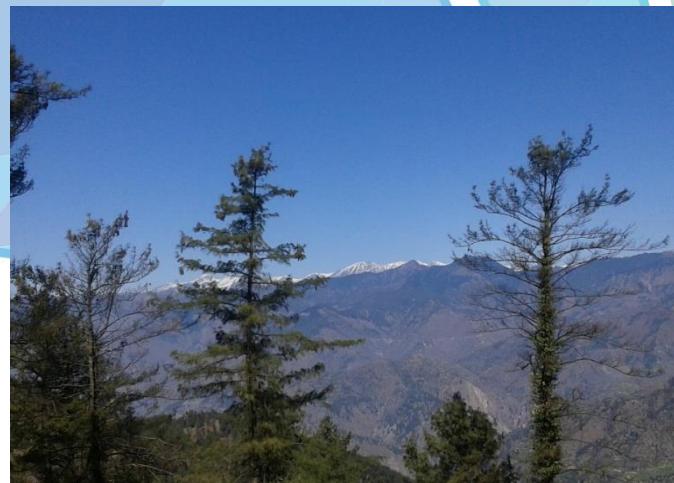


Photo credit:PlabanaMahanta

## **VOLUNTOURISM: A GOOD DEED WITH SIDE-EFFECTS?**

Written by:

**Madhurjya Sarma  
1<sup>st</sup> semester, MTTM  
Dept. of Business Administration**

Globalization and subsequent digitalization has not only made the World a large joint family but also is able to make people aware about certain social and environmental issues. People's generosity and curiosity to make difference by solving these issues across the world has paved a way for a unique type of tourism prospect known to the world as Volunteer tourism or Voluntourism. Voluntourism is a growing tourism trend and most of these volunteers dedicate their energy on projects abroad especially in developing countries of Asia and Africa which includes teaching in schools, building sustainable housing, help in understanding digital transformation, i.e. computer education, raising awareness of different social issues, working in the orphanages, environmental awareness and much more.

Voluntourism is now promoted by many organizations and countries as a mean to experience values and personal satisfaction creating ethos in a certain destination beneficial for the host and tourist as a whole. These include organizations such as UNICEF, CARE international, World vision with intention of mainly attracting voluntourists from Western countries.

According to the UN Volunteers,

*"People the world over engage in for a great variety of reasons: to help to eliminate poverty and to improve basic health and education, to tackle environmental issues, to reduce the risk of disasters or to combat social exclusion and violent conflict. In all of these fields, it makes a specific contribution by generating well-being for people and their communities."*

On the positive side, Voluntourism has the ability to change the social and economic status of destination through participation of the world in variety of aspects. It creates a bond of Universal brotherhood among the locals and tourist through raising awareness and solving issues that has been gripping the society over long period of time. Also, the money spent by the voluntourists in a destination has the ability to create a multiplier effect for overall good of the economy itself.

But, in recent years many criticism from different backgrounds has come in the way of this new trend in tourism mainly due to its negative effects or side effects. These effects often create ruckus in the sustainability of a destination. The negative aspect includes,

- Inexperience of volunteers without proper skillset to achieve certain tasks run the risk of creating improper and unstable structures costing further loss of time, money or energy to the society.
- The Voluntourism destinations are promoted in such way that creates a vague and false impression about the issues contributing to ethical negativity. Sometimes these opportunities just remain as a photo-ops rather than proper work.
- Most of the times, the programs are designed in such a way that leads to the superficial engagement of the voluntourists than actually doing something to root cause of such issues.
- Short term engagement of Voluntourists leaves the projects vulnerable without any supervision in future. As a result, the community might be unintentionally exploited.
- Sometimes voluntourists with their engagement in different projects might actually put the local population out work creating an unintentional disruption of the local economy.

Overall if we look at the possibility of Volunteer tourism, it has the potential to create a sustainable industry or society with people from diverse backgrounds coming together contributing significantly to the local economy through tourism. At the same time, creating a balance between the positive and negative aspect is necessary for the growth of Voluntourism as a significant part of the tourism industry. Only time will tell if it is a trend with good deed or just side-effects?

