

**TOURISM INDUSTRY IN ASSAM
A CASE STUDY OF SIBSAGAR DISTRICT**

By

JOHN SONA

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Dissertation

SUBMITTED

IN

PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

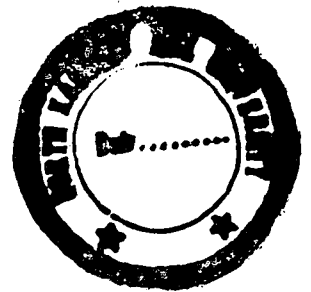
OF THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

ECONOMICS

To

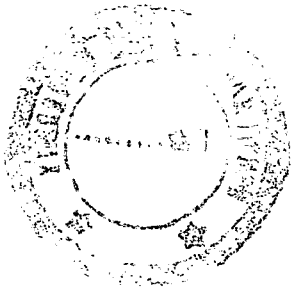


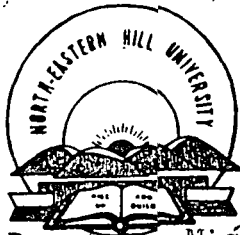
**The North - Eastern Hill University
SHILLONG**

Disc

DS
915.416204
SON

MEMO Library
Acc. No. 102662
Acc. by LP 9/9/95
Date
Class by
Sub heading by
Caterby
Transcribed by





Dr. S.K. Mishra
Professor

Department of Economics

PHONE :
GRAMS : NEHU

North-Eastern Hill University

Mayurbhanj Complex, Nongthymmai, Shillong-793014

CERTIFICATE

Certified that the subject matter of this dissertation is the record of work done by Mr. John Sona, under my supervision, that the content of this dissertation did not form a basis of the award of any previous degree to him, or the best of my knowledge, to anybody else and that the dissertation has not been submitted for any degree of any other University.

In habit and character, he is a fit and proper person for the degree of Master of Philosophy.

October 28, 1991


(S.K. Mishra)
Supervisor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank my Guide Prof. S.K. Mishra for his help in carrying out the entire study and all those experts for their helpful comments and suggestions.

I also thank the Director of Tourism, Gauhati, and all other officers who helped me by providing necessary information and data at various stages of my study.

Shillong,
the 28th October, 1991


(John Sona)

CONTENTS

		Pages
	Acknowledgement	
CHAPTER - I	Introduction and Growth of Tourism	1 - 23
CHAPTER - II	Tourism Development in India and Assam in particular	24 - 72
CHAPTER - III	Tourism in Sibsagar, Development and Findings	73 - 90
CHAPTER - IV	Tourism in Assam - Retrospect and Prospect, Conclusion and Suggestion	91 - 100
	Bibliography	101 - 102

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND GROWTH OF TOURISM

The word tourist has come from the word "tour" which is derived from the latin word "tournus" meaning a tool for describing a circle or a turner's wheel. The word "tourism" did not appear in the English language until the early nineteenth century, and the word tour was more closely associated with the idea of a voyage than with the idea of an individual being temporarily away from home for pleasure. Later on in the 19th Century Dictionary the word "Tourist" is defined as "a person who travel for this pleasure of travelling out of curiosity and because he has nothing better to do".

The concept of tourism was first formulated in the period between the two world wars and the definition put forward by the Swiss Prof. Aunziker and Krapf was subsequently adopted by the International Association of Scitntific Experts in Tourism (AISET).

Tourism is the sum of phenomenon and relationship arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in so far they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with earning activity.

In the year of 1937, a commiteee of the League of Nation defined Tourist as any person visiting a country other

than that in which he usually resides for a period of at least 24 hours and whose travel involve one of the following purposes.

- a) Travelling for pleasure and domestic reasons including health.
- b) Travelling to attend international marriage.
- c) Travelling for business purposes.
- d) Travelling in the course of a sea cruise even though the stay may be less than twentyfour hours. The committee of Statistical Experts excluded individuals arriving to take up work or residence, students attending schools, commuters who cross borders on their way to work, and traveller who do not stop en route through a country regardless of the length of time physically present in that country.

The International Union of Official Travel Organization (IUOTO) modified the committee's definition in 1950 by including students on study tours as tourists and by specifying a new type of traveller called an international excursionist. An excursionist is an individual travelling for pleasure who visits another country for less than 24 hours.

In 1963, a United Nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism was held in Rome which drew a distinction

between "tourists" who stayed for more than 24 hours and 'visitors' who stayed for less than 24 hours.

The "Expert Statistical Group" working under the United Nations Statistical Commission in 1967 suggested that the distinction be made between tourist who stayed overnight and day visitors or excursionist who did not.

After a decade, the United Nations Statistical Commission convened in 1976 an international conference involving representatives of the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Conference of European Statisticians, the East Caribbean Common Market, and the Caribbean community. The guidelines for definitions resulting from this conference provided the basis for defining international travellers used by most countries.

A summary of the terms recommended by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the associates are as follows:

International visitor : An individual entering a country that is not his usual place of residence and who is not -

- i) Intending to emigrate or to obtain employment in the destination country.
- ii) visiting in the capacity of a diplomat or a member of the armed forces.
- iii) A dependent of anyone in the above categories.
- iv) A refugee nomad or border workers.

- v) Going to stay for more than one year but who is or may be -
- (a) visiting for purposes of recreation, medical treatment, religious observance, family matters, sporting events, conference study or transit to another country.
 - (b) A crew member of a foreign vessel or aircraft stopped in the country on a lay-over.
 - (c) A foreign commercial or business traveller staying for less than one year including technicians arriving to install machinery or equipment.
 - (d) An employee of international bodies on a mission lasting less than one year, or a national returning home for a temporary visit.

International visitors are to be divided into International Tourist and International Excursionist.

International Tourist : Visitors who spend at least one night in accommodation in the destination country.

International Excursionist : Visitors who do not spend at least one night in accommodation in the destination country. These include visitors who are passengers on board cruise ships who may visit the same port of call over several days but who return to the ship to sleep. Excursionists who do not include in-transit passengers such as airline passengers who may touch

down in a country but do not officially enter by clearing customs.

Domestic Tourist : There has been less progress towards consensus on definitions of domestic travel than for international travel. While recognising the need for flexibility in definition for domestic tourism and the impossibility of imposing international conventions on such definitions, the WTO (1981) has suggested several guidelines for domestic tourism definitions.

The WTO defines a domestic tourist as a traveller visiting a destination in his country of residence for at least 24 hours but less than one year, for the purposes of recreation, holidays, sport, business, meetings, conventions, study, visiting friends or relatives, health, mission work or religion. A domestic excursionist is a visitor travelling in his country of residence for any of the reasons given for tourists, but who stays less than 24 hours at the destination.

