

# “TOURISM POLICY OF ASSAM 2017”

A Project Report

Submitted to the Dibrugarh University for the partial fulfillment of the requirement of B.Com 6<sup>th</sup> Semester course curriculum in Commerce Stream.



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## 1. Preamble :

- 1.1 Tourism has emerged as one of the largest industries in the World today. It is an industry which can easily change the economic scenario of a country. Several countries have transformed themselves through tourism and created a global presence in the tourism industry. Tourism is not directed to commercial or population centers but in most cases towards natural and cultural resources. Thus, tourism can contribute significantly where other commercial activities are limited. Developed tourism can bring smiles to every household of a state or a country. Tourist movements have spread across the globe, becoming for many of them an important sector in terms of employment generation and foreign exchange earnings.
- 1.2 As reported by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Tourism Highlights 2015 Edition, International tourist arrivals grew to 1.1 billion in 2014 from a mere 25 million in 1950. The UNWTO estimate that approximately 1 in every 11 person in the World is employed by the tourism industry. As of 2014, the global tourism industry generated USD 7.6 trillion, constituting 10% of the global GDP.
- 1.3 The economic significance of tourism especially in terms of employment, income generation, foreign exchange and regional development is a major driving force that enables the national and state governments to place tourism most appropriately, in the overall development agenda. The Union Government has recently declared that it would give top priority on the development of five 'T's i.e. Tradition, Talent, Trade, Technology and Tourism for overall development of the nation. Local communities across the tourism destinations are encouraged to minimize leakages and maximize linkages of the industry with a view to reap maximum benefit.
- 1.4 Assam is endowed with plentiful natural and cultural resources which can form the basis for a very lucrative tourism industry, creating employment and generating income not only in the urban centers but also in the rural areas. What has held tourism back in Assam was its insurgency issues, its remoteness, a sense of perceived insecurity and negative publicity of the place. The need of the hour is to market Assam vigorously in order to refurbish its image in the national and international market using latest technological interventions. Assam can become one of the most sought after destinations in the country because of its magnificent tourism products like exotic wildlife, awesome scenic beauty, colorful fairs and festivals, age old historical monuments, lush green tea gardens and golf courses, massive river Brahmaputra and its tributaries, serene and tranquil country side and warm and hospitable people.
- 1.5 Tourism activities in Assam have developed sporadically and in an unplanned manner. Also due to very limited government funds made available to the tourism sector and hesitation of the private sector to invest due to various issues, tourism promotion and marketing activities have always taken a back seat. Overall public sector tourism is groping in the dark and has been sub-optimally functioning with limited financial and human resource capacity. Also, the private sector feels that the Government does not provide them full support. It is often not enough just to have the right product; there is a felt need that Government should support



## 2. Vision

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

## 3. Mission

- 3.1 To bring in maximum footfalls to Assam.
- 3.2 To promote Assam Tourism with a new approach of vigorous massive campaigning.
- 3.3 To build a global brand 'Awesome Assam' to attract National and International Tourist.
- 3.4 In keeping with "Act East Policy" of Central Government, we will have close collaboration with other neighboring countries like Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos Vietnam, South Korea, Japan, China & other South East Asian Countries harping on the similarities of these communities with the people of Assam.
- 3.5 Identify most popular and attractive tourist destinations and develop tourist Infrastructure in an around them.
- 3.6 To encourage Responsible Tourism (RT) in the state with a view to preserving environment eco-systems in keeping with Sustainable Development Goals.
- 3.7 To facilitate extensive involvement of private sector and active participation of local community in all aspects of Tourism promotion.
- 3.8 To create an investment friendly atmosphere for promotion of Tourism by making full use of Ease of Doing Business.
- 3.9 To conduct special skill development Certificate programs of local youths in Hospitality and for Tourism Sector, the advantage of Government of India's Skill India and 'Hunar Se Rojgar tak' shall be leveraged.
- 3.10 Adopting Information Communication Technology (ICT) in Tourism Sector.
- 3.11 To ensure safety and security of the tourists.
- 3.12 To promote Spiritual Tourism centering on Kamakhya Temple as India's most powerful Shakti-Peeth highlighting Ambubachi Mela.
- 3.13 To promote Wildlife Tourism centering on one-horned Rhinoceros.
- 3.14 To promote Tea Tourism of Assam.
- 3.15 To provide 'Excellence Awards' annually for Tourism.
- 3.16 Promote Film Tourism by developing single Window clearances and providing incentive to film makers.
- 3.17 A special incentive package in the form of logistic support within Assam should be provided to the film producers to kick start their arrivals.