### References:

- <http://theconversation.com/volunteer-tourism-whats-wrong-with-it-and-how-it-can-be-changed-86701>
- <http://www.unv.org>



Photo credit: Madhurima Mukherjee

### **TOURISM AND ITS IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY**

Written by:

**Arunjyoti Das**  
1<sup>st</sup> semester, MBA  
**Dept. of Business Administration**

“Inclusive growth and ensuring a future with quality jobs are the concerns of Government everywhere. Travel & Tourism, which supports one in every ten jobs on the planet, is a dynamic engine of employment opportunity”. These are the lines quoted by Gloria Guevara Manzo, President & CEO, World Travel & Tourism Council.

Tourism is a business which provides its services to the tourists. Tourism encompasses many businesses like airlines, hotel, entertainment, food & beverages, hospital, railways, school etc. A Tourist may visit a country for various purposes like to see their culture, to take medical help, to educate themselves and to refreshment purposes. Tourism can be a very important tool for a country or a state, regarding revenue generation or for overall development of the country or the state.

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Tourism has contributed for the development of many countries like Switzerland, France and Thailand etc.

Tourism contributes around 9.4% of GDP including direct and indirect contribution as per “World Travel & Tourism Council” (WTTC) reports. Tourism is one of the fastest growing sub-sector under service sectors of our economy. The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was INR 15,239.6 BN (9.4% of GDP) in 2017 and is expected to grow by 7.5% to INR 16,386.5 BN (9.4% of GDP) in 2018, as per WTTC reports.

Tourism also contributes for the employment generation in the economy. Tourism has created jobs in the lines of Travel agents, Hotels, Railways, Airlines, etc. A country like India where there is a huge population falling under working age group, tourism can here play a major role in moving the economy for better future. As per Times of India nearly 31 Million Indian's are jobless. This shows the unutilized working force our economy. A report by Indian Industry body FICCI and services firm KPMG said that Travel & Tourism sectors together generated 25.9 Million Jobs in 2017. It can infer that tourism can be a game changer for our Indian economy.

Tourism also helps in increasing the Foreign Exchange resources of our economy. A report by Economic Survey 2018 said that Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE) from tourism grew to 27.7 Billion Dollar in 2017. In today's competitive environment where China is taking every needed step to remain as a leader in our sub-continent area , the importance of foreign exchange earnings cannot be neglected.

Tourism can also help Assam to be one of the major states which contribute to the development of the economy. All the Seven Sisters of the North-East can be developed through tourism as all these states are rich in flora & fauna, tourist sites like early centuries temples etc.. Moreover, Government is working in the development of the North-Eastern States through policies like “Look East Policy”, the main aim of which is to have a good relationship with the South-East Asian Nations. Therefore, this is a great time for tourism industry in the North-Eastern States to help the country in having good relation with these nations.

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Although, tourism has greatly contributed for the development of our nation, many events are being seen where tourists are treated badly in our respected country. Though India is rich in flora and fauna and many other tourist destinations, still it is ranked around 25 in the world's most visited nations. Many tourists have reported of being cheated or harassed by the tourist agents or by the local people of our country. Tourists in our country have faced problems of inadequate infrastructural facilities like poor roads, low quality services in hotels, buses, hospitals etc.. Tourists are being targeted and charged at very high rates for even a nominal service or a small value good. Many have also complained about the lengthy procedures or the time taking process of issuing VISA of India.