In India, the Department of Tourism follows the definition of the Conference on International Travel and Tourism organised by the United Nations at Rome in 1963. A foreign tourist is a person visiting India on a foreign passport, staying at least twenty four hours in India and the purpose of whose journey can be classified under one of the following headings:

- 1) Leisure (recreation, holiday, health, study, religion and sports).
- 2) Business, family, mission, meeting.

The following categories are not regarded as Foreign Tourists:

- 1) Person arriving with or without a contract, to make up an occupation or engage in activities remunerated from within the country.
- 2) Persons coming to establish residence in the country.
- 3) Excursionist that is temporary visitors staying less than twenty four hours in the country (including travellers or cruises).

However, statistics do not include the following as tourists:

- i) Nationals of Pakistan and Bangladesh
- ii) Nationals of Nepal entering India through land routes
- iii) All foreigners entering India from Bhutan.

From the above definitions, it can be summed up that Tourism denotes the temporary, short term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work and their activities during the stay at these destinations.

Much of this movement is international in character. And much of it is a leisure activity. In recent years, it has become an important factor in world trade and major element in the balance of payment of many countries. For countries, regions, towns and villages, which attract tourists in large numbers, tourism can be a significant element in their prosperity. Tourism generates wealth and employment. It is a major source of income and employment for individuals in many places deficient in natural resources other than climate and scenery. It makes use of resources which may not be used in otherwise, in particular of unemployed labour in developing countries and regions with few or no alternative source of employment. Beaches, mountains, snowfields, forests are example of natural resources, which cannot readily contribute to the economic wellbeing of the area except through the medium of tourism. It is also a major source of income to many transport operators, providers of accommodation and entertainment, shops and other business.

TOURIST BEHAVIOUR : AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

One of the basic question is why do some people travel? Why in a particular country more people engage in tourism than in other? It has been disclosed through the study of tourist psychology that tourism is the outcome of a combination of motivations.

In examining motivations it is useful to distinguish between two broad groups of travellers.

The first group comprises those who have to visit a particular place and includes businessmen and some elements of those who may be described as common interest travellers such as visiting friends and relatives. In these travels the decision to travel, where to go and when to go, is to a greater extent outside their control. They are less influenced by price or distance and is relatively price-inelastic.

The second group that is holiday tourists have a freedom of choice. They decide for themselves whether they should spend a part of their income and a part of their leisure time to participate in tourism. To a greater extent they also decide where to go and when to go. Their demand for travel is highly price-elastic.

If we elaborate the basic motivations and analyse them, we see that people engage in tourism mostly for eight reasons.

1) Pleasure : In the tiring day to day routine every human being needs some kind of fun, excitement, and recreation travel and holiday making is one of the way of having it for which people go out from the normal place of residence as tourist.

ii) Relaxation, rest and recreation : The rapid growth of industrialisation, urbanisation have created pressure on men for which human mind as well as body needs recreation and rest in open space far from the hustle bustle of city.

iii) Health : In the modern age, industrial hazard causing environmental pollution is one of the major problems of the world. To escape pollution people travel in search of fresh, healthy atmosphere, sometimes for special kind of medical treatment.

iv) Participation in sports : People often travel to participate in sporting activities like riding, boating, shooting, mountaineering, water-skiing, underwater swimming, pony-trekking etc.

v) Curiosity and culture : Man is always curious to know about the foreign land especially those places having important historical or cultural association. Sometimes, tourists are also attracted by international events like national celebration, exhibition art or music festivals, etc.

vi) Ethnic and family : Number of people often make travel for impersonal reasons which include visiting one's relations and friends, meeting new people and seek new friendship.

vii) Spiritual and religious : One of the earliest motivators

of travel was visiting religious places for spiritual purposes. Millions of people go out for pilgrimage to sacred religious or holy places all over the world.

viii) Professional or business: Many people travel for their professions and business, attending conventions, conferences, business meeting, seminar related with it.

Tourist Destination

Tourist destination may be defined as the geographical unit visited by a tourist which may be a village or a town or a city, a district or a region, an island, a country or a continent. The tourist destination provides a convenient focus for the examination of the tourist movement and its impact. Throughout the year its amenities serve its residents and working population.

The importance of tourist destination is determined primarily by three factors - attractions, accessibility and amenities.

Attraction is perhaps the most important factors of tourism. The attraction may be site attractions like climate, scenery, historical, religious and cultural or event attractions like exhibitions, sporting events conventions etc. both of which

exercise a gravitational influence on non-residents. Tourist visiting Alps, Athens, Himalayas are charmed by their physical grandeur. The site attractions have clearly determined the tourist importance of such destination as the Grand Canyon in United States, the Niagara falls, the Geysers of Iceland. Trade fairs and Olympic games are other factors of attractions, they may also enhance the site attraction of a destination.

Accessibility plays a crucial role in the development of tourism. It is the function of distance from the tourist market that is centres of population and of external transport and communication which enable a destination to be reached.

Distance plays an important role in determining a tourist choice of destination. The large movement of tourists to Europe and America in contrast to Asia and Africa provides an explanation of Accessibility.

Amenities at the destination comprise accommodation, catering, entertainment as well as internal transport and communication which enable the tourist to move around during his stay. Thus it is clear that amenities contribute much to the tourist destination in contrast to areas which lack in adequate amenities for visitors.

The presence of these three qualities in a particular

place not only determines its importance but also its likely success as tourist destination. But in order to maximise the opportunities from tourism, a tourist destination must also have a tourist organization in order to provide the framework in which tourism can operate to develop the tourist product and to promote it in appropriate tourist markets. So the organization constitutes a fourth factor which determines the importance and success of a destination.

TOURIST SERVICES

The phenomenon of tourism give rise to a wide range of services in the course of the journey and stay at destination.

The essential tourist services required during the journey are passenger transport accommodation, catering and entertainment. Transport provides the means to reach a destination and also means of movement at the destination. In recent years by far the fastest growing means of long distance tourist transport has been the aircraft. Shipping plays a more prominent role on short sea routes and waterways and also for cruises. Rail represents short and medium distance transport within and between countries, both for reaching a destination and for movement at the destination, in some mountain location it forms the only means of access. Road transport by bus and coach provides regular direct route services for short and medium distances to the destination and on any route alternative facilities to rail. But one of the most significant developments of

recent years has been the replacement of travel by public road and rail transport by the motor car, which has become the principal means of tourist transport in most countries. Transport is necessary but not sufficient condition of tourism by itself.

At the destination accommodation catering, and entertainment constitute the primary tourist services. Accommodation is basic necessity to any tourist destination. However, in recent years the type of accommodation has been changing considerably. In recent years some of the big suites have been closed down as there has been a growing demand for informal types of accommodation e.g. holiday villages, apartment houses camping and caravan sites and tourist cottages etc. have become very popular.

