

# MYSTIC EAST

...nuggets galore

A bi-monthly magazine by HRAEI | Vol 1 | Issue 5 | July - August 2015



**FHRAI Convention ends  
on a high note**



## VISION

- ✌ Make the Eastern Region comprising 12 States and a Union Territory a flourishing destination for domestic and foreign tourists by projecting their captivating tourism assets.
- ✌ Promoting best industry practices and setting benchmarks for industry constituents.



## MISSION

- ✌ A common voice for hotels, restaurants and associates for unhindered progress of the hospitality industry in the country's Eastern Region.
- ✌ Create value for members by ensuring government policies remain supportive of tourism and the industry.

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July - August 2015



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BIPUL BHATTACHARJEE

Cover Design: SUNIL HOON

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Eastern India, 18A/1, Everest, 18th Floor, 46C, Chowringhee Road, Kolkata- 700 071; Telephone- +91 33 2288-1742/43, 40035993. E-mail: info@hraei.co.in Website: www.hraei.co.in

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**Sudesh Poddar**

**Big players from the international hotel industry like Newport, USA and domestic majors like Lemon Tree, Haldiram, Brahmaputra, ITC Fortune and Ramada Plaza have evinced interest to set up hotels in the state of Odisha**

Dear Fellow Members,

The meticulous planning and execution skills of our organizing committee and associates have borne fruit and the result is there for all to see. We have just concluded the golden jubilee convention of FHRAI in Bhubaneswar and the feedback received so far indicates that it has been a resounding success.

Right from the inaugural session, in which top government dignitaries from the Centre and Odisha government participated, to the valedictory function on the 27th it was one glitch-free, seamless and pleasant experience for all our guests, visitors and delegates.

Big players from the international hotel industry like Newport, USA and domestic majors like Lemon Tree, Haldiram, Brahmaputra, ITC Fortune and Ramada Plaza have evinced interest to set up hotels in the state, according to state government sources.

Concrete proposals from the industry came on the second day of the convention. It was announced that two premiere five-star hotels will come up in the twin city of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. The Haldiram Group will construct one while the other will be set up by the ITC Fortune Group.

In conclusion, I acknowledge the unstinted support we received from the Indian tourism ministry, state governments, our sponsors, vendors, various stakeholders, media and last but not least our hard-working staff at the convention secretariat.

**Sudesh Poddar**  
President, HRAEI

**SECRETARY'S MESSAGE****Pranav Singh**

**In an effort to attract a wider pool of domestic travellers, brands like AccorHotels, Berggruen Hotels, Carlson Rezidor, The Gateway, Ginger Hotels and InterContinental Hotels are adding inventory in the economy and mid-scale categories.**

Dear fellow members,

Improved access to technology and a booming middle-class are expected to fuel the already rapid growth of online tourism in India. It is expected to outperform the overall travel market by about six percentage points to 17.8% in the three years to 2016.

In a report titled 'Indian Online Travel Industry — Going Places', the global research and analytics firm said 41% of gross travel bookings in the country are taking place online and the increasing internet and mobile internet penetration will play a vital role in the online travel market's growth story.

Another factor aiding the growth will be the country's burgeoning middle-class, which is becoming increasingly aware of the need for a better work-life balance. Their higher disposable incomes have given them the leeway to plan frequent vacations in a year, including weekend getaways to exotic locales.

The Indian travel and tourism industry is the second fastest growing market worldwide, following China. The worldwide travel market is clocking just 4% growth but the travel industry in the country is set to grow at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12% to reach \$27.5 billion in 2016, the study pointed out.

Moreover, the passenger traffic

has grown significantly owing to airfare cuts, introduction of new low-cost airlines and improvement in the economy.

In an effort to attract a wider pool of domestic travellers, brands like AccorHotels, Berggruen Hotels, Carlson Rezidor, The Gateway, Ginger Hotels and InterContinental Hotels are adding inventory in the economy and mid-scale categories.

Hotel supply in the country remains upbeat. While the rapid increase in supply has affected average daily room rates and occupancy figures, the tourism department has referred to a shortage of around 150,000 rooms in the budget, economy and mid-market segments, it said. The Indian hotel industry is all set to enter the next phase of growth. The industry is estimated to touch \$ 1.8 billion by 2016, up from a current total size of \$ 800 million, according to a recently released report from ICRA.

**Pranav Singh**  
Secretary, HRAEI

# WB CM names Gajoldoba tourist hotspot 'Bhorer Aalo'



Gajoldoba: (source: AITC/indiannaturewatch.net)

**T**he state government is setting up a tourist hotspot at Gajoldoba in North Bengal to be named 'Bhorer Aalo'.

The spot, identified by Mamata Banerjee during her election campaign in 2011, is located near Teesta Barrage in Jalpaiguri district. The seven reserve forests are an hour's drive from there.

Sprawling over 210 acres of government land, the spot is encircled by the Teesta barrage catchment on one side and a bird sanctuary on the other where over 15,000 birds come annually.

"For the last two years, we have been developing the infrastructure of

the area with PWD constructing three connecting roads of 31 km, 9 km and 7 km to the spot. A power sub-station has been set up and two huge water tanks are there," Dr Amit Mitra, State Finance Minister, told reporters.

Several star category hotels, including three, four and five star, would come up along with two budget hotels for the middle class. A nine-hole golf course, too, would come up.

"We would set up a golf training centre and small cottages at the golf course," Mitra added.

Sterling Holiday Resorts, in joint venture with Thomas Cook, had won

the bid for the three-star hotel, while Summit Group, which owns Darjeeling's Swiss Hotel and Seal Group, that promotes tea tourism in North Bengal, had won bids for two budget hotels.

"One lakh tourists can be served by these three hotels annually and around 1,000 people would get job opportunities," the finance minister said.

The government would be earning Rs 4.5 crore as annual lease rental and Rs 3.5-4 crore as luxury tax from these hotels.

A crafts and ayurveda village, too, are under construction in the area, Dr Mitra added.(AITC)



Mukteswar Temple, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

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# North East Festival to focus on tourism



**New Delhi:** To be held in October here, the third edition of the North-East Festival -- with tourism as the main focus -- will have many attractions including football and music.

The fest attempts to showcase and

create awareness about Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. It will be held from October 16 to 18.

“The biggest cultural festival of Delhi is back. Tourism is the main focus,” Shyamkanu Mahanta, the organiser-in-chief said.

“We will also promote regional festivals like Sangai, Hornbill and Rongali so that tourists can plan their visit to the northeast accordingly. There will be sessions on tourism and connectivity too,” he said.

A football competition will be held from October 10 to 15 before the main event begins.

“We thought of making the fest slightly bigger... There will be around 20 Delhi colleges competing against north-eastern football clubs. The prize money is Rs.5.5 lakh,” he said.

Mahanta said there will also be traditional sports of the northeast too.

On display will be photographs to highlight the role played by freedom fighters from the region -- as well as tribes from the states.

“Some traditional costumes will be showcased. One can look forward to handlooms and handicrafts,” he said.

Northeast food will be one of the highlights. Along with 25 food stalls offering northeast delicacies, there will be option to buy vegetables from the region not easily available in Delhi.

Two or three films from the northeast will be screened too. And there will be plays based on stories of the region.

“We are trying to bring the entire northeast under one platform,” Mahanta said.

The fest has more to offer in terms of entertainment.

“There will be around 45 musical acts. Popular musicians like Lou Majaw, Zubeen Garg and Girish and The Chronicles will perform. We are expecting Rabbi Shergill to join us,” said Mahanta.(IANS)

## Heritage tourism circuit in Birbhum

**KOLKATA:** Birbhum tourism is not just about Tagore’s Santiniketan. The district has a host of traditional temples which have heritage value and also unique architecture. Tourists can now take interest in it on their way to Santiniketan via Burdwan. This apart, temples like the one at Tarapith is of special mention.

Prodded by chief minister Mamata Banerjee, the state tourism department has come up with a Rs 20 crore plan to develop a heritage eco tourism circuit in Birbhum. The authorities have already started building lodges and cottages and will revamp the areas surrounding Tarapith, Bakreswar and Kenduli.

State tourism department secretary Ajit Ranjan Bardhan and other officials visited some areas in Tarapith on Tuesday to finalize the plans. “The plan is to develop a tourism circuit around Tarapith, Bakreswar, Kendua and Santiniketan. The thrust will be on heritage and eco-tourism,” Bardhan said. The Birbhum district administration will be assisting the tourism department in implementing the project. A meeting

was held between the officials of tourism department and Birbhum district administration to chalk out plans.

Sources said the overall tourism infrastructure in these places will be developed. A beautification programme will also be taken up in Tarapith, surrounding the temple, where the roads will be beautified. A tourist lodge will be set up at Tarapith where about 80 visitors could be accommodated. The authorities have already started setting up tourist cottages in Bakreswar.

Plans are also on to provide shelters to the ‘sadhus’ there. Landscaping will also be done along the Dwaraka river with a separate footbridge for visitors who will go to the temple and those who will go to the crematorium. Welcome entry gates will be set up at Jaydeb and Kenduli.

The tourism department also has plans to initiate a public private partnership (PPP) project on a nine-acre plot in Santiniketan to develop eco tourism. This apart, restoration work has been planned in a few temples and heritage structures in the areas.



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# ‘Rs 400 crore project to boost waterways



**NEW DELHI:** To boost waterways, the government has prepared a Rs 400 crore project under which the centre will provide subsidy of 50 per cent to states to build floating jetties, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari today said.

Also, the government has decided to open up seven new major ports in the country, Gadkari said after chairing the sixteenth meeting of Maritime State Development Council (MSDC) at Dona Paula near Panaji in Goa today.