At this juncture, two quotes of Sanskrit are coming to my mind, “AtithiDevoBhava” and VasudhaivaKutumbakam”. The first one means “The host always receive their guests with full honour” and the second one means “the world is one family”. Tourism is not just about earning income from tourists but also include cultural exchange, behaviour exchange etc.. Tourism industry has the potential of giving ample returns, if Government and the businesses involved in it increase their efforts in it, by improving transportation hospitality and other related services. Travel agents are needed to be better trained in an organized manner, so that they come to know how to deal with the tourists in a better manner. VISA process is needed to be become more faster, as it will drive more tourists to India. Also, awareness programmes are to be launched both through media and face-to-face channels so as to teach the locals about the way one should look at a woman or how to deal with them, and the manner in which one should deal with every tourist.



Photo credit: Satabdi Sarma

## **TOURISM AND BROTHERHOOD: SEEKING ETHNICITY**

Written by:

**MonishaChetia**  
**3<sup>rd</sup>semseter, MTTM**  
**Dept. of Business Administration**

Evolving from apes to Homo sapiens and then turning life amidst concrete and machines, human life is behaving more complex than ever. Advancing technology with globalisation has though increased the movement across the borders but the interaction among the human minds, the emotional fondness is fading away. Somewhere, they are also reasons behind community conflicts and loss of universal brotherhood.

People say that time is a circular flow. It will carry you back from where you have started off. The exactness can be drawn while setting the scene of tourism. From the concreteness, people have started moving out to experience some “extra” and “unique”. This has led them to enter into the interaction with nature and indigenous cultures. From traditionally travelling for trade purpose to travelling for cultural exchanges, the world of tourism has now grown to a greater extent. People nowadays seek involvement with other races of mankind. Tourism has started boosting up the bond of brotherhood among the visitors and the host communities. Seeking ethnicity in terms of cultures and behaviours, travellers have started respecting the way of other’s living. Though the concepts of cultural shocks etc. are creating hindrances in the way, yet the positive outcomes are reflected on a huge rate.

Tourism is not just a service-sector, it creates a platform to cater to universal brotherhood and peace. To live is just a normal life, but to spend moments and laugh with the local people, going through emotional turbulence with them splashes the excitement of living in a true sense. Looking into the sight of the future, we cannot deny the possibility of transforming the geographical dividedness into emotional togetherness. While learning to respect and value other’s cultures, visitors are capable enough to create the conditions of preserving one’s cultural heritage without distorting the other.

On one side of the frame, “mass tourism” is being referred as “harmful” for tourist attractions; “community-based tourism” (CBT) or “ethnic tourism” is giving us hope to evolve from the harm and trust by playing a game-changing role in the niche tourism segment.

## **UTTARAN - SPECIAL EDITION**

Imagine, ‘tourism’ is a canvas and start painting with the colours, characters, natural beings, dialogues of cultures. Isn’t it a perfect art? A plot where the cultural spectrum is being praised, respected, clicked and promoted by each other. The world deserves to be a better one. We just need our collaborations to together the minds valuing of each other’s cultures. In this very time, tourism professionals are responsible to come up with strategies because rightly,

*“TOURISM IS DIVIDED BY GEOGRAPHY BUT UNITED BY CULTURES”*



Photo credit: Deep Gurung

## **MANALI MEMOIRS**

Written by:

**Santosh Rawat  
1<sup>st</sup> semester, MBA  
Dept. of Business Administration**

It is said that the test of true friendship can be measured by the amount of trips a group has made to Goa. I strongly agree to this and we decided to pack our bags for an awesome Goa trip but as we all know that a Goa trip is incomplete without a friend cancelling at the very last moment. This is what happened to us. Two of our friends cancelled and we had to change our plans. So basically we (I and Sumit) were sad but I guess destiny had something else stored for us and what followed was one of the best experiences of our lives.

So there was one friend of ours who was studying in JNU and he called one day and said “o bhaibolManalijau, Sumit’ok u kobi” (brother lets go to Manali, please tell Sumit also). Those words reverberated in my ears and without giving a second thought we accepted the offer.

Now the experience part.....