The third group of tourist services provided by the travel agents and tour operators plays a significant role for the growth of international tourism. The travel agent fulfils an intermediary function between the tourist and provides transport and accommodation in particular and the tour operator combines the individual components of a holiday into a product, which is then marketed on his own risk.

Apart from the above three principal tourist services, there are other groups of tourist services which provide infor-

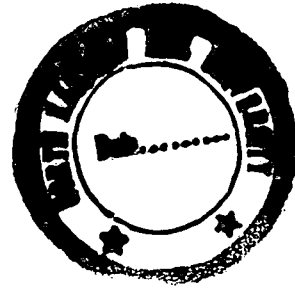
mation services, sightseeing and shopping.

TOURIST PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

A tourist products consists of those things which the tourist buys in a destination or what he does in a destination and of the services he uses to make it possible. Each destination has a particular product to offer which the tourist selects and the services which he uses during his stay. The tourist product at a destination may be developed to attract particular people with certain features of the destination like swimming pools, parks, indoor entertainments etc. they are also developed in the minds of potential tourists, through the creation of a particular image of a destination by promotion.

The tourist market is defined by reference to the tourist products. It is a network of dealings between the seller who provides the composite tourist product and the buyer of a product or the tourist who buys it.

Corresponding to each tourist product there is a tourist market. In the tourist market there are more or less homogeneous group of tourists who behave more or less similarly and exercise their demand on more or less similar tourist product. To develop tourism one has to identify these groups and bring the information of the products to the potential tourists.



SIGNIFICANCE OF TOURISM

When the XXI United Nations General Assembly designated 1968 as the International Tourist Year with a unanimous resolution recognising that "tourism is a basic and most desirable human activity deserving the praise and encouragement of all people and all governments" its importance was formally acknowledged all over the world. A large number of tourist travel each year to participate in events ranging from congress to coronations, their visits also afford opportunities to improve cooperation as well as to project an image of a country to the outside world.

The tourist in their travel came in contact with the inhabitants and affects the social structure and mode of life in the destinations, tourists are in turn affected by the experience and often carry back home with them new habits and new outlook on life. Tourism is often accompanied by cultural exchange by those who travel as well as those at the receiving end.

In bringing together people of different backgrounds from different countries, tourism therefore has a political and social significance in this and in the activities in which tourist engage, there is often also educational and cultural significance. But the manifold significance of tourism does

not arise only when people visit other countries. Internal, domestic tourism promotes similar interaction between people and places and contribute to that knowledge and awareness which may enhance understanding.

Politics, society, education and culture thus often provide motivations for tourist to travel away from home, they influence tourism and tourism in turn has an influence on them. Some of the most important aspects aim in the relationship between tourism, the economy and the environment.

In both international and domestic tourism one of the main economic significance is that money earned in places of normal residence (of the tourist) is spent in places visited. The flow of money generated by tourist expenditure finds its way into the overall economy of the tourist destination, as the money is turned over and re-spent.

But international tourist expenditure introduces an additional aspect of economic significance. It enters into the balance of payments accounts of individual countries and is of major significance in international trade. For countries which generate tourist traffic, it represents import in much the same way as do import of merchandise for countries receiving tourist traffic it represents and export in much the same way as do exports of merchandise.

TOURISM IN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

The part played by tourism in the national economy may be seen in broad terms when tourist expenditure is related to estimates of National Income and Expenditure.

It is often more difficult to evaluate tourism as a source of income for small tourist destination but it is usually possible to provide at least a broad indication by means of special survey of the destination.

Tourist expenditure increases the income of the destination by an amount greater than itself. The expenditure is amplified and this effect is known as the multiplier concept. The multiplier itself is the numerical co-efficient indicating how much will increase as a result of tourist expenditure. Money spent by the tourist goes into the account of businessman (tour operators). The money, in turn is spent on salaries, supplies, insurance and taxes. Each time a tourist makes an expenditure, a ripple of additional spending is sent through the economy. This ripple is called multiplier. The multiplier describes the additional spending by a given level of tourist spending. A large multiplier means that an expenditure of one unit produces a relatively large amount of additional economic activity. Mathematically the multiplier may be defined as -

$$M = \frac{\Delta I}{\Delta T}$$

Where M = tourist multiplier

ΔI = change in income resulting from a change
in tourist spending

ΔT = change in tourist spending.

The calculation of a multiplier first requires itemisation of the expenditures between the tourist sectors of the economy and all other sectors. Some rather complicated matrix algebra is then used to convert these exchanges into a multiplier. Multipliers are often difficult to calculate precisely under the best circumstances.

TOURISM AS AN EMPLOYER

The provision of tourist services generates employment. Tourist requires roads, airports, hotels, fast-food outlets, gift shops and many other facilities. These crates additional job to plan, design and construct them. The nature of tourists industry manifests itself in a number of related trades such as transport, accomodation, entertainment, souvenir and shopping etc. The development of tourism stimulates related service job such as taxi drivers, tour leaders and interpreters. These jobs are direct result of tourism development, employment arises also indirectly in other sectors of the economy which supply

goods and services to those who serve tourists directly, further employment is induced throughout the economy as the incomes derived from direct and indirect employment are spent and re-spent. Tourism as a source of employment is particularly important for areas with limited alternative source of employment as in non-industrial areas which are often deficient in natural resources other than climate and scenic attractions.

TOURIST BENEFICIARIES

The origin, growth and the development of sub-sectors depends upon the stage and status of tourism development in the region. The number of tourist arrivals is directly related to the development of various components of this industry.

Two types of beneficiaries primary and secondary tourist enterprises can be distinguished when we consider the importance of tourism in their total activity. Hotels and restaurants, travel agents, and all tour operators depending mainly on tourist for their business fall on category of primary tourist enterprise. Secondary tourist enterprise are those which depend partially on tourism, but for the most part serve the needs of the resident population, examples are banks, laundries and retailers in important tourist destination.

Another way of classifying tourist enterprises are whether they receive income from tourists directly or indirectly,

the distinction is then between direct and indirect tourist enterprises.

The effects of tourism on the economy are spread over a large number of industries. The contribution to incomes arises both from incomes generated in the tourism sector itself and from incomes generated in the rest of the economy.

TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Income and job creation are the most common benefits to be derived from tourism but other benefits may also be realised if the volume of the tourist trade is large enough. In addition to being a source of income and employment, tourism is frequently a source of amenities for the resident population of the tourist destination.