“The government has prepared a new scheme worth Rs 400 crore to boost inland waterways. Under the scheme the Government of India will

give 50 per cent subsidy to states to erect floating jetties while 50 per cent of the cost will have to be borne by the states,” an official statement issued here said quoting the Minister.

The scheme has been sent to the cabinet for its approval, the statement added.

For passenger jetties this subsidy will be Rs 10 crores while for container/goods jetties, it will be restricted to Rs 25 crore, he said.

“The Union Government has decided to open up 7 new major ports in addition to 12 existing major ports, out of which one will be based in West Bengal namely Sagar port and the other will be in Dahanu in Ma-

harashtra to be opened up jointly for Maharashtra and Kerala.... The work on these two projects has already begun,” he said.

Gadkari also released a vision document after the meeting.

Releasing the vision document the Minister said in order to increase the share of coastal shipping in modal cargo mix to 10 per cent by 2019-20 and to promote cruise tourism leading to development of coastal regions, the Ministry has prepared a vision for coastal shipping, tourism and regional development in consultation with stakeholders along with an action plan to achieve the objectives.



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**Mr Tejinder Singh Walia, past president passes the baton of FHRAI presidency to Mr Bharat Malkani**

# Bharat Malkani takes over as FHRAI President

**MR. BHARAT MALKANI** has been elected as President of the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) for 2015-16. The 59th annual general meeting of FHRAI was held at the Suryaa Hotel, New Delhi on September 30, 2015.

An alumnus of the prestigious University of Washington, St. Louis, USA where he completed his MS in Technology Management, Mr. Malkani is a dynamic and trusted entrepreneur with business interests in hospitality and aerospace industries. The diversity of his businesses does not detract from providing high quality services to all his clients who, among others, include the Indian government and the

armed forces. He is the chairman of Transit Group of Hotels that operate two business boutique hotels located at Mumbai domestic and international airport. He is also chairman of Max Aerospace and Aviation Pvt. Ltd.

Widely travelled around the globe, Mr. Malkani is recognized for his sharp business acumen and strategic leadership. He is a member of various trade associations such as Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI), CII, Society of Indian Aerospace Technologies and Industries (SIATI), Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO), besides other prominent trade bodies.

After being elected President –FH-

RAI, Mr. Bharat Malkani said: “As an association we need to change and modernize ourselves and redefine our strategies towards our members. We wish to work closely with various government bodies, apprise them of our concerns and to find solutions. Every effort would be made to seek positive and favorable policies that would stimulate tourism growth at all levels.”

At the first meeting of the new FHRAI Executive Committee, the following Office Bearers for 2015-16 were also elected:

- Honorary Secretary:** Mr. Vivek Nair, CMD, Hotel Leelaventure Ltd
- Vice-President:** Mr. Luv Malhotra, JMD, The Suryaa, CHL Ltd
- Vice-President:** Mr. T.S.Walia, Chairman, Hotel Walson
- Vice-President:** Mr. K. Syama Raju, MD, Hotel Maurya
- Honorary Treasurer:** Mr. Sudesh-Poddar, MD, Satya Hotels and Natraj Hotel & Resorts
- Joint Hony. Secretary:** Mr. Garish Oberoi, Partner, Hotel UberoiAnand
- Joint Hony. Secretary:** Mr. K. Murali Rao, MD, New Woodlands Hotels Pvt Ltd

## About FHRAI

The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) is the apex body of the Indian hospitality industry and represents nearly 4000 members, including hotels, restaurants and associates, spanning the length and breadth of our vast country. Founded in 1955, the association has steadily evolved into being the pre-eminent national voice of the hospitality industry and plays a seminal role in supporting the growth trajectory of India’s tourism sector. FHRAI provides a vibrant interface between industry, government, regulatory bodies, academia, international organisations, civil society and the media.

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# New HRAEI committee (2015-16) takes charge

Mr Sudesh Poddar was elected president of HRAEI for the second consecutive year at the recently concluded committee meeting of the Hotels & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI). With the addition of approximately 100 new members, the total membership strength has touched 600.

**New Office bearers of HRAEI for the year 2015-16 are given below**

SL. NO.	NAME	OFFICE BEARERS
1	Mr Sudesh Poddar	President
2	Mr Vinaay Malhotra	Senior Vice President
3	Mr Gopal Das Agarwal	Vice President
4	Mr Pranav Singh	Honorary Secretary
5	Mr Mahavir Prasad Agarwal	Joint Honorary Secretary
6	Mr Nitin S Kothari	Honorary Treasurer
7	Mrs Alka Sehgal	Joint Honorary Treasurer

**Newly elected members in the HRAEI Managing Committee**

Sl. No.	Name	Designation	Organisation	Place
1	Mr. Amit Ruia	Director	Hotel Narayani	Kolkata
2	Mr. Apurva Salarpuria	Director	Novotel Kolkata Hotel & Residences	Kolkata
3	Mr. Shanker Singh	Director	Hotel Esteem	Kolkata
4	Mr. Vijay Dewan	Managing Director	The Park	Kolkata
5	Mohammed Azhar	Partner	Aminia Restaurant	Kolkata
6	Mr. Mahesh Agarwal	Proprietor	Haldiram Bhujawala	Kolkata
7	Mr. Nitin S Kothari	Sole Proprietor	Peter Cat Restaurant	Kolkata
8	Mr. Vishwaratna Goenka	Managing Director	Vishwanath Hotel	Guwahati
9	Mr. Girish Arora	Proprietor	Sea Shell Hotel	Port Blair
10	Dr. Ajoy Kumar Singh	Managing Director	Hotel Samrat International	Patna
11	Mr. Ronald D' Costa	Partner	The Boulevard Hotel	Jamshedpur
12	Mr. Dilip Kumar Ray	Chairman cum Managing Director	Mayfair Lagoon, Bhubaneswar	Bhubaneswar
13	Mr. Mahavir Prasad Agarwal	Managing Director	Central Hotel	Gangtok





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# HRAEI NEW COMMITTEE



**Mr. Sudesh Poddar**  
President, HRAEI, & Honorary Treasurer, FHRAI



**Mr. Vinaay Malhotra**  
Senior Vice President, HRAEI & FHRAI EC Member



**Mr. Gopal Das Agarwal**  
Vice President, HRAEI



**Mr. Pranav Singh**  
Honorary Secretary, HRAEI, & FHRAI EC Member



**Mr. Nitin S Kothari**  
Honorary Treasurer, HRAEI



**Mr. Mahavir Prasad Agarwal**  
Honorary Joint Secretary, HRAEI



**Mrs. Alka Sehgal**  
Honorary Joint Treasurer, HRAEI



**Mr. Tejinder Singh Walia**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI & Vice President, FHRAI



**Mr. Ashoke Singh**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI & FHRAI EC Member



**Mr. Amit Ruia**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Apurva Salarpuria**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Chandan Bhambani**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Dilip Kumar Ray**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI &  
FHRAI EC Member



**Mr. Girish Arora**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Mahesh Agarwal**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Navin Suchanti**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Rajiv Gogia**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Rajiv S Kothari**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Ravi B Parikh**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Ravindra Kumar Kashuka**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI

# HRAEI NEW COMMITTEE



**Mr. Ronald D' Costa**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Shanker Singh**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. V K Kapur**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Vijay Dewan**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI &  
FHRAI Co-opted Member



**Mr. Vishwanath Goenka**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mohammed Azhar**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Dr. Ajoy Kumar Singh**  
Managing Committee Member, HRAEI



**Mr. Souvagya Kumar Mohapatra**  
Managing Committee Member [Co-opted],  
HRAEI



**Mr. Charles Mantosh**  
Managing Committee Member  
[Co-opted], HRAEI



**Mr. Samrat Datta**  
Managing Committee Member  
[Co-opted], HRAEI



**Md. Aminul Haque**  
Managing Committee Member [Co-opted],



**Mr. Atul Bhalla**  
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Special Invitee, HRAEI



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# GOLDEN JUBILEE CONVENTION OF FHRAI

## Centre May Modify Policy to Grab Global Tourism Market



**BHUBANESWAR:** Even as India holds a special place in the hospitality industry across the world, there is a need for constant innovation to keep the sector afloat. This was opined by speakers at the inaugural session titled ‘Atithi Devo Bhava: The Legacy Continues’ of the golden jubilee convention of Federation of Hotels and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI).

Moderating the session, actor Victor Banerjee said Odisha, despite being a kaleidoscope of rich culture, festivity, magnificent historical sites, monuments and landscapes, is less explored.

“The State has immense tourism potential which needs to be explored

by travellers as well as stakeholders in the sector,” Banerjee said.

Taking the discussion forward, Director of Inox Leisure Ltd Subhasis Ganguli said the country’s hospitality industry is the fastest growing sector as far as generating employment and revenue is concerned. “The concept of ‘Atithi Devo Bhava’ is a long running tradition in India. But at a time when competition in the hospitality industry is increasing day by day, meeting customer expectations has become the need of the hour. Stakeholders in the sector should ensure that customers get value for their money,” he said.

Echoing Ganguli’s views, former vice-chairman of American Chamber

Aniruddha Lahiri said stakeholders in the sector need to continuously come up with new ways of enhancing the experience of their increasingly demanding clientele. “Hospitality in India has become extremely diverse, starting from guest houses to cosy huts and from palaces to stunning heritage mansions,” he said.

While actress Mahima Chaudhary and actor Gulshan Grover opined that Indian hotels rarely fail to leave a lasting impression on visitors as compared to the West, Paul Walsh, founder of Jungle Crows, said hoteliers should take care to reflect the regional flavour in their properties and services.