The first day when we reached there it was tiresome as we had 16 hours long bus journey from Delhi. We stayed in a hotel and we slept for around 3 hours, waking up so energized that we could even conquer the world ( joking though). By the time we got up it was already evening and the sun was signing off and we did not know what to do. The hotel staff suggested having a visit of the town which is more preferably known as the MALL ROAD. The mall road is a busy market area which was 2 kilometers away from our hotel. The town is filled with shops and there are numerous eateries around where one can satisfy his hunger. After spending about two hours there we returned back to our base and had a good night’s sleep.

The next morning was followed by a visit to KULLU, a small hill station and the district headquarters. There we visited the royal palace, several Buddhist monasteries, and the famous hand woven shawl shops.

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As planned the third day was a visit to Rohtang pass which is around 52 kms from the town. We hired a cab and en route our journey we were constantly accompanied by the lush green winding roads that slowly led to snow. Having reached there I was mesmerized by the beauty of that place and more surprisingly shocked to see people putting up Maggi stalls at such a height. We had a bowl of Maggi and then we slowly walked towards the snow. We spent the entire day playing around like kids throwing snow balls to each other and even sliding up and down in the snow. After three hours of play and enjoying the landscape with numerous selfies and pictures it was time to return back.

On the last day we visited the famous Hidimba temple and after that we trekked to Jogini waterfall which was our final destination. Later that evening we had a bus to catch and as always all good things must come to an end so did our beautiful journey.

So all in all whatever I had imagined and seen in movies it was more beautiful than that. The picturesque landscape, the mystifying hills, the snow capped mountains and the tumbling Beas all added to the beauty of that place. It was really a paradise on earth.

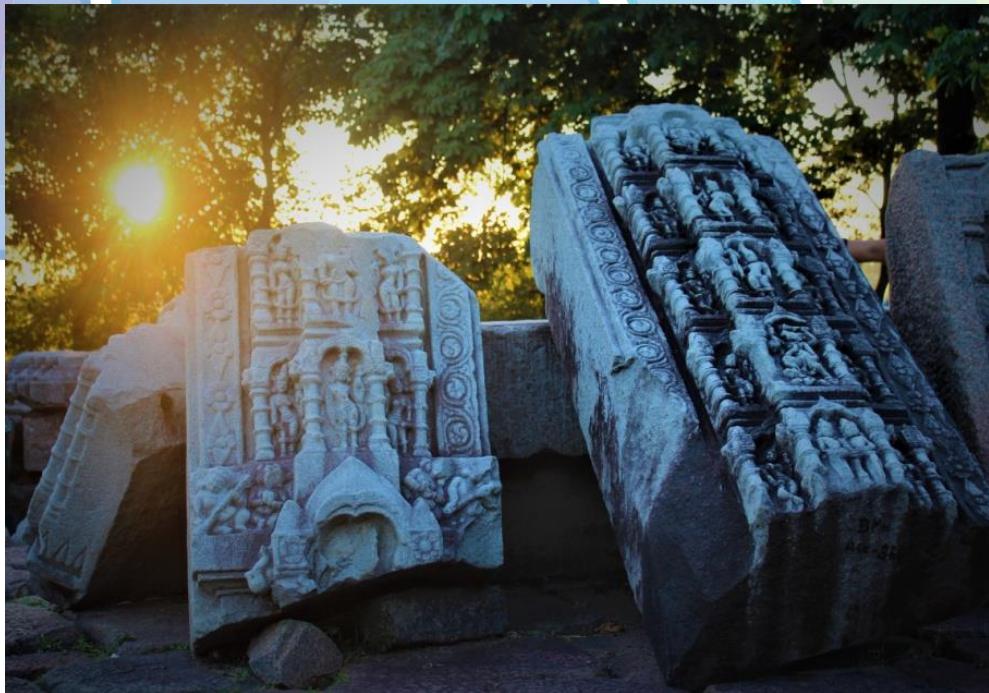


Photo credit :Satabdi Sarma

## THE WANDERER SOUL...

Written by:

**Bhagyashree Sarma**  
**1<sup>st</sup> semester, MBA**  
**Dept. of Business Administration**

When I was a kid, I wouldn't lie,

I loved being under the open sky.