In comparison with other forms of economic development, an improvement in living standards may be generated through tourist traffic and its expenditure relatively quickly. No sophisticated technology is required to establish the basic facilities for the development of tourism. As the industry is labour intensive, tourism can absorb unemployed labour resources, which is particularly valuable in areas with surplus unskilled labour.

In some locations tourism provide an infrastructure, which in turn forms the base and the stimulus for the diversifi-

fication of the economy and for the development of other industries. Tourism itself may be expected to create some demand for goods and services necessary for the creation and expansion of some local industries - to maintain the facilities, to meet its requirements for supplies and to meet the requirements of the visitors directly. Tourism expenditure may therefore be said to stimulate an economy beyond the sector concerned with tourism.

Tourism may provide a stabilizing influence on country's export earnings, whose exports are largely dependent on only one or few primary commodities, with widely fluctuating prices in world markets. In developing country, tourism offers the prospect of early and substantial foreign currency earnings.

TOURISM AND THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

Due to international travel tourism has great impact on the balance of payment position of individual countries. To gauge the magnitude of its effect, it is useful to list the principal types of transaction and monetary movements, both of current and capital nature, which arise between countries because of tourism.

a) Current expenditure by tourist in countries visited (on accommodation, meals, shopping, local transport, and similar).

b) Purchase of capital goods by tourists in countries visited (for example, antiques and motor cars).

c) Import and export of goods for tourism purposes (equipment, furnishing, food, wine and other supplies).

d) Fare payments to other countries international carriers (principally airlines and shipping lines).

e) Various money transfers (for e.g. by nationals working in tourist enterprises abroad, to finance advertising and tourist offices in other countries).

f) Foreign capital investment facilities (particularly accommodation).

g) Interest, profits and dividends (transmission of returns on investment to country of origin of capital).

Of the above transactions, items (b) and (c) are included with other imports and exports of goods in the balance of trade. Items (d), (e), (g) are included in the balance of payments with other individuals i.e. other imports and exports of services and monetary transfers. Item (f) is included in the capital account of the balance of payments. Therefore, six of the seven principal types of transactions generalised between countries by tourism are not normally separately identified as such in the balance of payments. The only item which is so identified is the first expenditure by tourists in the countries visited, in the travel account of the balance of payment.

Sometimes official estimates are made of international fare payments i.e. item (d) above. When this is the case, the amount may be added to those in the travel account, to give estimates of identifiable foreign payments and earnings from tourism.

CHAPTER II

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

India's glorious traditions and cultural heritage are linked with the development of tourism. Its incredible monuments attract large number of tourists from all over the world. It has varied climate from extreme cold in high altitudes of Himalayas to the hot summer in plains. The golden beaches, the sanctuaries teeming with wildlife, its quite hill stations, the wealth of cultural traditions extending over thousands of years, the music, dance, paintings, customs, language etc. all these make India a tourist paradise.

However India adopted the modern concept of tourism quite late. India recognised the significance of tourism on economy and society only in sixties when it was fully exploited in other countries of the world. Although considerable time and attention was devoted for the development of tourism immediately after independence, however it received priority only two decade later.

The first conscious effort to promote tourism was made in 1945, when a committee was set up under the supervision of Sir John Sergent. The objective of the committee was to make detailed survey of the tourist traffic in India and suggest new potential areas in the country. One of the major recommendation of this committee was to set up a separate representative

organisations for the promotion of tourism. The recommendations of this committee formed the guidelines for the establishment of tourist organisation in the country after independence.

A separate tourist traffic branch was set up in the Ministry of Transport in 1949. In 1955-56, the Tourist Traffic Division expanded its operation from one branch to four branches. The four sections looking after various subjects were :

- 1) Tourist Traffic Section
- ii) Tourist Administration Section
- iii) Tourist Publicity Section
- iv) Distribution Section.

Another important step during this period was the opening of a chain of tourist offices both in India and overseas for dissemination of tourist informations. Regional offices were set up at important parts of entry. Tourist offices were opened in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Tourist information offices were also set up in some of the foreign countries.

It was on March 1, 1958 that a separate department was created in the Ministry of Transport to deal with all matters concerning tourism. However, the Ministry was recognised again on March 14, 1967 as the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation with two departments (i) Department of Tourism and (ii) Department of Civil Aviation.

The functions of the Department of Tourism are both promotional and organizational which are calculated by the following seven Divisions :

- i) Planning and Programming
- ii) Publicity and Conference
- iii) Travel, Trade and Hospitality
- iv) Accommodation
- v) Supplementary Accommodation and Wild Life
- vi) Market Research
- vii) Administration.

The work of these Departments has increased enormously. They can be summarized as in the Table No. 1.

India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)

The India Tourism Development Ltd. was incorporated on March 31, 1965, by amalgamating three separate undertakings then in existence namely, the Hotel Corporation of India Ltd., India Tourism Corporation Ltd., Tourism Transport Undertaking Ltd., under the provision of the Companies Act 1956, on the 1st October 1966, the ITDC started its formal functioning. In pursuance of the recommendation of the Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC), the control of Ashoka Hotel Ltd. and the Janpath Hotel Ltd. was transferred from the then Ministry of

Table No. 1

ORGANIZATION OF TOURISM ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

Department of Tourism

Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation

Government of India, New Delhi

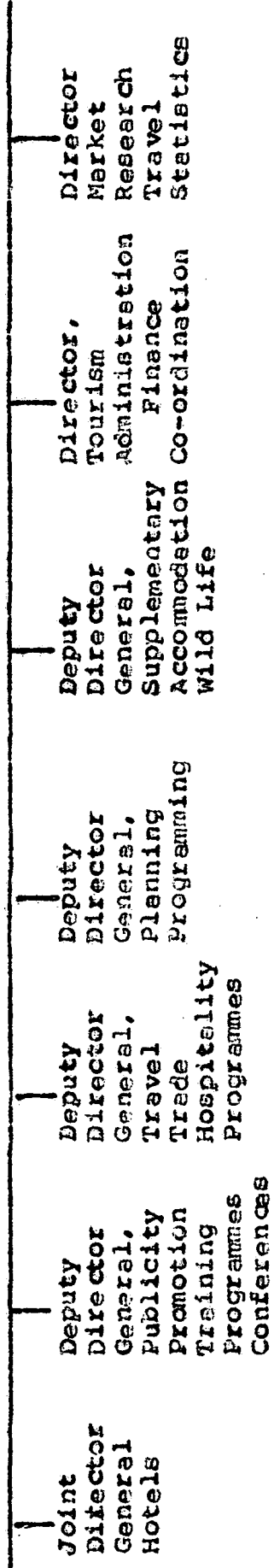
Minister

Deputy Minister

Secretary

Director General

Additional Director



Works, Housing and Supply to the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation from July 2, 1968. Ranjit and Lodi Hotels were also amalgamated with I.T.D.C. from March 1970. The main objectives of this Corporation are :

i) Construction and management of hotels, motels, tourist bungalow, guest houses, restaurants and beach resorts at various places for accommodating tourists.

ii) To provide comfortable transport facilities for tourists.

iii) To provide entertainment facilities for tourists by way of organizing cultural shows, music concerts, sound and light shows.

iv) To provide shopping facilities for tourists.

v) To provide publicity service in India and overseas.