The issue of taxation in the sector

was also discussed. Speakers said taxation has turned out to be the biggest deterrent in the sector today. “These days, Indians find travelling to South East Asian countries like Thailand, Cambodia and China cheaper than visiting Goa as holidaying in Indian destinations has become an extremely expensive affair,” Ganguli said.

Drawing parallel between hospitality in India and Thailand, Consul General of the country Preecha Kaensa said Thailand’s primary focus is on airport, hotel and restaurant as far as welcoming travellers is concerned. “Like Indians, we pay a lot of attention to providing great hospitality and sumptuous food. That is the reason, we have a lot of Indian restaurants in Thailand,” he said. Kaensa’s counterpart from Italy, Cesare Bieller said Indian hoteliers should focus on lesser known but beautiful tourism destinations in the North East.

The speakers were unanimous in their view that it is the friendly gesture by hotel employees that sets Indian hospitality apart from other parts of the world. (New Indian Express)



# Odisha's Tourism Potential Remains to be Fully Tapped: FHRAI



**BHUBANESWAR:** Even as India holds a special place in the hospitality industry across the world, there is a need for constant innovation to keep the sector afloat. This was opined by speakers at the inaugural session titled 'Atithi Devo Bhava: The Legacy Continues' of the golden jubilee convention of Federation of Hotels and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI).

Moderating the session, actor Victor Banerjee said Odisha, despite being a kaleidoscope of rich culture, festivity, magnificent historical sites, monuments and landscapes, is less explored.

"The State has immense tourism potential which needs to be explored by travellers as well as stakeholders in the sector," Banerjee said.

Taking the discussion forward, Director of Inox Leisure Ltd Subhasis Ganguli said the country's hospitality industry is the fastest growing sector as far as generating employment and revenue is concerned. "The concept of 'Atithi Devo Bhava' is a long running tradition in India. But at a time when

competition in the hospitality industry is increasing day by day, meeting customer expectations has become the need of the hour. Stakeholders in the sector should ensure that customers get value for their money," he said.

Echoing Ganguli's views, former vice-chairman of American Chamber Aniruddha Lahiri said stakeholders in the sector need to continuously come up with new ways of enhancing the experience of their increasingly demanding clientele. "Hospitality in India has become extremely diverse, starting from guest houses to cosy huts and from palaces to stunning heritage mansions," he said.

While actress Mahima Chaudhary and actor Gulshan Grover opined that Indian hotels rarely fail to leave a lasting impression on visitors as compared to the West, Paul Walsh, founder of Jungle Crows, said hoteliers should take care to reflect the regional flavour in their properties and services.

The issue of taxation in the sector was also discussed. Speakers said taxation has turned out to be the biggest

deterrent in the sector today. "These days, Indians find travelling to South East Asian countries like Thailand, Cambodia and China cheaper than visiting Goa as holidaying in Indian destinations has become an extremely expensive affair," Ganguli said.

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The speakers were unanimous in their view that it is the friendly gesture by hotel employees that sets Indian hospitality apart from other parts of the world. (New Indian Express)



## Hoteliers express interest to open 'star' properties in Odisha

**A** day after Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik offered all out support to the tourism sector, a number of groups today expressed interest to set up star hotels in the state.

Big players from the international hotel industry like Newport, USA and domestic majors like Lemon Tree, Haldiram, Brahma Putra, ITC Fortune and Ramada Plaza are keen to set up hotels in the state, a tourism department official said.

The proposals from the industry came on the second day of the Feder-

ation of Hotel and Restaurant Association of India's (FHRAI) 3-day long golden jubilee convention here.

FHRAI president Tejinder Singh Walia said two premiere five-star hotels will come up in the twin city of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. While the Haldiram Group will construct one and another would be set up by the ITC Fortune Group. One of the two would be set up here, while the other would come up between Cuttack and Bhubaneswar.

"Yes, some groups have expressed their interest to set up hotels in the

state. They have been told to make formal application and we will provide all facilities available under the state's new IPR-2015," tourism secretary L N Gupta said.

Odisha's long coastline, beaches, lakes, dense forests, wildlife, Buddhist sites, ancient monuments and its rich cultural heritage attracted many hotel groups, he said.

The state's tourism and industries departments in a joint presentation at the convention highlighted the unique tourism products and tourism potential of the state. (PTI)



# Hoteliers' body proposes new circuit- 'Splendours of eastern India'

**BHUBANESWAR:** Aiming to tap the tourism potential of eastern India including the north east, the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) has urged the state governments to jointly market the region by creating a new circuit "Splendours of eastern India".

"The whole of eastern and north-eastern India has so much potential for development of tourism. The region is

vastly unexplored. Globally tourism has acquired new dimension and the young travellers are looking for destinations where they experience new cultures and lifestyle," Sudesh Poddar, president of Hotel and Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI) said in a release on recently.

"So, it may be an excellent idea to network and jointly market the region by creating a new circuit Splendours

of eastern India."

He said the region has a large number of places important to Buddhism. "Tourists who visit Bodh Gaya can cover the entire eastern and north eastern states where there are Buddhist temples and relics. Tourists particularly those from China, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia and Myanmar will be delighted to visit these places," said Poddar.(IANS)

## Odisha 3D Map unveiled at Biju Patnaik International Airport

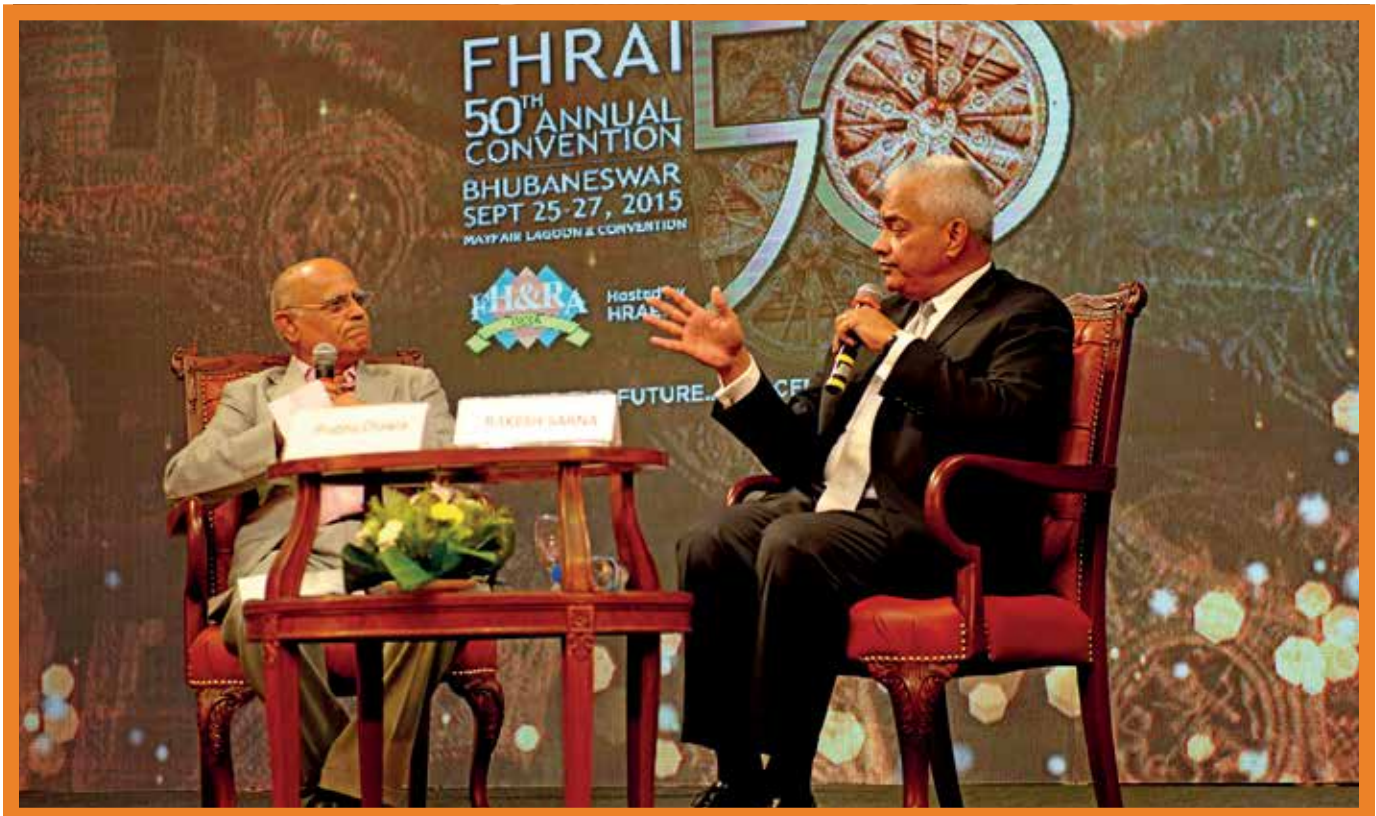


**Bhubaneswar:** In order to attract more tourists to Odisha, an unique Odisha 3D Map showcasing significant tourist destinations of Odisha has been unveiled today at Biju Patnaik

International Airport. State Tourism and Culture Minister Shri Ashok Chandra Panda today unveiled the 3D map of Odisha on the premises of Bhubaneswar Biju Patnaik International

airport. The 3D map is showcasing the significant tourist destinations like Jagannath Temple of Puri, Konark, Dhauli, Mukteswar Temple, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Hill Stations, Beaches, Backwaters, etc. Unveiling this 3D map, State Tourism and Culture Minister Shri Ashok Chandra Panda said, "Through this map installed permanently at Airport, tourists from outside Odisha as well as abroad can get information about the significant tourist spots of the State easily," The 3D map of Odisha unveiled on the opening day of the Golden Jubilee Ceremony of FHRAI starting from today in the capital city. More than 800 delegates have registered here to attend the mega convention.