- 3.18 Development of Wayside amenities on Tourism Routes in a PPP mode.
- 3.19 Development of Package tours to destinations of other states by suitable engagement with their Tourism departments and Tour operators of Assam.

#### **4. Objectives:**

- 4.1 To make Assam a tourist Hub for North East India.
- 4.2 To market Assam as a hot destination for the tourists from East & South East Asian Countries.
- 4.3 To leverage innovative forms of Tourism such as Cruises, Ethnic Tourism, Tea & Golf, leisure Tourism, Transit Tourism, Adventure Tourism and Monsoon Tourism.
- 4.4 To develop positive, Tourist friendly and reciprocative culture among local tour operators, guides and hospitality providers.
- 4.5 To upgrade skill, quality and professionalism of all service providers connected with tourism.
- 4.6 To develop tourism packages to cater to various types of tourists and market them through global and local tour operators.
- 4.7 Popularizing local and community hosts to promote Bed and Breakfast, cottages on stilts accommodation all across the Tourist spots/destinations.
- 4.8 Developing Assam into an all season tourist destination.
- 4.9 To focus on benefits for the Community from tourism.
- 4.10 To create enabling environment for investment.

#### **5. Strategies:**

##### **5.1 Assam Tourism website.**

- 5.1.1 An interactive and fully comprehensive website of Assam Tourism will be launched wherein all required information for any prospective domestic or international tourist will be readily available at the click of the mouse. The website will contain linkages to all sorts of information and bookings including Hotels, Air Travel, Rail & Road, Bus, Home Stays, Bed & Breakfast accommodation, Restaurants, Details of Tourist destinations, packages, Fairs and events, Route maps etc. It will have the facility for two way interactions with all stakeholders such as Tourists, Tour Guides and Tour operators. Hoteliers, Restaurateurs etc to collect feedback information on Do's and Don'ts, weather and local cultures will also be hosted to guide the prospective tourists.
- 5.1.2 A vigorous campaigning through social media such as Facebook, You-Tube, Twitter, Blogging sites will be launched to attract the younger up-coming generation of Tourists. A special cell for maintenance & updating of information will be created for sustainability. A separate statistical cell shall also be created for Management Information System, generation of statistics and their analysis.
- 5.1.3 Regular Meet with the National and International Tour Operators Association & Hoteliers & Restaurateurs Association will be organized. Fam tours will also be organized regularly.



## 5.2 Building Brand

- 5.2.1 In spite of having tremendous tourism potential, Assam has not yet aggressively marketed itself. A comprehensive marketing strategy will be chalked out in consultation with professional agencies. A brand image of Assam as "Awesome Assam" will be created portraying the state's uniqueness and exotic beauty. The brand name will be translated to Hindi and other National and International languages.
- 5.2.2 A renowned celebrity will be roped in as brand Ambassador of Awesome Assam.
- 5.2.3 A blitz-Krieg National & International Promotional Campaign shall be launched to build "Awesome Assam" brand through newspapers, life style magazines, in-flight magazines, TV advertisements, Talk shows, Road shows, Travel marts and Tourism stalls and kiosks etc.

## 5.3 Assam-A Tourist hub for North East India.

- 5.3.1 Assam is the gateway to the North Eastern states. Geographically and culturally the states have interdependent relationships. A total NE perspective in tourism planning, where the strength of each state complements each other is beneficial to all and is a constructive way forward for tourism promotion. Assam will play a proactive role to develop such a wide view of tourism promotion through coordination among the states in creating zonal and regional circuits.
- 5.3.2 Most of the tourists travelling to other seven sister states have to transit through Guwahati. Half/full day City tour packages by ATDC and private operators will be an incentive for the travellers to extend their duration of stay which in turn will boost the local economy.

## 5.4 Wildlife Tourism

- 5.4.1 An attractive feature of Assam's forests is its colorful wildlife. Some of the species are exclusive to the state. Assam is famous as the home of one-horned rhinoceros which is its unique selling point apart from the fauna.
- 5.4.2 Though most of the domestic and international tourists are drawn towards Kaziranga and this heritage site has got the best tourist facilities with private participation, yet the Government will develop infrastructure around individual Wildlife sanctuaries such as Manas, Pabitora, Orang, Pani Dihing, Barail and Nameri at Dibru-Saikhowa across Assam to accommodate tourists and resort to aggressive marketing to position Assam as Wildlife destination of the world. The Quality of Tourist facilities will be improved and proper tourist information centers will be established in each place.

## 5.5 Spiritual Tourism

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