



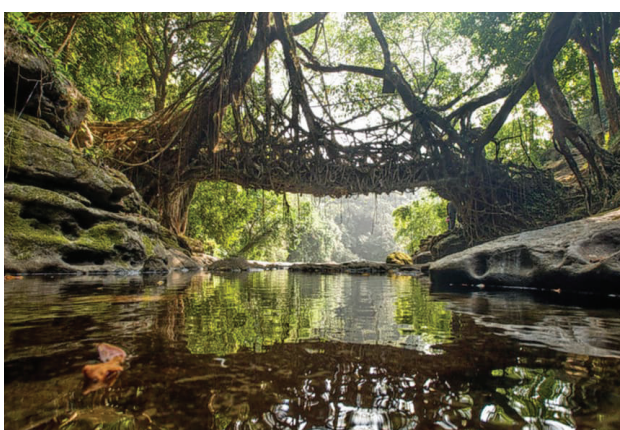
Nitin Gadkari assures support to travel & hospitality sector



Hon'ble Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said that with the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat, the government is committed to create multiple opportunities for MSMEs, boost tourism with the help of upcoming infrastructure projects, at a FICCI webinar. The minister added that the government's initiatives, such as collateral-free automatic loans for business, including MSMEs; Rs 50,000 crore equity infusion through MSME Fund of Funds, will generate tremendous business opportunities. There is a huge potential for small hotel partners, agents to tap into this and look at expanding their offerings catering to the needs of tourists, he said.

Revenge tourism beats "lean season"

After pandemic-induced hibernation for a year, desperate Kolkatans have taken to revenge travel that has transformed January and February into a peak season for the airline and hospitality sectors, according to a report in Times of India. February is usually a lean month for the travel and hospitality industry as school exams are scheduled around this time of the year. But with exams going online, many families are taking a vacation as the school can virtually travel with them to the hills or sea-sides of West Bengal.



The COVID-19 pandemic hit Meghalaya's tourism sector hard, and that resulted in massive loss of revenue for the state. Now it is going to welcome outsiders with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The state government has set up an entry point in Umling. Tourists need to produce a COVID-19 negative certificate and register themselves with the Meghalaya Government before their visit using a smartphone app.

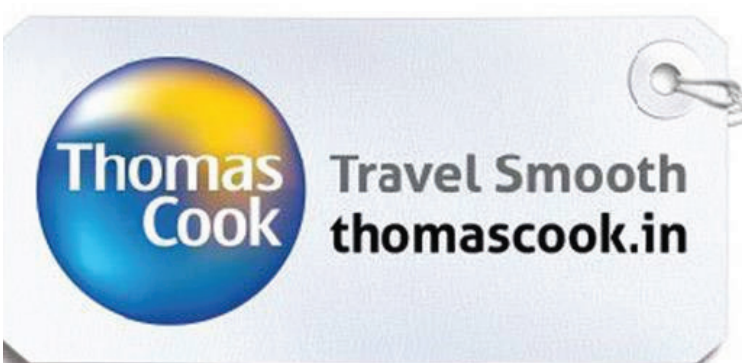
Meghalaya welcomes tourists with SOPs

India planning to restart e-tourist visas soon

India has started issuing medical visas and is planning to soon restart E-Tourist Visas, Union health minister Harsh Vardhan said. The move is in a bid to boost medical tourism in India that remained hard hit due to covid-19 pandemic. The union health minister said that the advancements in India's health-care facilities have led to a spike of medical tourism in India. "India has always been a popular tourist destination, but over the last few years, it has also emerged as a leading destination for medical tourism," said Harsh Vardhan.

Thomas Cook boost to MICE travel

Thomas Cook (India) Ltd has launched a strategic corporate outreach, in partnership with Marriott International. The event, aimed at bringing back confidence in MICE travel, saw active participation from over 80 of India's leading corporates. Thomas Cook India's Assured-In-sured-Secured program, together with Marriott International's Commitment to Clean, served to build confidence and add reassurance towards MICE travel in the new normal.



Panel formed to promote tourism in NE



The Ministry of Tourism has formed a committee of stakeholders to "aggressively" promote tourism in North East India, an official of MOT said recently. The committee will identify new destinations, develop itineraries, identify places where events can be organised to create awareness, organise workshops for the local stakeholders to provide them necessary skills. In this backdrop, India Tourism, Guwahati has organised an event "1000 BAR DEKHO- NORTH EAST DEKHO" from March 7-17, 2021

No RT PCR test needed for Sikkim travellers

People who wish to visit Sikkim will not have to undergo COVID-related tests. The mandatory negative RT-PCR report enforced by the West Bengal government for passengers travelling from Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka and Telangana on February 24 will be enough for the time being. The tourism and hospitality sector has breathed a sigh of relief at hearing the announcement.

Arunachal urges Centre for more tourism circuits

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu recently assured that the state government would urge the Centre for early clearance of the proposed tourism circuit in troubled Tirap district, along with Changlang and Longding, so that they develop on par with other parts of the north eastern state. "The government has been discussing with the Centre for opening more tourist circuits in the state by resolving all the issues including Protected Area Permit (PAP) and Restricted Area Permit (RAP)."

Eco-Tourism Project at Cheirao Ching, Manipur



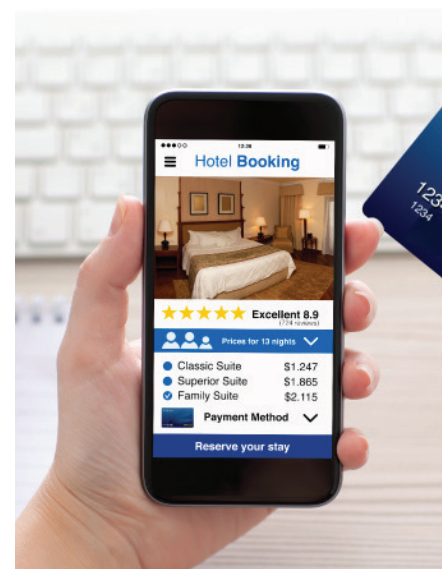
Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh inaugurated Eco-Tourism Project at Thangmeiband Cheirao Ching in Imphal West District recently. The Eco-Tourism Project was developed under the Department of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER). The project will increase leisure activities and attract more tourists to the state. The foundation stone for the project developed at a cost of around Rs 15 crores was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in March 2018.



Ultra-luxury hotels in India's main wedding destinations, including Jaipur, Jodhpur and Mussoorie, are seeing massive demand for hosting "diverted destination" weddings – many postponed from last year – of the uber rich which cannot be held abroad due to current travel restrictions. The biggest hospitality players including Taj, Oberoi, ITC, Leela, Marriott and Accor have a major presence in these destinations here. A Taj Hotels spokesperson said, "The big fat Indian wedding may have got slimmer but is now more Indian than ever."

Luxury destination weddings back in India

Surge in hotel bookings in February : RateGain



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