Among others President of Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Association of India(FHRAI) Shri T S Walia, Bhubaneswar-Madhya MLA Shri Priyadarshi Mishra, Shri Sudesh Poddar, Shri Debashish Patnaik were present in the unveiling ceremony. (odishadiary.com)



# 'Social Media Must for Hospitality Industry'

**BHUBANESWAR:** Social media is emerging as the latest trend in generating revenue for hospitality and travel sectors, said speakers at the concluding day of the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Association of India (FHRAI) golden jubilee convention here on Sunday.

Elaborating on the importance of online portals in hospitality sector, social media expert Avijit Arya said in the present day scenario, Internet or online portals and social media play a very crucial role in getting business for the hospitality industry. "Today, you cannot even think of running a hotel without having a website or presence in social media," he added.

Country Manager of TripAdvisor India Nikhil Ganju termed travel websites as the new mode of generating revenue. "Social media is the new bridge between hospitality and

travel industries and the customers," he said.

Moderating the technical session on 'Social Media and Technology - Influence on Hospitality Business', CEO of Resnext Global Solutions Mike Kistner said for the hospitality business, a very strong marketing tool is social media which is an amalgamation of socio benchmarking and wikis.

The concluding day also saw celebrity chefs deliberating on changing trends in restaurant business and customer preferences in the session 'Restaurants of Future'.

Chef Aditya Bal said while thinking of setting up a restaurant, one should be aware of the global changing perception. As far as cuisines are concerned, Bal said, chefs are now celebrating regional flavours with a new touch and many traditional cuisines are being repackaged suiting customer

needs and preferences.

Speaking to mediapersons, FHRAI's vice-president Bharat Malhani said the existing level of taxes on the hospitality industry in India is very high as compared to neighbouring countries like Singapore and Thailand despite the fact that India receives very less number of tourists compared to other destinations in South East Asia. "This is affecting the overall tourist inflow in the country. If the tax percentage on the industry is lowered, we can get more tourist inflow to the country which will result in increased revenue for the Government," he said and added that FHRAI will prepare a charter soon which will be submitted in the pre-budget notes to the Central Government. The three-day convention ended in Puri with a gala evening on the beach. (New Indian Express)

## Odisha carnival celebrates World Tourism Day

**A** colourful carnival with dancers from several states was organised in Odisha's capital city to mark World Tourism Day on September 27, 2015.

The first-of-its-kind carnival, flagged off by Governor S.C. Jamir, was jointly organised by Odisha Tourism and Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI).

The carnival procession was led by biker groups on luxury bikes followed by vintage cars. Bollywood diva Mahima Chaudhry also joined the carnival.

Eight tableaux were exclusively designed for this cultural extravaganza. The World Tourism float led the carnival procession, while the Odisha Tourism float showcased different tourist destinations in the state.

"School and college students and various folk artistes performed as well," said state Tourism and Culture Minister Ashok Chandra Panda.

Besides, bands of Indian Navy, Odisha Police along with dance troupes from Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Jharkhand enthralled the spec-

tators.

"We have truly celebrated World Tourism Day today. There is representation here at national as well as international level, with guests from US and Italian consulates also present here", said Tejinder Singh Walia, FHRAI President.

FHRAI technical committee chairman Debashish Pattnaik said: "This unique World Tourism Day carnival was planned to showcase the rich culture and heritage as well as popular tourist destinations in the state." (IANS)







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# Integrated strategy for Buddhist circuit is the key

**A** dedicated and impartial institutional capacity and financial allocation is needed to coordinate and drive implementation of an integrated strategy across states and countries. This capacity should be agreed upon by various parties and established as soon as possible since the successful implementation of the Buddhist Circuit strategy will depend on this, according to a report prepared by the IFC, Investing in the Buddhist Circuit, for the government of India.

The Buddhist Circuit is a route that follows in the footsteps of the Buddha from Lumbini in Nepal where he was born, through Bihar in India where he attained enlightenment, to Sarnath and Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh in India, where he gave his first teachings and died. This iconic route only

includes places where the Buddha actually spent time, and these sites – all of which are over 2500 years old – are among the most significant and revered for all Buddhists.

Although tourism authorities of India, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Nepal are all engaged in initiatives to promote and develop the Buddhist Circuit, these attempts are uncoordinated and not based on an integrated strategy, the IFC report has pointed out.

The rationale for investing in the Buddhist Circuit is to improve the experience of visiting these sites and link that to the potential of tourism to deliver sustainable and inclusive economic growth through job creation and income generation opportunities for micro and small enterprises and by growing a related tax base. Experience in other parts of the world





demonstrates that tourism benefits reach deep into local households. For India, and especially Bihar and Uttar Pradesh – two of India’s most populous states – accessing these benefits is vital for growth.

The most important places along the Buddhist circuit are:

- Lumbini (in Nepal) – where he was born.
- Bodhgaya (in Bihar) – where he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree.
- Sarnath (in Uttar Pradesh) – where he delivered his first sermon.
- Nalanda and Rajgir (in Bihar) – where he lived and taught, and Nalanda, in particular, became the centre of Buddhist learning and teaching.
- Kushinagar (in Uttar Pradesh) – where he died.
- Kapilvastu (on India Nepal Border) – Kapilvastu is deeply endowed with the Buddha’s origins. It is believed that Buddha spent his first early years here before embarking on the long journey to enlightenment.
- Vaishali (in Bihar) – Buddha’s last sermon delivered.
- Sravasti (in Uttar Pradesh) – Buddha spent twenty four rainy seasons here at the Jetavan monastery, built by his disciple Sudatta Anathapindika.
- Kausambi (in Uttar Pradesh) – Buddha is believed to have stayed and preached at Kausambi.

Destinations along the Buddhist Circuit need to transform into interpretive and learning contact points, which in turn will stimulate demand, promote longer stays, and generate a desire to visit other sites and lead to growth in goods and service providers. There is scope to enhance the visitor experience beyond trips to monuments and temples; however, this requires specific interventions in planning, skills development, market access, and access to finance.



► Mahaparinirvana Temple, Kushinagar (Uttar Pradesh)

# Swot analysis of BUDDHIST CIRCUIT

## STRENGTHS

- Already well-established as a major pilgrimage route
- A global market of 450 million Buddhists
- All countries with strong Buddhist cultures have monasteries on the circuit
- The importance of the Buddhist Circuit makes it attractive to non-Buddhists
- Stupas and temples date back over 2000 years
- There are high quality relics in museums in Sarnath, Bodhgaya, and Patna. One of the best collection of Buddhist artefacts anywhere in the world. It is only second to the Indian National Museum in Kolkata and superior to the National Museum in Delhi.
- The country possesses the actual

corporal relic casket of the Buddha in Patna and other relics found in the relic stupa of Vaishali.

## WEAKNESSES

- Sold mostly by specialist Buddhist Circuit operators and not by the general tour operator community.
- No clear brand identity – fragmented among private and public-sector role-players
- Very limited online marketing.
- High seasonality linked to weather conditions as most pilgrims/tourists come during the more pleasant cooler season.
- Low standard of tourist-related services and products.
- No accommodation facilities above 3-star level (only a total 300 3-star rooms across the circuit)
- Limited tourist-quality restaurants,



► This project is a unique collaboration across states, multiple state government levels and with the Union government; there are valuable lessons for improving the delivery model for Indian government resources

- coffee shops, shopping, and services.
- Limited multi-lingual guides and visitor interaction.
- Lack of land for new developments.
- Few amenities such as picnic and recreation areas for day visitors and tourist relaxation.
- Limited opportunities to shop for authentic local arts, crafts and other goods.
- Limited tourist activities beyond Buddhist sites. For instance, hiking Buddha trails, picnic places, nature engagement, cultural and village experiences, mind-body-spirit programs, archaeology and geomorphology, agro-tourism, and adventure.
- Museums display relics but offer limited interpretation of the rich heritage behind them.
- Restrooms of poor standard.
- Tourist information centers poorly managed.
- Road quality poor in many places making travel arduous, time-consuming, and, often, dangerous.
- Lack of wayside amenities increase discomfort over long travel distances and times.
- Inconvenient rail schedules between sites.
- Local community organisations, monasteries, local bodies and other government authorities seldom engaged in joint planning and partnerships.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Potential to attract the large Buddhist population from nearby Asian countries – year on year only 0.005% of source market Buddhists visit the Buddhist Circuit.
- Location allows for mainstreaming the Buddhist Circuit as an extension to northern India foreign tourist circuit.
- Attracting tourists with special prices and events during shoulder season (a travel period between

- peak and off-peak seasons) could expand market share.
- As market grows investment opportunities will increase for higher quality hotels, restaurants, and wellness resorts.
- Offering experiences beyond pilgrimage sites.
- Developing local supply chains and income generating opportunities through tourism.
- Developing unique local shopping opportunities for arts, handicrafts, food, and clothing.
- This project is a unique collaboration across states, multiple state government levels and with the Union government; there are valuable lessons for improving the delivery model for Indian government resources.

### THREATS

- Population pressures and competition for resources may lead to encroachment of Buddhist sites
- Traffic congestion around sites potentially hazardous
- Air pollution may damage ancient relics (this is already happening in some places)
- Destruction of relics and sites due to a lack of awareness and sensitivity towards fragility of ancient sites
- Buddhist sites set in Hindu and Muslim dominated communities may dilute Buddhist character and experience
- Lack of understanding among locals and pilgrims of respective lifestyles, needs, and traditions may cause insensitivity and conflict
- Hazardous road conditions may compromise transportation safety of tourists
- Lack of hygiene and poor food safety standards may threaten visitor health and taint the circuit's brand.
- There are multiple government agencies at village, municipal, district, state and federal with unclear and in some cases overlapping

mandates over sites on the Buddhist Circuit, aspects of connectivity, infrastructure development and market development; this threatens the viability of collective actions that might contribute to the transformation envisaged by stakeholders.

