

Brief On Development and Promotion of Tourism in the North Eastern States

North East region is a virgin unexplored terrain with vast tourism potential in the form of wild life sanctuaries, adventure tourism assets, diverse cultural heritage, multi faceted fairs & festivals, world famous Buddhist Monasteries etc.

Ministry of Tourism has already drawn up perspective Tourism plan for each of the North Eastern states for 20 years. These plans have been sent to the respective State Governments for development of tourism in their states. Projects are prioritized in consultation with the concerned State Governments. Based on the decision taken in prioritization meetings, the State Governments approach Ministry of Tourism with detailed proposals. Ministry of Tourism sanctions such projects after due scrutiny, under the existing guidelines.

Tourist Arrivals

The number of domestic and international tourist visits in the area during the years 2006 to 2009 is as under:

2006		2007		2008		2009*	
Domestic	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign
Arunachal Pradesh							
80137	607	91100	2212	149292	3020	195147	3945
Assam							
2768824	10374	3436833	12899	3617306	14426	3850521	14942
Manipur							
116984	295	101484	396	112151	354	124229	337
Meghalaya							
401529	4287	457685	5267	549936	4919	591398	4522
Mizoram							
50987	436	43161	669	55924	902	56651	513
Nagaland							
15850	426	22085	936	21129	1209	20953	1423
Sikkim							
292486	18026	329075	17498	368451	19154	547810	17730
Tripura							
230645	3245	244795	3181	245438	3577	317541	4246

***Provisional**

Plan Allocation for North Eastern Region

10% of the plan allocation of the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India is earmarked for North Eastern Region (NER).

Funds allocated to the Ministry, funds earmarked for North Eastern Region vis-à-vis funds sanctioned to projects during the 2007-08, 2008-09 & 2009-10 Plan period are as under:

Year	Plan Allocation	10% earmarked for NE	Actual Expenditure	Percentage
	(Rs.In Crore)	(Rs. In Crore)	(Rs. In Crore)	
2007-08	953.00	96.00	150.97	15.73
2008-09	1000.00	100.00	160.52	16.05
2009-10	950.00	95.00	178.61	18.80

Promotion and Marketing

1. In the financial year, 2007-08, and early 2008-09, a campaign with an outlay of Rs.15.51 Crores was launched in TV and Print (Magazine) in the Domestic Market.
2. A print Media campaign in various National and Regional News-papers was also launched for Rs. 1.64 Crore around the same time.
3. In the financial year 2008-09, Ministry of Tourism produced a colourful and informative map on the North –East Region of India to popularize North- East among the international as well as domestic tourists.
4. In the financial year, 2009-10, a booklet on the legends and folklores of North-East of India has been produced by the 'India Today Group' supported by the Ministry of Tourism. These legends and folklores are related to geography, beliefs, culture, tradition etc. of the North –East of India.
5. In April 2009, Ministry of Tourism participated in SATTE, 09, an international exhibition, at Delhi wherein all the North Eastern States including Sikkim were provided stalls to highlight tourism products of North East at no cost to these States.
6. In 2009-10, Ministry of Tourism released a campaign for an estimated amount of Rs. 6.23 Crores on various TV channels to promote North East of India including Sikkim among the domestic travelers. A 60 sec. TV commercial was aired during the campaign which was released in January / February 2010 through DAVP.
7. In 2009-10; MOT approved Central Financial Assistance of Rs. 14.90 lakhs to the State Government of Sikkim for the production of CDs and tourism literature.

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8. In 2010-11, the Ministry of Tourism approved Central Financial Assistance of Rs. 26.38 lakhs to the State Government of Mizoram for the production of tourism literature and documentary film for the promotion and publicity.

9. In April 2009, Ministry of Tourism participated in SATTE, 09 at Delhi wherein all the North Eastern States including Sikkim were provided stalls to highlight tourism products of North East at no cost to these states.

10. The East and North East Road Show was organized in Kolkata on 11th & 12th August, 2009, the first ever domestic road show which was held in the country.

11. Interstate regional conference of Tourism Ministers of East and North East States was organized at Gangtok, Sikkim during 5th to 7th December, 2009.

Participation in International Travel Fairs and Exhibitions

The Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India provides space on complimentary basis to the North Eastern states, in the India Pavilions set up at major international travel fairs and exhibitions, including WTM in London, ITB in Berlin, ATM in Dubai etc. to give the states an opportunity to showcase and promote their tourist destinations and products.

Marketing Development Assistance (MDA) Scheme

The Marketing Development Assistance (MDA) Scheme of the Ministry of Tourism has been modified so as to enable tourism service providers (travel agents, tour operators, hoteliers, etc.) in the North Eastern Region, approved for undertaking the following promotional activities overseas :

- (a) Participation in Travel Fairs and Exhibitions
- (b) Sale cum Study Tours
- (c) Printing of Publicity Material for distribution overseas.

Hospitality to Foreign Media/ Travel Trade personnel

Familiarization Tours to the North Eastern Regions are being arranged for Travel and Media Representatives from Overseas to the States in the North Eastern Regions on a regular basis under the Hospitality Scheme of the Ministry of Tourism.

During the last financial year, a total of 10 familiarization tour was organize during which 21 guests visited North East Region of India under hospitality scheme. The guest were from Sweden, Finland, Germany, Poland, Australia, France, U.K. and The Netherlands.

IHM's/FCI

Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance for setting up of Institute of Hotel Managements (IHM) and Food Craft Institutes (FCI) in the state. As per the CCEA's approval, the scheme's scope has been enlarged to cover the funding of infrastructure creation in vocational schools, polytechnics /ITI's, Universities etc. for starting courses in Tourism and Hospitality sector.