ITDC services include accommodation and restaurant, duty free shops at International Airports, sound and light shows and the production of quality publicity material. This Corporation has established a marketing division at its headquarter in New Delhi.

According to its seventeenth annual report 1981-82, ITDC had seven 5 star hotels, three 4 star hotels, eleven three star hotels and twelve 1 star hotels with 3800 bed capacity and a tourist transport fleet of 113 luxury cars, 39 ambassadors, 49 big coaches, 2 mini coaches. Today it is the apex organization

fully involved with all the developmental and promotional activities pertaining to tourism in India.

VISIT INDIA YEAR 1991

In order to give desired thrust to tourism the Ministry of Tourism has decided to observe 1991 as "India Tourism Year". Various quite extravagant plans have been put across to build up what is considered as adequate basic amenities and inducement for tourists. These include :

- (i) Making the country Tourist Destination of the 90's Decade.
- (ii) Enlarging the ten established circuit and adding some more.
- (iii) Bringing in 46 cultural and seasonal fares and festivals within the tourist promotion sphere.
- (iv) Stengthening the Himalayan Trekking circuits and trails to inner Himalayas.
- (v) Working up a print-media campaign on tourism promotion and its benefits - economic and social.

Also to relieve pressure on the "Golden Triange" (Delhi, Agra and Jaipur), the Government has opened up 18 new tourist circuits. These range from the Dilwara temple in Rajasthan to Mandu in Madhya Pradesh. Then the Manali-Leh road has been opened

to tourist traffic, and Sikkim and Himachal are being sold to winter sport enthusiasts.

In Madhya Pradesh, Bestar district is being opened to tourists. The State's Tourism Department is trying to explore unknown hill stations like Pachmarhi and the medieval ruins of Bundelphand. Importantly it has installed a computerised hotel reservation system which enables tourists in any part of the country to book rooms in Madhya Pradesh Tourism hotels.

Maharashtra which is targetting sea lovers developing 30 locations along the State's virgin coastline and as many as 18 new hotels are stated to come up. The Government is drawing villages into its plan providing loans to set up restaurants, composites and boating facilities.

Orissa too is attempting to develop its 482 kms. coastline and drawing up a blueprint to promote its Buddhist historical sites. Kerala is wooing tourists to its famous backwaters. The Government is tying up with the Taj Group which plans to invest Rs. 100 crore in setting up a series of resorts and hotels in the State.

Union Tourism Secretary Manish Bahal said the Centre has allocated 225 crores for the development of tourist spots in the country. The total planned investment in the tourism sector included a grant of Rs. 100 crore from Japan for the development

of tourists spots in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

A total amount of Rs. 2.12 crore has been given for the development of tourism in Bihar. In addition to the financial assistance already provided in Bihar, the Centre would spend Rs. 24.02 crore on repair of national highways in the State. The State Government in turn would spend Rs. 32 crore on the State highways.

The State Tourism Department has located more picturesque spots in Sikkim, the seat of the world's third highest snow peak Kanchenjunga (8603 metres). The State Government had requested the Centre to open more attractive areas in this strategically important state to the tourists - mainly the foreign travellers. The State Government had urged the Centre to permit foreign tourists to visit "Yunthang" surrounded by thick Rhododendran forests overlooking the snow capped mountains in North Sikkim. Under the new relaxed rule, foreigners can visit up to Phodang monastery 40 kms from here in North Sikkim. However, they can move in the entire West and South Sikkim for a period of 15 days with official permission from Delhi, Calcutta and Gangtok.

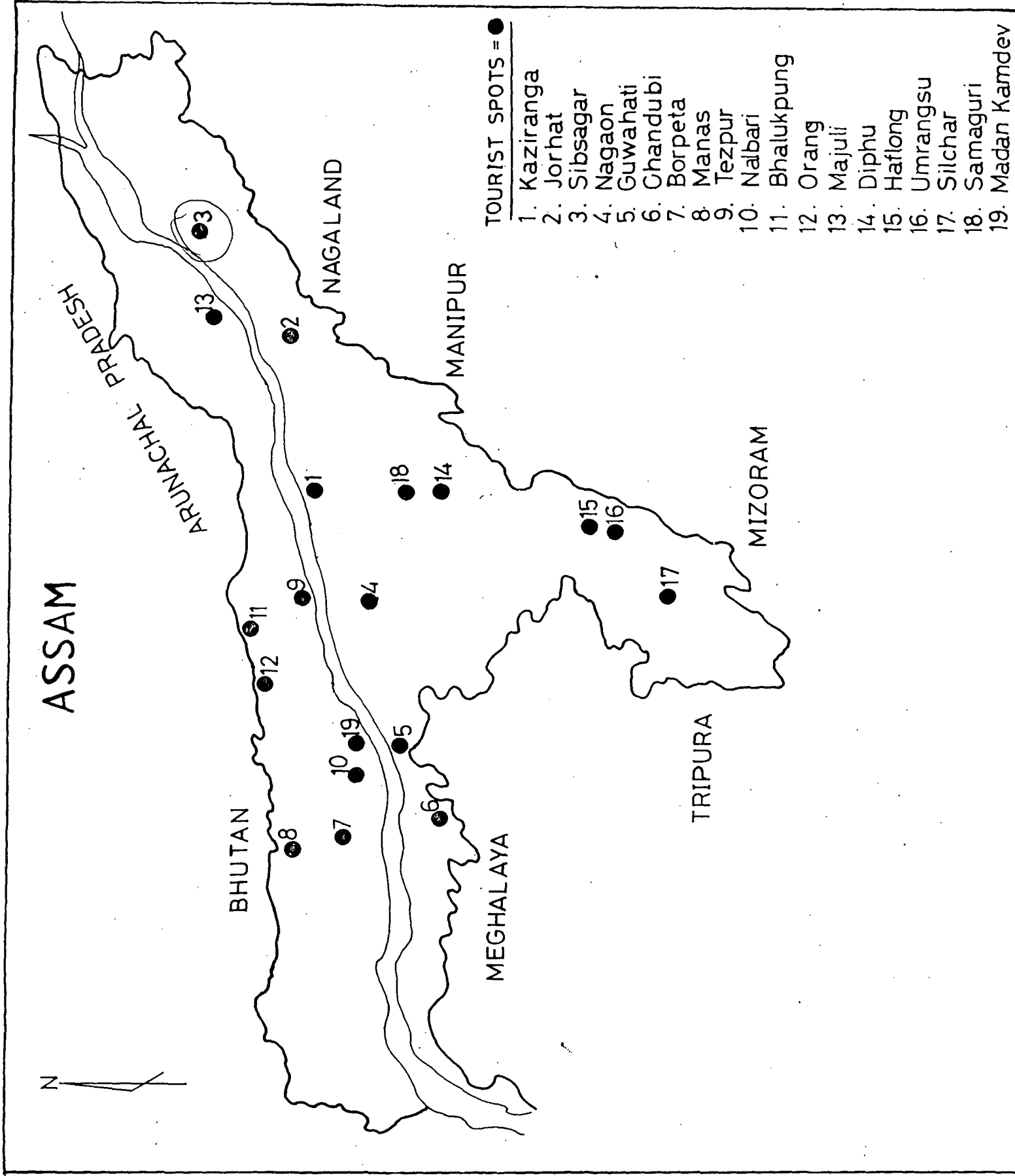
The State Governments in North Eastern States are gearing up by strengthening the infrastructure and streamlining, the other departments to attract more tourists during the "Visit India Year". Regarding the restriction of the entry of foreign