The Buddhist Circuit presents an opportunity for the development and growth of tourism, supporting industries and the economy/community at large. Improvement in infrastructure through developing roads, railway networks, airlines, hotels, transport and travel agencies, translators, facilitators, tour guides and so on can generate large-scale employment in the states of UP and Bihar. There is an opportunity for the participation of the local community, which must be involved for the upliftment of the poor economic conditions and create sustainable tourism in these states. Development of infrastructure, product/experience, amenities, connectivity, marketing, and promotion will lead to the development of the circuit as a year round easily accessible circuit appealing to a wide range of tourist groups. With the fast growing tourist arrivals and the above mentioned developments, the need for quality hotels from the budget to upper mid-market segments across destinations (and upscale space in some destinations) is critical for developing and sustaining tourism along the circuit. In times when the hospitality and travel industry are faced with challenges of over competition and diminishing returns in established operating markets and tourist circuits across the country, the proposed PPP model to develop the Buddhist Tourist Circuit in UP and Bihar is a prospect where stakeholders in the industry can create, establish and be a part of a truly international circuit.

*(Source: Investing in the Buddhist circuit: IFC and HVS Research)*

## Amaravati all set to be Mahayana Buddhist centre



► The giant Dhyana Buddha complex at Amaravati in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh

**T**he ancient town of Amaravati, which forms part of the upcoming capital region of the State, will be promoted as a cradle of Mahayana Buddhism to attract international tourists, particularly those from Chi-

na, Japan, Thailand and other Asian countries.

Acharya Nagarjuna, known as the second Buddha, was the founder of Madhyamika school of Mahayana Buddhism, one of the two main

branches of Buddhism. With the Urban Development Ministry already declaring the ancient Amaravati as one of the 12 Heritage Cities in the country under HRIDAY scheme, the Andhra Pradesh government is focusing on developing a major Mahayana Buddhist tourism circuit encompassing Amaravati and Nagarjuna Konda.

Generally tourists visiting Buddhist circuit go to Bodh Gaya, Sarnath, Lumbini and Kushinagar. “We want to market Amaravati and Nagarjuna Konda as part of the Buddhist circuit,” a top official told The Hindu .

Following Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu’s tour to China, a team from Chinese Buddhist Association visited Nagarjuna Konda. The Buddhist Association had assured to contribute its mite in the promotion of Nagarjuna Konda and other Buddhist sites among Chinese tourists and it was equally interested in investing in the tourism projects here.

The official said the State government was planning to establish an exclusive stall in Bodh Gaya to disseminate information on the importance of Amravati, Nagarjuna Konda and other Buddhist sites in Andhra Pradesh. He said Buddhist-related festivals were being organised every year between October and March at Bodh Gaya where Buddhist Monasteries from different countries have been established. “We also want to tie-up with those monasteries,” the official said and setting up of Monasteries Boulevard in the new capital region was a major step in this direction.

“Make Amaravati your second home,” was the call given by the chief minister during his recent tours to Japan and China. The government is also planning to introduce diploma courses in Japanese language in Acharya Nagarjuna University in Guntur to help the Telugu-speaking professionals work in tandem with the Japanese.



#### ► Rajgir Hills

Making tourism as one of its mission, Andhra Pradesh is planning a special police force for the safety and security of tourists. The force would have special police stations for tourists, apart from a round-the-clock call centre and a guidance centre. The state tourism department is also exploring introduction of one ticket for multi-modal transportation for a tourist. The government is planning to attract Rs 10,000 crore worth investments in tourism sector alone in the next five years, particularly in the Buddhist circuit.

It was decided that tourism projects would be treated as industrial ventures and single-desk clearances would be granted to them within 21 days. Tourism projects will be levied only a special tariff, giving them a fair chance to take off. The tourism department was told to attract international tourists, by bringing famous tourist operators on board and work with them.

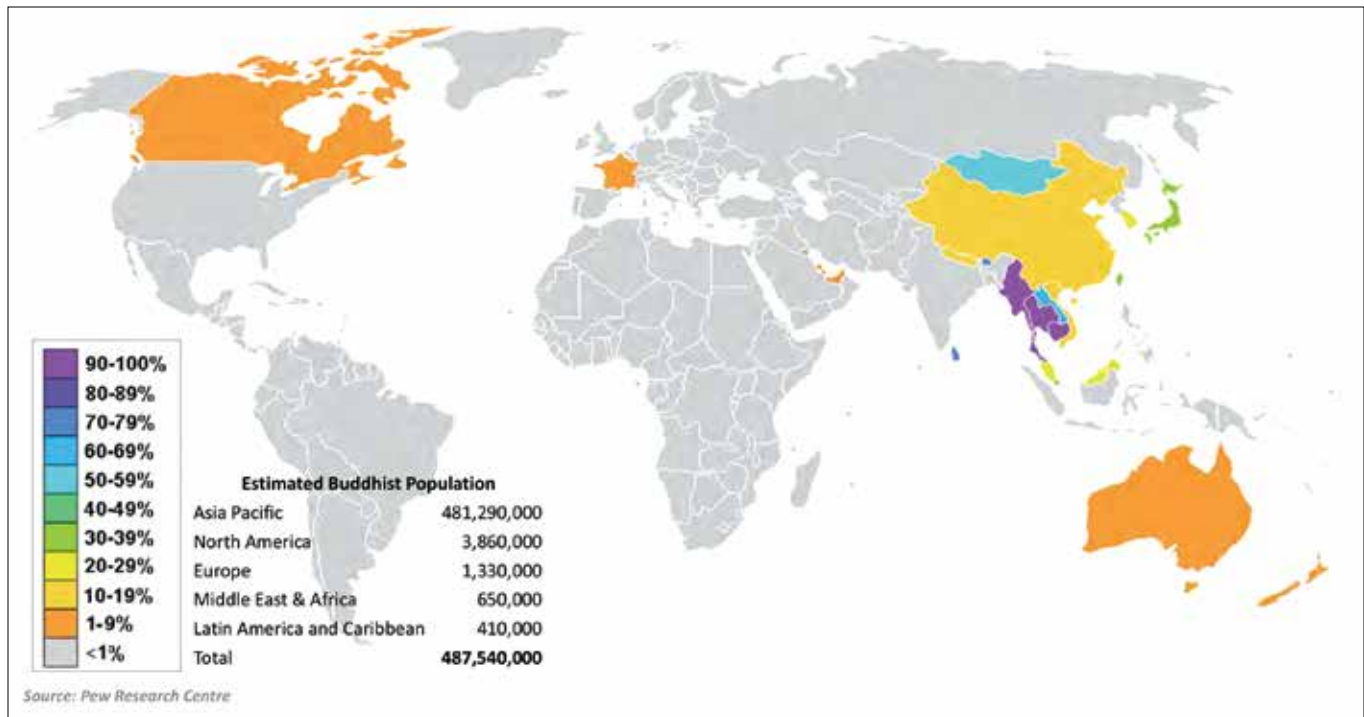
The Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation will pool workforce required for the tourism and hospitality sector. A tourism and hospitality university will be set up. The department will also explore the possibility of introducing water sports, beach tourism, spiritual tourism, eco-tourism, caravan tourism, and heli-tourism.

Two major expressways and other multi-lane highways will link important towns and ports, including Visakhapatnam, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru, with Amaravati. A green-field international airport is also envisaged near Mangalagiri close to the new capital.

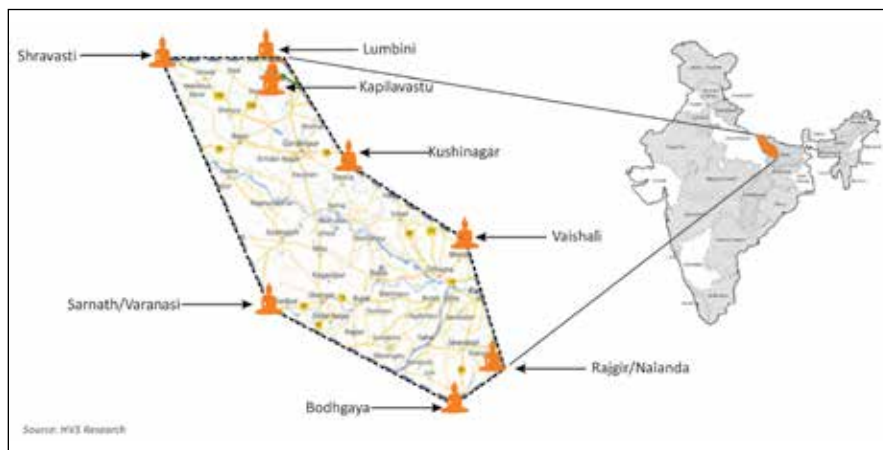
Various projects have been planned to develop ancient Amravati town under HRIDAY scheme and also under PRASAD scheme of the Union Ministry of Tourism by spending about Rs. 90 crore.

(source: The Hindu, Deccan Herald)

## Distribution of Buddhist population around the world



## Destinations along the Buddhist Circuit



Local community organisations, monasteries, local bodies and other government authorities seldom engaged in joint planning and partnerships

Amaravati and neighbouring Dharni-kota were once the seat of power during the rule of Satavahana during 2nd century BC and 3rd century BC. Since then, it continued as the capital of many Andhra dynasties until the Moguls conquest and the subsequent British rule.