The first time I saw a hill so high

Never before did I tend to fly..

Even without wings I felt the urge,

To meet life; with adventure I merged.

As nature opens her arms with love,

What more can any person ask?

I fell in love with my wandering soul,

With d roads I passed by, the busy rivers overall.

People became familiar, as I was on the go

I needed a break from all friends and foe,

But what I found in me instead, is a surprise to show.

The taste of travelling far beyond one's expectation,

Is what keeps us going towards our desired destination

When Nature says it's time to meet,

How can I deny; how can I cheat?

I need to be out in her comforting arms

Discovering some more of her unique charms.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA: EMPOWERING TOURISTS**

Written by:

**Deep Gurung**  
**Research Scholar, Dept. of Business Administration,**  
**Tezpur University**

Information is the backbone of the tourism industry. There is a race among destinations to aware & inform people about the destination and its attributessuch as food, people, dress, roads etc. For centuries, destination marketers have used books, magazines, brochures, print, and audio-visual advertisements etc. to attract tourists from around the globe. The power to attract tourists mostly remained with those who could popularize the destination using the above means. The destination marketers were able to position the destination as they perceived best for the destination. This positioning influenced people's perception regarding the destination and its attributes. This further has an impact on the expectations of tourist towards the destination and would be realized only through experience. In cases where the experiences did not match expectations, it took time to inform the tourist community about the reality of the destination. However, the scenario soon changed with the dawn of the Internet.

Back in the year 1989, Tim Burners-Lee introduced Web 1.0, the first generation web which is the read-only web. The Web 1.0 began as an information place for businesses to produce information, but provided limited user interactions or content contributions and only allowed to search the information and read it. This gave destination marketers another platform to promote and popularize the destination with no or minimal interference from the users. The positioning of the destination still stayed largely in the hands of destination marketers. The use of text, photographs, and videos on the websites of destination marketers would promote the destination, as they want to project. Users had limited interactions with the destination marketers through e-mail and phone number provided on the websites. However, the challenge still existed as people took time to adopt internet technology.

The concept of web 2.0 as a read-write web was popularized by Tim O'Reilly and Dale Dougherty. It allowed users to review and respond to the content, thus it is also known

as social media or, user-generated content (UGC) or consumer-generated media (CGM). With the advancements in technology, social media has become one of the important sources of information for the consumer making a purchasing decision. The internet users have also increased rapidly with time, from 1% in the year 1995 of the world population to 40% by the year 2014.

The benefit of social media was realized by tourist community around the globe. Social media enabled tourists to share their experiences in real-time using the Internet. It has grown to be one of the most effective means of information for tourists. The social media has further supplemented use of the internet for tourists; as a tourist can now inform, educate and share real-time experiences regarding various attributes of a destination. It also influences social benefits and membership behaviors in online travel communities and increases awareness regarding people, destination, event, and tourism and also contributes to image creation. In the year 2011 a study by researchers Fotis, Buhalis, & Rossides revealed that 45% of prospective travelers searched their destination through social media, and around 42% sought suggestions

about various activities 50% of travelers used social media to stay connected with friends and 30% to find holiday-related information. Although modern tourists visit the official website of destination marketers for information, the decision is greatly influenced by social media; as the information in social media is considered reliable and high level of trust exists in the information.

Information is power and Social Media has shifted the power of disseminating information from destination marketers to tourists. The use of mobile apps has further enhanced the speed of information sharing. The numbers of users are rapidly increasing who religiously share their everyday experiences including tours. This real-time sharing provides insight into any destination and has also proved to be useful in answering queries instantly regarding the destination. Thus, the expectation from any destination is no longer based on the information in books, magazines, brochures or website of the destination marketer rather social media has enabled reality of any destination to be projected by the tourists, for the tourists, and of the tourists.