tourists, there has been a joint venture by the Eastern States for relaxation of the Restricted Area Permit (RAP). A meeting has been held in Delhi recently by the Secretaries of Each State concerned urging the Centre to lift the ban on foreign tourists.

Tourism Development in Assam

The North-Easternmost State of India - Assam - came under British rule after the treaty of Yandaboo in 1826. Before that, it was an independent state ruled by the royal house of the Ahom, the descendant of the Sukapha, who crossed the Patkai Hills with about 1000 of his countrymen and settled there in the early years of the 13th century.

Before the advent of Ahoms, the country was known as Kamarupa and it had its capital at Pragjyotispura. Ancient Kamarupa included many parts of present North Bengal and East Pakistan. According to ancient Shastras, like Kalika Purana, the temple Kamakhya near Guwahati was the centre of Kamarupa, and the country extended around this temple in all direction for 450 miles. It was bounded by the Karotoya river in the west, Dikrang river in the East, the mountains of Kanchana and Giri Kenyska on the North and the confluence of the Brahmaputra and Lakshmi river on the south. So Kamarupa included roughly the Brahmaputra valley, Bhutan, Rangpur of present East Pakistan and Cooch Bihar of West Bengal. During the mythological period,



TOURIST SPOTS = ●

1. Kaziranga
2. Jorhat
3. Sibsagar
4. Nagaon
5. Guwahati
6. Chandubi
7. Borpeta
8. Manas
9. Tezpur
10. Nalbari
11. Bhalukpong
12. Orang
13. Majuli
14. Diphu
15. Haflong
16. Umrangsu
17. Silchar
18. Samaguri
19. Madan Kamdev

the King Narakeruna and his son Bhagadatta were the famous kings of Kamarupa. The Chinese traveller Hien Tsang who visited Kamarupa about 640 A.D. during the rule of King Bhaskara Varman has left a vivid account of the country and its people. After this historical document, the knowledge of ancient Assam for few centuries was very meagre but the discovery of several copper plates which were prepared between the later part of the 10th century and the middle part of the 12th Century has brought into light the condition of the country at that time. According to the accounts of these copper plates which were meant to recite the grants of land by the kings to the Brahmanas, the country was ruled by the dynasties of Palas, Kochas, Kacharis, Chutias etc., one after another in different parts of the country. There was no stable government in the country due to constant warfare between the neighbouring states until the coming of Ahoms under the leadership of Sukapha, a prince of Shan tribe of the ancient Kingdom of Mungmen as Pong (that was located in the upper portion of the Irrawadi valleys in 1228. They crossed the Patkai range and entered the areas which now form the present Dibrugarh District and South-eastern part of Sibsagar. They conquered the local tribes one after another. By the end of the 15th century, the Ahoms were the dominant power in upper Assam. Two centuries later, they became the masters of the whole of Assam upto Goalpara, after defeating the Koches, Kacharis and others. The power and prosperity reached their Zenith during the rule of King Rudra Singha (1696-1714 A.D.). In the 18th century the kingdom

was greatly weakened by internal jealousy and diversions. By 1786 there was a state of anarchy. In despair, the ruling prince Gaurinath Singha sought the aid of the English in Calcutta. In response, Lord Cornwallis sent a small force to Assam in 1792 under Captain Welsh, who ultimately drove away the foreign freebooters, and placed Gaurinath Singha on the throne. When Sir John Shore succeeded Lord Cornwallis as Governor General of Bengal, one of his first acts was to recall Captain Welsh as a policy of non-interference in Assam in spite of the protest of the ruling king. Internal strife that caused one crisis after another and in 1817, the Burmese came to Assam in response to Badan Barphukan's appeal- a rebel against the King. They swept over the country bringing untold misery to the people and having achieved their purpose, they left the country soon after, but reappeared again a few years later in response to further appeals.

This time they intended to stay. The ruling prince Chandrakanta Singha fled to Bengal and the Burmese taking advantage of this, put Jogeswar Singha (1821-1824), the brother of one of the Assamese consorts of the King Bodawpaya of Burma, as their nominee on the throne of Assam. The Burmese invasion at the end of the Ahom rule was the greatest catastrophe for the Assamese people. As a result of their inhuman brutality, the people of the Assam valley fled to the hills, to Cachar, to Manipur and the whole region became depopulated, in addition, thousands of Assamese were taken away as captives.

The English whose interest were being threatened elsewhere and whose envoy was humiliated by the Burmese, were again induced to intervene. They defeated the Burmese in several battles in Assam. By the treaty of Vandaboo in 1826, the Burmese renounced all claims upon Assam and promised to abstain from further interference, a very mild word for a reign of terror that took place in Assam.

David Scott was appointed Agent of the Governor-General over this devastated area. By 1842 the whole of the Assam valley came under English rule, and it was administered as an outlying district of Bengal. In 1874, a separate province of Assam under a Chief Commissioner was created with Shillong as capital. In 1905 under the orders of Lord Curzon, Assam was amalgamated with the eastern district of Bengal, and a new province was known as Eastern Bengal and Assam with Dacca as capital was created. The partition of Bengal caused a lot of political unrest and ultimately the new arrangement was broken up and Assam was made a separate province in 1924.

India achieved her independence in 1947 and as a result of partition, the district of Sylhet excluding the Karimganj sub-division has gone to Bangladesh (the then Pakistan) so with her newly drawn boundary, Assam is now the north easternmost State of the Indian Union.