Besides, Amaravati is also seat of the Buddhist renaissance in the south and the home of Saint Acharya Nagarjuna, one of disciples of the Lord Buddha. Nagarjuna was instrumental in the development of the two truths doctrine, the ultimate reality and the conventionally or superficial reality.

Amaravati is also famous for Buddhist sites, including a stupa built during Emperor Ashoka's time. In 2007, the Kalachakra was performed at Amaravati with the participation of Dalai Lama and Buddhist monks from all over world. The tallest Dhyana Buddha statue (125 feet) is also being built

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## THE BUDDHIST CIRCUIT - MAJOR EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF BUDDHA

Birth at  
LUMBINI (Nepal)  
624 BC

Mahaparinirvana at  
KUSHINAGAR (UP)  
544 BC

Marriage  
at KAPILAVASTU  
(UP) 608 BC

Last Sermon  
at VAISHALI  
(Bihar)

Renunciation at  
KAPILAVASTU  
(UP)  
595 BC

Sermons at  
SHRAVASTI (UP)  
& RAJGIR/  
NALANDA  
(Bihar)

Enlightenment  
at BODHGAYA  
(Bihar) 589 BC

First Sermon at  
SARNATH (UP)  
588 BC





A jazz band consisting of three men in black tuxedos is performing in a hallway. The man on the left has long white hair and is playing a flute. The man in the center is playing a double bass. The man on the right is playing a saxophone. In the foreground, a woman is lying in a white bathtub, wearing a large, ornate, jeweled headdress. The hallway has a red carpet and a large, ornate chandelier hanging from the ceiling.

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A MEMBER OF DESIGN HOTELS

on the banks of Krishna close to the Amareswara temple.

The Dhyana Buddha project started in 2003. The state tourism department is planning to operate cruises from Vijaya-wada to Amaravati after its inauguration. The government believes that the tallest Dhyana Buddha will resurrect its capital dreams taking pressure off the agrarian Tullur and 28 other villages.

The development of the new capital will begin with the construction of the state legislature, the secretariat or headquarters of the government, and a high court. The government also announced a special industrial zone for the Japanese near Amaravati, as they are keen on

developing all the Buddhist heritage sites on the banks of Krishna.

“Make Amaravati your second home,” was the call given by the chief minister during his recent tours to Japan and China. The government is also planning to introduce diploma courses in Japanese language in Acharya Nagarjuna University in Guntur to help the Telugu-speaking professionals work in tandem with the Japanese.

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### India, China exploring possibilities of 'Buddhist circuit'

“We are exploring the possibility of Buddhist circuit with Indian officials,” Huang Xilian, Deputy Director General of Asian Affairs in the Chinese Foreign Ministry told Indian media here today. In 2014, 1.40 lakh Chinese visited Nepal, an increase of 70 per cent, indicating the popularity of Buddhist places like Lumbini where Buddha was born, he said.

India is organising ‘Visit India Year’ in 2015 to entice a chunk of about 100 million Chinese tourists who visited abroad last year, spending billions of dollars on shopping. (PTI)

“India is a natural repository of Buddhism. We should be using the deep Buddha connection to our advantage,” said BJP national executive member Seshadri Chari, who was among the main organisers of the Buddha Poornima Diwas in the Capital. He confirmed Modi government’s plan to go big on Buddhist diplomacy. India would host a conference next year, where practitioners of all kinds of Buddhism from various countries practising the religion will be invited. (ET)

## India, Myanmar look to boost ties with tourism

**Mandalay:** With Myanmar opening up in the last few years, international focus is back on The Golden Land. As its neighbour, India, too, is fast catching up with the changing political landscape in the neighbouring country and tourism is a sector both countries want to explore to boost bilateral ties.

In 2014, 3.08 million tourists visited Myanmar and 2.04 million visited it in 2013. However, India is in the 13th position on the list of tourists visiting Myanmar. Thailand and China occupy the two top spots.

“The tourism industry in Myanmar

is booming. Both Myanmar and India need to improve this sector. Every Myanmarese wants to visit Gaya in Bihar once in their lifetime,” says Cho Cho Myint, a visiting professor in the tourism department of Mandalay College, Mandalay.

Supplementing her, Tapir Gao, former Lok Sabha MP, said both sides should focus on the Buddhist connection. Saying that people of Myanmar and the northeast are the same, he said health tourism is another area that should be explored.

Chairing a technical session at the International Tourism Conference on

South East Asian Countries Tourism & India’s Act East Policy at Mandalay, Daw Kyi Kyi Aye of Myanmar Tourism Federation said the tourism sector is moving forward with the new government in Myanmar. She called for improving connectivity between Myanmar and Manipur.

The tourism conference on July 3 and 4 was jointly organized by the Indian Tourism and Hospitality Congress (ITHC), northeast chapter, and Mandalay College, Mandalay. It was supported by the Indian Consulate at Mandalay and Indo-Myanmar Fraternal Alliance.



Myanmar's deputy minister for hotel and tourism Sai Kyaw Ohm said his country is strategically located between South East Asia and South Asia. "India-Myanmar ties are deep-rooted and we share long borders. We now need to focus on improving connectivity," he added.

India shares a 1643-km-long border with Myanmar and there is a cultural connect between people on both sides.

"It has been a border of interaction, not a border of isolation," said N

Nandakumar, consul general of India, Mandalay.

He added that the change of perspective with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Act East Policy can make India's northeast region a tourism gateway to South East Asian countries.

With tourism and hospitality becoming the main industry in Myanmar, Win Hlaing, Mandalay region minister of social affairs, told the Indian delegation that his country has a

lot of potential and that the Myanmar are known for their hospitality.

Meinam Binota Devi, president of ITHC (NE), said the two countries have a bright future in tourism and called for strengthening the tourism infrastructure in border regions. President of Indo-Myanmar Fraternal Alliance R K Shivachandra said the future of NE India lies with Act East Policy and the region should facilitate Myanmar tourists in visiting Bodh Gaya by land. (ToI)

# Hope rekindled for revival of Vikramshila Mahavihara



**Bhagalpur:** With the HRD minister of state Upendra Kushwaha expressing concern and admitting the neglect of ancient Vikramshila Mahavihara (university), hopes of resurrection

of the ancient seat of education at Kahalgaon in Bhagalpur district has been rekindled.

Kushwaha, who was at Kahalgaon recently, also favoured linking the

Mahavihara with the 'Buddhist Circuit' so that its legacy can be restored. Earlier, BJP MP from Godda Nishikant Dubey, a resident of Kahalgaon, had sought the intervention of the

14th Dalai Lama in restoration of the Vikramshila Mahavihara, the ancient seat of Buddhist and tantric learning.

Dubey had communicated with Dalai Lama in 2013 and requested him to adopt Vikramshila Mahavihara for its development. The Godda MP had made efforts for making Dalai Lama the 'brand ambassador' of the ancient university.

**The Vikramshila Mahavihara was inhabited by thousands of Buddhist monks and scholars for research and was one of the two most important centres**

**of Buddhist learning in India during the Pala dynasty. It was established by King Dharmapala (783 to 820 AD) and is about 50 km east of Bhagalpur and 13 km north-east of Kahalgaon railway station on Bhagalpur-Sahebganj section of Eastern Railway.**

Buddhist monk Atish Dipankar Srigyan became the 'acharya' of the Vikramshila Mahavihara. Tibetans revered Srigyan as 'The Noble Lord' and as the 'Second Buddha' at that time.

Kushwaha assured that the Union HRD ministry would make serious

efforts for development and revival of the ancient varsity. BJP MP from Buxar Ashwini Choubey, who accompanied Kushwaha, said the university yearns for its revival. Revival on the lines of Nalanda University will result in development of the area, he said.

Congress legislature party (CLP) leader in state assembly and Kahalgaon MLA Sadanand Singh said he has been advocating development of Vikramshila since long and will take up the issue with CM Nitish Kumar and Union HRD ministry for restoring its legacy. (ToI)

#### Tourist arrivals in India by main tourist source regions and Buddhist countries, 2009-2011

Region/ country	Number of Arrivals			Percent share of arrivals	Percent growth	Estimated Buddhist population[3]	Percent Buddhists in total population
	2009	2010	2011				
				2011	2011/10	2012	2012
North America	1,051,209	1,173,664	1,239,705	19.65	5.6	7,241,845	1.6
South America	46,604	62,728	60,988	0.97	-2.8	651,248	0.3
Western Europe	1,634,042	1,750,342	1,838,695	29.14	5	64,666,457	5.3
Eastern Europe	183,475	227,650	274,598	4.35	20.6	387,165	1.8
Africa	164,474	204,525	232,386	3.68	13.6	157,581	0.1
West Asia	204,843	235,317	278,773	4.42	18.5	3,464,305	1.6
South Asia	1,001,401	1,047,444	1,139,659	18.06	8.8	38,997,284	2.6
Nepal	88,785	104,374	119,131	1.89	14.1	3,179,353	12
Sri Lanka	239,995	266,515	305,853	4.85	14.8	14,323,846	70
Bhutan	10,328	12,048	15,489	0.25	28.6	551,220	76
South East Asia	360,191	439,043	521,755	8.27	18.8	214,723,860	36.2
Myanmar	12,849	14,719	25,043	0.4	70.1	53,649,200	89
Singapore	95,328	107,487	119,022	1.89	10.7	1,753,092	33
Thailand	67,309	76,617	92,404	1.46	20.6	61,943,563	95
Vietnam	5,577	7,458	9,809	0.16	31.5	74,664,000	85