Photo credit: Deep Gurung

### যায়াবৰীমন

Written by:

Lakhyajyoti Bora  
3rd semester, MTTM  
Dept. of Business Administration

যায়াবৰী মই, যায়াবৰী মন

সপোন খেদি ফুৰোঁ... দিঘে যাওঁ, ভটিয়াই যাওঁ

অনন্ত গন্তব্য স্থান

অসীম সংখ্যক লোক

যাবলৈ আছে চাবলৈ আছে

নানা জাতি - উপ জাতি

ৰাজনৈতিক ভেদা ভেদ নেওচি

কৃষ্ণ-সংস্কৃতিৰে ভৰি থকা আমাৰ এই পৃথিবী

যায়াবৰ মই যায়াবৰ মনে কব সমস্ত জগত যেন পৰিয়াল হৈ ৰব |



Photo credits: Satabdi Sarma

### **DIGITALIZATION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

Written by:

**Angshumi Goswami**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> semester, MTTM**  
**Dept. of Business Administration**

From the way we book our tickets for travelling to a new place, the way we click pictures on our journey to the way we disseminate our travel story to others – everything has tremendously evolved. This is the level at which digitalization has penetrated into the tourism industry. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by travel companies has boosted their sales thereby ensuring sustainability. Consumers are the one's highly benefitting with these new trends. They can very easily have access to the internet and by using the various web-portals, interact with the service providers and select the best option for travel and stay. Flight bookings, travel itineraries and hotel bookings are done using such websites and customers can easily fly out at the maximum level of convenience.

## **UTTARAN - SPECIAL EDITION**

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If we talk about the way travelers share their experiences on the social media, it is through the use of artificial intelligence again. Comments, reviews, ratings etc are all related to the feelings and level of satisfaction of tourists. Travel and tourism service providers highly depend on such feedbacks for corrections and updation of services. Though, the drawback is that one negative comment by the tourists mars the entire organization as every sphere of the travel industry keeps themselves aware of such happenings.

Then comes the concept of ‘Chatbots’ also called ‘Chatter Robots’. These are basically computer programs that mimics the human conversations, both text and spoken language with the help of artificial intelligence techniques. Today, the entire business of tourism is undertaking this method of artificial interaction and this has opened up new realms of customer engagement towards a service. Travelers get information on any query they have and thus gather awareness. On the other hand service providers need not be directly available in-person as basic answers are given by the chatbot. Interactive websites anyway attracts attention and hence the credit goes to digitalization through the use of AI.

Travel and tourism industry being a customer-centric industry is seen embracing AI as the workload gets reduced substantially and moreover, services are available 24/7 and even post-trip follow up becomes easy and efficient. A Dutch airline was the first one to use bots and chatting apps wherein they used to send the boarding passes and other flight-related information through various apps like Facebook, WeChat and the other similar networks. Many more organizations like Expedia, Hilton hotels, etc are using it already and many are looking forward to this.

The truth is, organizations making use of artificially intelligent ways of delivering services and interacting with customers are gaining popularity and contributing greatly to the development of tourism. Companies which are not yet using this are lagging behind. There is every possibility that digitalized services become an inseparable part of the industry and artificially created chatbots become that ingredient the customers will look forward for before and after their travel.

## “চৌ মই”

Written by:

MonishaChetia  
3<sup>rd</sup> semester, MTTM  
Dept. of Business Administration

চৌ মই

প্ৰবাহনীৰ,  
নৰিবঘ্নতাৰে বোৱা স্বৰোতস্বনীৰ  
অনুভূতি মই।

আৱগে মই,

আকাশৰ নীলাভৰঙ্গটকি  
সড়েজৰ সতৈ মলিনোৱাৰ হকে,  
সুদীপ্ত সূৰজক  
গভীৰতাৰ সতৈ সামৰাৰ হকে।