RELIEF FEATURES AND GEOLOGY

The most dominating feature in the topography of Assam is the course of the river Brahmaputra. It has carved out its own valley between two parallel ranges - the Brahmaputra valley and the Barak valley. The river enters the plain near Sadiya from where it assumes the present name and runs directly westwards for nearly 450 miles traversing every district of Assam valley. The valley (Brahmaputra valley) is a perfect plain, studded with numerous clumps of hills rising abruptly from the general level and surrounded on all sides except the west by mountains and intersected in all directions by many streams and rivulets, which coming out from the neighbouring hills empty themselves into the great channels of Brahmaputra. The Barak Valley is extending about 125 miles (200 kms) in length and 60 miles in breadth. This valley is also of alluvial origin, and is closed by ranges on three sides.

Physical Divisions

The physical features of Assam are so closely related that it is convenient to divide Assam into the following physical units.

- a) The Brahmaputra valley
- b) The Barak Valley
- c) Hill Zone.

a) The Brahmaputra Valley : The valley can be divided into two

parts, the lower Assam valley, where the plains are broken by isolated groups of hills, and the upper Assam valley, where unbroken plains lie from the Himalayas on the northwest to the Naga Hills on the southeast.

The numerous low hills formed scattered near Dhubri, Goalpara, Gauhati and Tezpur. The surrounding plains have been formed by the alluvial materials carried down by the mighty Brahmaputra and its numerous tributaries. The upper Brahmaputra valley lies northeast and southwest between two fairly parallel ranges and it covers the districts of Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh, Sibsagar, Jorhat, Golaghat.

The Brahmaputra valley is a flat level plain, though surrounded by high mountains. Dibrugarh has an altitude of 340 ft. (104 metres) and Gauhati has only 163 ft. (50 metres).

b) The Barak Valley : This valley consists of its main part largely of swampy flats broken by numerous low isolated hills and ridges. The Garo hills mark the limit of the valley abruptly in the north, but the southeastern boundary is of a different character long spurs of highland project from Tripura and Mizo Hills and between them are broad valleys unusually diversified with many low isolated hills. Most of the tea cultivation in the Barak valley is on the Tipam bed. Another interesting feature is the presence of gravel in the plateau deposited by the Barak and its tributaries. The flat ground is largely occupied by clayey alluvium.

c) Hill Zone : The Hill Zone of Assam comprises of two revenue districts viz., Karbi Anglong and N.C. Hills. This Zone lies between $24^{\circ}54'$ and $26^{\circ}41'$ N. latitude and $92^{\circ}7'$ and $93^{\circ}52'$ E longitude. The Zone covers an area of 5,222 sq. km. equivalent to 19.4% of the State area of which 66% and 34% of the area is occupied by Karbi Anglong and N.C. Hills Districts respectively. This Zone has a population of 4,55,357 which is equivalent to 3.11% of the State.

FLORAL AND FAUNAL ATTRIBUTES

Flora and Fauna both have been considered as good resource of modern tourism. The greenery of forest and wild cries of animals always attracted the mankind. As far as Assam is concerned, it is very rich and prosperous in floral and faunal resources.

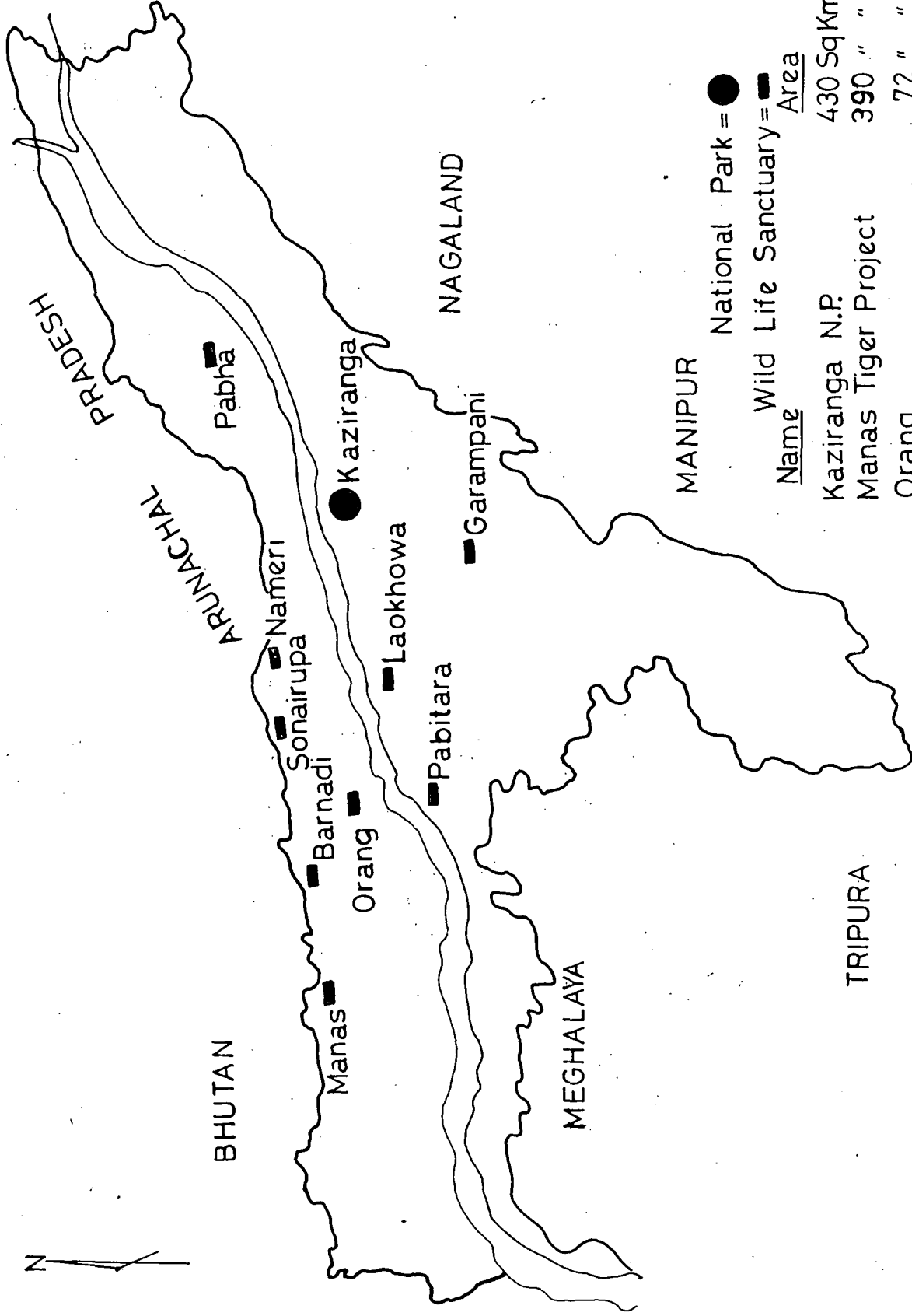
Assam is known for her rich forest wealth. The luxuriant, evergreen and deciduous forests of the State abound with variety of valuable timber species. In certain parts of the State extensive bamboo forests also exist. Assam also occupies a place of pride in the wild-life map of the country for her rich, varied and rare wild-life species.