## Tourist arrivals in India by main tourist source regions and Buddhist countries, 2009-2011

Region/ country	Number of Arrivals			Percent share of arrivals	Percent growth	Estimated Buddhist population[3]	Percent Buddhists in total population
	2009	2010	2011				
East Asia	322,797	411,947	475,951	7.54	15.5	467,848,179	29.5
China	1,00,209	119,530	142,218	2.25	19	107,177,990	9
Taiwan	234,64	23,915	25,916	0.41	8.4	21,540,660	93
Japan	124,756	168,019	193,525	3.07	15.2	122,933,785	96
Rep Korea	70,485	95,587	108,680	1.72	13.7	11,265,569	70
Australasia	182,451	210,275	233,165	3.7	10.9	54,292	1.7
Total from Buddhist Countries	839,085	996,269	1,157,090	18.3	16.1	472,982,278	
Grand Total	5,167,699	5,775,692	6,309,222	100	9.2	489,807,761	

Source: Government of India, 2012

## Visitor numbers, markets shares, and growth patterns at Buddhist sites on the Circuit, 2006–2012

Location	Number Of visitors 2012			Percentage share of total 2012			CAGR percent 2006-2012		
	Indian	Foreign	Total	Indian	Foreign	Total	Indian	Foreign	Total
Kaushambi	146,131	8,401	154,532	2.2	0.7	2	9.6	10.5	9.7
Sarnath	833,500	355,294	1,188,794	12.4	29.6	15.3	5.6	8.7	6.4
Sankisa	77,620	11,700	89,320	1.2	1	1.1	5.6	11.8	6.3
Shravasti	113,965	113,538	227,503	1.7	9.5	2.9	2.8	7.1	4.8
Kushinagar	736,763	61,032	797,795	10.9	5.1	10.3	6.2	27.6	7.2
Kapilvastu	153,359	29,971	18,330	2.3	2.5	0.2	9.1	9.3	9.1
Bodhgaya	933,153	207,933	1,141,086	13.8	17.3	14.7	1.23	25.6	14.1
Rajgir	3,700,446	373,186	4,073,632	54.8	31.1	52.3	48.3	80.2	49.9
Vaishali	53,276	37,533	90,809	0.8	3.1	1.2	-23.3	21.9	-16.7
Total	6,748,213	1,198,588	7,781,801	100	100	100	17.9	19.6	17.7

Source: Government of Uttar Pradesh; Government of Bihar, 2013

## Summary of road conditions on the Buddhist circuit

Stretch	Distance and time	Condition	Comments
Varanasi-Bodhgaya (L-K)	255 km/approx. 5 hours	Excellent	
Bodhgaya-Rajgir/Nalanda (K-J)	90 km/approx. 2 hours	Average	Three very old narrow bridges slow down traffic. Bridge at Tungi Bazaar is especially bad, forcing tour coaches on a long detour along the mountain.
Rajgir-Patna (J-H)	110 km/approx. 4 hours	Average	Bottleneck at Fatwa, located between Bakhtiyarpur and Patna. Bakhtiyarpur to Rajgir is a very bad stretch.
Bodhgaya-Patna (K-H)	100 km/approx. 4 hours	Good but narrow	The road is being upgraded from Patna to Rajgir and Bodhgaya – due to be completed mid-2015
Patna-Vaishali (H-G)	54 km/approx. 2 hours	Average	Bad traffic management at bridge over the Ganges river leads to delays
Vaishali-Kushinagar (G-F)	175 km/approx. 6 hours	Average	National highway under construction. However, construction seems to have stopped leading to difficult driving conditions.
Kushinagar-Sravasti (F-B)	250 km/approx. 6 hours	Average	Wayside amenities needed.
Kushinagar-Lumbini (F-D)	180 km/approx. 5 hours	Average	Decent road, quite quick. Wayside amenities required.
Kushinagar-Varanasi via Gorakhpur (F-L)	270 km/approx. 7 hours	Poor	Kushinagar to Gorakhpur is in an acceptable condition, but Gorakhpur to Varanasi is poor.
Lucknow-Varanasi (A-L)	320 km/approx. 6 hours	Good	
Sravasti-Varanasi (L-N)	305 km/approx. 7 hours	Average	
Sravasti-Lucknow (B-A)	165 km/approx. 5 hours	Highway is in average condition, but adds an extra 90 km	Road deteriorates from Baraich to Sravasti, especially from Masuali. Wayside amenities needed.
Lucknow-Sankisa (A-N)	250 km/approx. 6 hours	Very poor	Lucknow to Kanpur is acceptable but Kanpur to Sankisa is very poor.

Source: Key tour operators on Buddhist Circuit

► Hornbill festival, 2014



## NAGALAND

# Land of song, dance and music

**S**hrouded in mystery, greatly awe inspiring till recent times, the territory of Nagaland finds mention in the ancient/Sanskrit scriptures, wherein it is hailed as 'Nag Bhumi'- the land of serpents. Due to the extremity of its location, the rugged terrain, coupled with dense forests and wildlife, Nagaland remained for long, almost a virgin territory where few mortals from the outside world dared to tread. But not so any-

more. With growing awareness and interest in travel and tourism, the travellers relentlessly search for newer destinations. Consequently, Nagaland is fast emerging as a tourist destination in its own right. Interestingly the state has its own distinctive cultural heritage steeped in tribal beliefs, superstitions, arts and crafts, dance and music, legends and myths.

Nagaland abounds in serene natural beauty and panoramic views of the

hills, which in fact are the eastern offshoots of the mighty Himalayas. Nagaland is the land of songs, music and dance where you can hear folk songs praising the brave deeds of ancient warriors and folk heroes, love songs immortalising tragic love stories, gospel songs and modern tunes. Each of the sixteen odd tribes and sub-tribes that dwell in this exotic hill state can easily be distinguished by the colourful and intricately designed costumes,





jewellery and beads that they wear. The present generation of Nagas have ventured into fashion designing in a big way, reproducing fabrics that represent the ancestral motifs blended with modern appeal. Nagaland has become a rich fashion centre of the Northeast.

Nature could not have been kinder to Nagaland, sometimes referred to as the 'Switzerland of the East'. The exquisitely picturesque landscapes, the vibrantly colourful sunrise and sunset and its diverse flora and fauna make this land a perfectly breathtaking experience. The inhabitants belong to the Indo-Mongoloid stock, whose ancestors lived off nature's abundant gifts, are blessed with friendly dispo-

sitions. Above all, the people here are warm-hearted and extremely hospitable.

The social evolution of the Naga society from the ethnic tribal community of headhunters to the modern society of today, just over the span of about 200 years is interesting. It shows the tenacity and adaptability of this unique community generally identified as a hostile society

Considering the unique and environmentally fragile region of North-east India in general, and Nagaland in particular, it is almost imperative that the tourism planning of the region should evolve around the concepts of eco-tourism and heritage tourism.

Scope for tourism development

About 58,000 domestic and 4,000 foreign tourists visited the state in 2014. Nagaland has recorded 61 per cent growth in the arrivals of the domestic tourists, while in the foreign tourists arrivals the state recorded a 33.33 per cent growth in 2014. Creation of tourist complexes, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, ethnic culture tourism, health farms, hotels, convention centres, tourist travel services, etc. are various avenues for investment in the sector.

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has included 12 villages in Nagaland under the rural tourism scheme in order to promote traditional rural art, craft, textile and culture. The preferred tourist destinations in the state are Kohima, Dimapur, Mokokchung, Longleng, Wokha, Kiphire, Zunheboto, Phek, Peren, Mon and Tuensang.

In the year 2013-14, 10 projects were sanctioned involving an amount of over US\$ 8.66 million while in 2014-15, 10 projects were sanctioned for an amount of around US\$ 10.12 million.

### Specific unique tourism projects for Nagaland

- Phokhungri / Zungki & Chindwin Rivers / Shilloi Lake (Myanmar border) Region, International Collaborative Project
- Mt. Saramati International Biosphere Reserve (including Fakim Wildlife Sanctuary) and a Centre for Ecology, Adventure & Culture, at Thanamir/Fakim in South Tuensang district on Myanmar border, an Eco-tourism Project
- Eco-tourism, Wildlife & Adventure Tourism Projects
- Cultural Tourism through integration at the International / Interstate Tri-Junctions
- Agriculture/ Handicraft Centres
- Handicraft Centre in Mon – Tuensang region / Dimapur
- Defence Tourism & World War II

## Tourism economics in Nagaland

Trends & Projections of Tourist Arrivals at the major Tourist Destinations							
Destination	Past Trends			Future Projections (Annual-average)			
	1998	1999	2000	2002- 2006	2007- 2011	2012- 2016	2017- 2021
Phokhungri/Shilloi Lake Region, Int. Coll. Project				100	150	200	300
Mt. Saramati Int. Biosphere Reserve			100	100	200	300	500
Intangki National Park			100	100	150	200	300
Dzukou Valley			2000	2000	2500	3500	5000
International Tri-junctions				100	150	200	300
Interstate Tri-junctions				100	100	150	200
Agriculture/Handicraft Centre at Zunheboto			500	500	800	1000	2000
Defence Tourism					100	200	300
Rural Tourism			500	500	800	1000	2000
Water Tourism					100	200	300
Urban Tourism-Kohima, Dimapur			8000	8000	9000	12000	20000
Regional Parks at Wokha/Kohima			500	500	800	1000	1500
Heritage Tourism/Circuit			500	500	800	1000	1500
Wildlife Circuit				500	800	1000	2000
International Border Circuit					100	150	200
River Tourism Circuit				100	150	200	300
<b>TOTAL FOR NAGALAND</b>	<b>29006</b>	<b>21160</b>	<b>13723</b>	<b>12000-15000</b>	<b>16000-21000</b>	<b>22000-30000</b>	<b>33000- 45000</b>