খামুচি আনো মই  
আকাশৰ মহোচন্ন বজোৰ;  
ধাৰাৰ সতৈ বোৱাবলৈ।

চৌ যে মই প্ৰবাহনীৰ।

আক্ষপে কৰোঁ কতেয়িাৰা,  
যায়াৰ যে মই!  
তথাপি বযোম নৰিন্তৰৰ;  
কতেয়িাৰা প্ৰতশ্ৰুতিৰি ছলিলোল তুলি,  
কতেয়িাৰা আকৌ ব্যৰ্থ জীৱনৰ ক্ৰন্দন সামৰাৰি  
বযোম মই সূৰজ অভমুখে;  
এমুঠি কাৰ্যকি আহ্মাদহৈ,  
একোটি মুক্তি পপিসুমন হৈ।

চৌ যে মই স্বৰোতস্বনীৰ,  
চৌ যে মই প্ৰবাহনীৰ।



Photo credit: Deep Gurung

## **MONOLITH FESTIVAL, MEGHALAYA**

Written by:

**Trinayanee Devi  
1<sup>st</sup> semester, MTTM  
Dept. of Business Administration**

Not everyone feels a connection with their cultural heritage, but many people do. Culture and tradition give a chance to the people to get connected with social values, beliefs, and customs. Cultural heritage provides an insight about one's unity and belonging within a group and allows them to better understand previous generations and the history of where they have come from.

Monolith Festival is an example of such cultural events, which gives a platform to the people to understand and connect with their culture and traditions that has been followed over the decades. A three-day cultural affair, the Monolith Festival, is an initiative of the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (KHADC), usually held in the Khasi Heritage Village, Mawphlang. Through this attempt, KHADC is trying to bring together the rich cultural traditions of khasi people, in the form of music, dance, food and cuisine, handicrafts, and attires conveniently under one roof. This event has a lot to offer to every visitor with a number of cultural performances, workshops, indigenous sports events, stage performances etc. It offers one common stage of cultural display and a chance to each one to discover their cultural roots.

The Monolith Festival 2016 won two awards in two of the heaviest categories at the Wow Awards Asia 2017 at Aerocity, New Delhi. The first award it received was the Bronze award for Intellectual Property-Achievement in Production Management. The second award was also a bronze for Intellectual Property- Festival of the Year in Art or Culture or Lifestyle. This award was the credit of the Khasi Heritage Conservation Forum, an offshoot forum of the KHADC (Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council).

Overall, Monolith Festival is a great initiative by the KHADC in order to protect and preserve the Khasi culture and showcasing its significance to the others. With the new technology advancements, it can present this event all across the globe while protecting its own cultural diversity and identity



Photocredits: Satabdi Sarma

## TRUTH BE MY CURSE

Written by:

Tahaj Hussain  
1<sup>st</sup> semester, MTTM  
Dept. of Business Administration

Last night when I was about to sleep  
I heard a guy weep  
I asked him, "why?"  
And he asked me to look at the sky,  
"What do you see ?"  
I replied "darkness"  
He smiled,  
And replied that's me.  
I live in the night,  
With a curse and a smile.  
Truth be my curse  
And she be my smile.

Your voice is my soul,  
Your smile is my air,

## UTTARAN - SPECIAL EDITION

It's your name that I breathe,  
It's your name that I preach,  
I dwell on thy memory,  
I dwell on thy melody.

Look into my eyes someday  
And you feel my love  
Put your hand on mine Sunday  
And you'll feel my love.  
Someday, let me have the honour  
to stare at your face,  
I never had the luck  
to live in that grace.

You are a wish  
I wished million times,  
You are a prayer  
I wished zillion times.  
Always had this dream  
To watch you sleep,  
Always had this dream  
To hug you tight when you weep,  
Always I did wonder  
How it feels to be near to you.  
Always I did wonder  
What would I be without you.

And he asked me to look at the sky,  
“What do you see?” I replied “darkness”  
He smiled,  
And replied that’s me.  
I live in the night,  
With a curse and a smile.  
Truth be my curse  
And she be my smile.

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