There are three operational IHM's in North east region. They are viz.

1. IHM Guwahati, Assam
2. IHM Gangtok, Sikkim
3. IHM Shillong, Meghalaya

Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned CFA for setting up IHM/SFCI at following places in North east in recent years:

1. IHM in Arunachal Pradesh
2. IHM at Ailawng, Mizoram
3. IHM at Dimapur, Nagaland
4. IHM at Jorhat, Assam
5. FCI at Nagaon in Assam
6. FCI at Tura, Meghalaya

This apart, Ministry of Tourism has also granted Central Financial Assistance to IHM Guwahati for OBC Expansion work, Centralizing campus and additions to IHM campus.

Rural Tourism

Rural Tourism Scheme is the 10th plan initiative of the Ministry of Tourism. It aims at improving the rural economy by promoting traditional rural art, craft textile, culture etc. based livelihood through tourism process. Ministry grants CFA for creating infrastructure and for human resource development in rural areas for developing sustainable tourism in the form of rural tourism projects. However, this opportunity has remained largely unexplored by the state Governments.

Details of Rural tourism projects sanctioned to the North Eastern states are as given in Annexure.

Adventure Tourism

Ministry of Tourism gives CFA for creating infrastructure relating to adventure activities. So far Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned following Adventure Tourism projects to the North Eastern States:-

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------------|
| 1. | Development of Aero-sports at Aizwal - | Rs. 2.98 crore |
| 2. | High Altitude Trekking in Sikkim – | Rs. 0.94 crore |
| 3. | Purchasing of Adventure sports Equipments in Manipur – | Rs. 0.06 crore |
| 4. | Construction of Eco and Adventure Centre Chemchi | Rs. 4.94 crore. |
| 5. | Construction of Indian Himalayan Centre for Adventure
And Eco-Tourism at Chemchi (Phase II) | Rs. 3.89 crore |

Assistance for construction of Heliport

Ministry of Tourism is providing CFA for construction of Heliport as a component for areas which are inaccessible but having tourism potential, with a maximum financial ceiling of Rs.75.00 lakh under the scheme of product infrastructure development of destination and circuits. Accordingly, all State Governments /UT Administrations have been requested to submit the proposal as per the guidelines.

For the first time anywhere in the country, the State of Sikkim has been granted Central Financial Assistance for three destination projects that include development of Heliport viz. Destination Development of Mangan Tourist Axis including Heliport in North Sikkim for Rs. 3.29 crore, Destination Development of Geetang Khola waterfall including Heliport in West Sikkim for Rs. 3.25 crore and Destination Development Of Tourist Infrastructure Under Berfung-Ralong Constituency Including Heliport At Chemchey In South Sikkim for Rs.4.22 crore. These would facilitate easy access to the destination mentioned above which are of immense tourism potential, where the tourists are otherwise discouraged due to long and taxing travel through hilly roads.

Assistance for construction of convention centre

In order to promote Meetings, incentives conventions and exhibitions(MICE), Ministry of Tourism has decided to consider proposals for grant of financial assistance upto Rs. 5.00 crore for construction of one convention centre in each State/UT under the scheme of Product/ Infrastructure development for destinations and circuits.

Manipur and Mizoram are the two North eastern states to receive financial assistance for construction of convention centre. For construction of Convention centre at Imphal, Government of Manipur has been sanctioned an amount of Rs 4.16 crore while, for construction of convention centre at Berawatlang Tourist Complex , Aizwal, Government of Mizoram has been sanctioned an amount of Rs.4.68 crore

Incentive on setting up hotel industries

Hotel industries are entitled for capital investment subsidy to the tune of 30% for Hotels (Not below 2 Star category) under the North east Industrial Investment promotion Policy (NEIIPP), 2007. Five year tax holiday is available for creation of accommodation in the districts close to World Heritage Sites provided they are constructed and start functioning from 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2013.

Other initiatives to boost Tourism in the North Eastern States.

Relaxation in Leave Travel Concession (LTC) norms for Central Government employees

In relaxation of CCS (LTC) Rules 1988, the Government has decided to permit Government servants to travel by air to North Eastern Region on LTC as follows:-

- a) Group A and Group B Central Government employees will be entitled to travel by Air from their place of posting or nearest airport to a city in the NER or nearest airport.
- b) Other categories of employees will be entitled to travel by air to a city in the NER from Guwahati or Kolkata.
- c) All Central Government employees will be allowed conversion of one block of Home Town LTC into LTC for destinations in NER.

Relaxation of norms for recognition of service providers in the North Eastern States

To meet the need to increase registration coverage for service providers, the Ministry of Tourism recently liberalized its guidelines. For the North Eastern region the relaxation is even more. For instance, the requirement of qualified staff has been relaxed from the existing two qualified staff to one with the other being owner who would be treated as a qualified staff. Secondly, the requirement of office space has also been reduced from the existing 250 Sq. ft to 100 Sq. ft. in hilly areas. North Eastern Region has been considered as hilly area. Thirdly, the chartered Accountant's Certificate regarding turn over of the firm in Rupee earnings would be treated as Foreign Exchange earnings, provided there is documentary evidence that such earnings are from inbound tour operations only.

The Ministry till date has granted approved of recognition to service providers in the States of North- Eastern Region as under:

North – Eastern Region					
State	Travel Agency	Inbound Tour Operator	Domestic Tour Operator	Adventure Tour Operator	Tourist Transport Operator
Arunachal Pradesh	Nil	01	Nil	Nil	Nil
Assam	01	08	01	Nil	Nil
Manipur	01	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Meghalaya	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Mizoram	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Nagaland	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Tripura	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Sikkim	Nil	11	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total	02	20	01	Nil	Nil