Note: The details of the past trends at various destinations are not available from the Nagaland Tourism. The numbers here are the total of domestic & foreign tourists, foreigners being approx. less than 0.5 % of the total tourists. The percentage of foreign tourists could increase only with very special efforts. The past trends show general decline of 28 %. This rate may gradually stabilise during the first five years, after which it may increase slowly to 5 % during the next 10 years and subsequently to 10 % over the next 5 years. Since the destination wise details of past trends are not available, assumptions are made for the availability of rooms/beds and 40% occupancy. It is our assessment that the present and ongoing projects should provide these minimum facilities to give preliminary impetus for tourism attraction in Nagaland. The development of innovative tourism destinations combined with appropriate marketing and publicity strategy should attract steady tourist inflow to Nagaland. (source: "20-year perspective plan for the sustainable development of tourism in the state of Nagaland-January 2003" prepared by 'The Designers')

- Trail / Circuit
- Water Tourism
- Rural Tourism
- Urban Tourism
- Regional Nature Parks: Ecological Park at Mount Tiya in Wokha District, Botanical Park / Orchid Sanctuary at Kohima
- Heritage Tourism: The Ruins of Medieval Kachari Kingdom, Dimapur, The War Cemetery, Kohima, Kohima Village, Kohima, Khonoma Village, Kohima district, Historical site at Naganimora, Mon district, Molung, Mokokchung district: 1st Baptist Mission in Nagaland & Imphur –Mission Centre

- Heritage Complex at Kisama near Kohima
- Tourism Festivals: Christmas & New Year, Festivals in collaboration with Star Hotels, Traditional Tribal Festivals

### Specific unique tourism circuits for Nagaland

Tourism Circuits is a very popular concept in the tourism sector today. The development of such circuits and organising tours on these circuits becomes economical for both tourists and tourism departments.

- **Heritage circuit:** (Khonoma, Molung, Naganimora, Ethnic Villag-

es under Rural Tourism, Handicraft Centre)

- **Wildlife circuit:** (All sanctuaries, National Park & Biosphere Reserve)
- **International Border Circuit:** (Myanmar border circuit)
- **Interstate Circuit:** (Nagaland – Manipur via Dzukou Valley, Nagaland – Assam via Doyang, Merapani, Longnak, Nagaland – Arunachal Pradesh via Longwa, Namtola circuits)
- **River Tourism Circuit:** (Perennial Rivers – Doyang, Dikhu, Zungki)
- **Defence Circuit:** World War II Trial / Circuit – Myanmar to Manipur, Kohima and some parts of Assam

## Nagaland vision 2025: Food for all

Nagaland could increase its annual agricultural production by 7-8 fold by 2025. Agriculture will continue to be the mainstay of the state economy. Aim is to convert from a consuming society to a producing society. Envisages food security to all by 2025.

Agri and allied sector contribution to the GDP stood at 20 per cent and expected to reach 28 per cent by 2025. About 71 per cent of the state's population is engaged in farming. The government has asked 'agri-graduates, horti- graduates & veterinary graduates' to take a lead and promote farming in the state. (source: Government of Nagaland)

## Physical infrastructure - roads

In 2014-15, Nagaland had around 1,080.09 km of national highways. In May 2015, the central government announced plans to develop a 100 km road with an estimated cost of US\$ 0.33 billion. The road will link Nagaland to the states of Assam and Manipur

Road type	Road length (km)
National highways	1,080.09
State highways	763*
Rural roads	22,095*
Total road length	34,146*

Source: Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, News articles \*As of March 2013

The Nagaland Foothill Road Coordination Committee has been formed to review work progress of a 300 km road from eastern Nagaland's Mokokchung town to Dimapur, its commercial hub. The Nagaland government is constructing a foothills road from Tizit under Mon district to Khelma under Peren district. The proposed state foothill highway would connect various districts bordering Assam.

## Physical infrastructure - rail-ways & airports

The railway station at Dimapur con-

### NAGALAND- FACTS & FIGURES I

Parameter Economy	Nagaland (2014-15)	All states (2014-15)	Source
GSDP as a percentage of all states' GSDP	0.16	100.0	Directorate of Economics & Statistics of Nagaland, Central Statistics Office
GSDP growth rate (%)	13.26	7.3	Directorate of Economics & Statistics of Nagaland, Central Statistics Office
Per capita GSDP (US\$)	1,585	1,389.61	Directorate of Economics & Statistics of Nagaland, Central Statistics Office
Physical Infrastructure			
Installed power capacity (MW)	140.04*	272,502.95	Central Electricity Authority, as of May, 2015
Wireless subscribers (No)	10,512,330 ^ **	973,347,094	Telecom Regulatory Authority of India-April 2015
Broadband subscribers (No)	660,000 ^ ^	100,760,000	Telecom Regulatory Authority of India-April 2015
National Highway length (Km)	1,080.09	92,851.07	National Highway Authority of India April-2015
Airports (No)	1***	132	Airports Authority of India
^ Combined figures for the Northeast states comprising Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura ^ ^ As of March 2014, *As of June 2015, **As of May 2015, ***Includes only operational airports			

### NAGALAND- FACTS & FIGURES II

Parameter	Nagaland	All states	Source
Social indicators			
Literacy rate (%)	79.55	73.0	Census, 2011
Birth rate (per 1,000 population)	15.4	21.4	SRS Bulletin, September 2014 Investment
FDI equity inflows (US\$ billion)	0.084 ^	248.5	Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, April 2000 to March 2015
Outstanding investments	1.6	2,414.2	CMIE (2013-14) (US\$ billion)
Industrial Infrastructure			
SEZs (No)	2	347	Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Dept of Commerce
SRS: Sample Registration System, SEZ: Special Economic Zone ^ Combined figures for the North-east states comprising Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Assam and Tripura			



► Shangnyu Village, Mon district, Nagaland, by JIM ANKAN DEKA

nects Nagaland with the rest of the country via Assam. The railway station at Dimapur connects Nagaland with the rest of the country via Assam. Around 88 km of the Dimapur-Kohima railway project is in the planning stage. The central government has envisaged completing this US\$ 156.5 million project by the end of 2015. Around 88 km of the Dimapur-Kohima railway project is in the planning stage. The central government has envisaged completing this US\$ 156.5 million project by the end of 2015.

In order to speed up the project, the Nagaland government has constituted a committee for proper and effective monitoring of the rail project. Constituting the committee would allow close coordination between the state government and the Northeast Frontier Railway for execution of the

Dhansiri (Assam) to ZubzaThizama (Nagaland) railway line project.

Nagaland has one operational airport at Dimapur. A second airport is being planned for Kohima.

### Urban infrastructure

Under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), US\$ 24.5 million has been allocated for roads/flyovers, parking lots and spaces, retaining walls along roads and drainage/storm water drains development in Kohima. As of May 2015, about 80 per cent of the project related to roads, transportation and storm water drainage has been completed.

The City Development Plan of Kohima city has been approved by the central government and development works are currently underway for the

project. The North Eastern Region Urban Development Programme (NERUDP) Phase-I is being implemented by the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD), with financial assistance from Asian Development Bank (ADB). It covers Kohima city in the state.

Infrastructure development of Kohima city is underway, with a funding of US\$ 62.5 million from the Asian Development Bank. It is to be implemented during 2008–17 and covers projects such as water supply, sewerage, solid waste management, drainage and landslip protection, transportation, slum and community up-gradation. As of February 2015, about 65 per cent of the work has been completed.

The state has earmarked a budgetary outlay of US\$ 144.7 million for several urban development projects

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during the 12th Five-Year Plan. Out of the allocated budget, about 72 per cent has been released till March 2015.

## Key industries

The Department of Industries and Commerce in Nagaland has taken steps for setting up of the Industrial Growth Centre (Ganeshnagar) and Export Promotional Industrial Park, Nagaland Mini Tool Room & Training Centre (Dimapur), the Nagaland Bamboo Policy under the Nagaland Bamboo Development Agency (Dimapur) and establishment of border trade centres at five places in the international border areas.

The natural resources, climatic conditions and policy incentives in Nagaland support investments in industries related to bamboo, horticulture, sericulture, tourism and agro-processing. Other promising sectors in the state include paper and pulp processing, minerals and mining, and petrochemicals. The state has adopted a cluster development approach, developing the cluster areas in proximity to the resources.

Some of the noteworthy companies include Nagaland Pulp & Paper Co Ltd (Tuli), Nagaland Forest Products (Tizit), Nagaland Mechanised Bricks Co Ltd (Dimapur), etc.

## Hotel/Homestays in Kohima

### Hotel Japhu

National Highway 39  
B.O.C, PR hill, Kohima  
Tel: +91-370-2240211/12/13

### Hotel Razhu Pru

Mission Compound  
Kohima  
Tel: +91-370-2290291

### The Heritage

Officers Hill, Kohima  
Tel: +91-9436000044

### Regal hotel

Midland, Kohima

### Hotel Pine

Midland, Kohima  
Tel: +91-370-2243129/2240269

### View Point hotel

PR hill, Kohima  
Tel: +91-370-224182/224191

### Hotel 2K

Officers hill, Kohima

### Hotel Cimorb

Old ministers hill, Kohima  
Tel: +91-370-2242248

### The Orchid

Midland Opposite War  
Cemetery, Kohima  
Tel: +91 9206111594

### Aradura Inn

National Highway 39  
Aradurah Hill, Kohima  
Tel: +91 9436603007

### Homestays

#### Visa's Homestay

Minister's Hill, Kohima  
Tel: +91 9774015787  
visashomestay@gmail.com

#### Lalhou's Homestay

Near Naga heritage village  
Kohima, Tel: 09612873026



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18A/1 Everest House, 18th floor, 46C, Chowringhee Road, Kolkata - 700071

Phone: +9133 2288 1742, e-mail: info@hraei.co.in