At the end of 1988 Assam had around 17.4 thousand sq. kms. of area under reserved forests and about 3.3 thousand sq. kms. of area under proposed reserved forests. The area under reserve

forests thus, constituting about 22 per cent of the total geographical area of the State.

Wilderness of the forest is the home of wild life and they are potential tourism resource. Assam has a colourful and fascinating wild life. Great Indian one horned Rhinoceros, Hollocks, Common langur, Cap langur, Golden langur, Tiger, Squirrel, Water buffalo, different kinds of Deer, Elephant, birds like Sarus, Peacock, Duck and Geese, Pelican and Hornbill, reptiles like Lizard, Python, Cobra, Krait are common in the jungles of hills and wild life sanctuaries of Assam. Migratory birds like Duck, Swan etc. coming from far off places like Siberia (USSR) are seen in large numbers during winter all over the State, White Winged Wood Duck a rare species of ornithologist's delight is found in the forest reserves of upper Assam. The mystery of thousands of birds committing suicide annually at Jatinga a quiet village in North Cachar Hills is yet to be unveiled by the ornithologist of the World.

ASSAM



National Park = ●

Wild Life Sanctuary = ■

Name Area

Kaziranga N.P.	430 SqKm
Manas Tiger Project	390 " "
Orang	72 " "
Pabha	49 " "
Laokhowa	60 " "
Pabitara	16 " "
Sonairupa	175 " "
Garampani	6 " "
Barnadi	26 " "
Nameri	130 " "

WILD LIFE SANCTUARY IN ASSAM

Table No. - 2

i) Manas Tiger Project	390 Sq. Km.
ii) Orang	72 " "
iii) Pabha	49 " "
iv) Leokhewa	60 " "
v) Pabitora	16 " "
vi) Sonai Rupa	175 " "
vii) Garampani	6 " "
viii) Barnadi	26 " "
ix) Dibro-Saikhowa	640 " "
x) Nameri	130 " "
xi) Kachugson	214 " "
xii) Diparbill	4 " "
xiii) Barail & North Cachar Hills	UNSPECIFIED

National Park : Kaziranga 430 Sq. Km.

Source: Tourism Statistics, Directorate of Tourism,
Government of Assam.

CENSUS FIGURE OF KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

Table No. 3

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1984</u>
Rhino	400	670	967	1080
Elephant	375	430	780	500
Wild Buffalo	550	600	660	700
Swamp deer	250	520	700	800
Bison	20	13	25	30
Samber	300	200	300	300
Hag deer	4000-5000	6000-6500	8000-9000	12,000
Barking deer	100	100	130	100
Wild Pig	500-600	550-650	800-900	800
Bear	30	30	30	30
Tiger	20	30	40	52
Leopard	12	10	10	-
Ottar	200-300	200-300	400-500	300
Hag badger	-	-	50	-
Cappad Langur	-	-	25	-
Hoolak Gibber	-	-	3	-

Source: Forest Department, Wild Life, Assam.

RACES RELIGION AND PEOPLE

The early history of race migration to Assam - a migration that came in different stages and waves - is obscure like a distant view, the anthropology of the different racial groups is only partially probed into and explored. It is in this land when races and people from different corners and regions across its borders met and lived, and in the process of time evolved a consolidated pattern with common traditions and aspirations. Through the long columns of history, peoples of different origin and ethnology migrated into this land, fought and rambled in its beautiful valleys and hills, and as the years rolled on, fertilized its sinews and arteries into a rich and solid entity.

The principal races of people that have migrated into it are: The Austro-Asiatics, the Dravidians, the Tibeto-Burmans, the Mongoloids and the Aryans. These were the principal races of people in the distantmost loom of history that built a culture of their own, and dominated a major portion of south-east Asia as Cambodia, the Nicobar Islands, Upper Burma and some parts of Australia. In India races of these people are found to some extent in Chota-Nagpur and Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

The Dravidians might be regarded as the next group of people in relation to the Austro-Asiatics, in point of time, to migrate and dwell in this land. These are ethnologists who

suppose that the Bania and the Kaibarte communities here are the remote survivors of this great race of people.

The Mongolians in general belong to the Tibeto-Burman family of the Indo-Chinese group. The Kacharis, the Rabhas, the Meches, the Miris, the Lalungs, the Garos, the Nagas, the Kukis and the like are the members of the early mongoloid group that migrated into this land.

The invasion of the Ahoms in the second quarter of the 13th century constitutes the history of Mongoloid migration in Assam.

Another great division of the Indo-Chinese family of peoples includes the Dimesa or the Hill Kacharis, the Bodos or the plains Kacharis, the Rabhas, the Garos, the Lalungs and the like. Both the Bodos and the Kacharis had their empire, their art and culture were developed to a high level of excellence and they constitute a landmark of a cultural history. Dimapur was the capital city of the Kachari Kingdom in central Assam.

The Chutiyas originally occupied a tract of land not far removed from the home of the Shans, along the north-eastern tip of the country. The Ahoms as they entered this land after having crossed the Patkoi ranges had to encounter the powerful Chutiyas. It seems the Chutiyas absorbed a good number of these

immigrants through inter-marriage and other social exchanges, and ultimately evolved a new race of people called the Ahom-Chutiyas as a result of this interfusion. The lore of the Chutiyas race is rich in tradition, and tradition has it that they formed a Hindu dynasty in Sadiya or what was known as Vidarbha.

The Ahoms came to this land in the 13th century, their appearance and intense participation in the life of this land changed the whole course of history. A member of the Shan sub-section of great Indo-Chinese family of people, the Ahoms who eventually became the masters of the whole of Brahmaputra valley, built for the most part, their stronghold in upper Assam. Particularly in the modern district of Sibsagar and Jorhat.

The Garos, a tribe of the Tibeto-Burman Bado family, who generally inhabit the hills known after them, are like the Khasis and the Syntengs a matriarchal people. Though matriarchal people, their cultural patterns have greater affinity with those of the Bodo-Kacharis in the plains than with those of the Khasi and Syntengs.

The Miris live both in the hills and the plains of the State, those in the plains are generally a riparian people. They are a docile population as the Mikirs are. Those in hills inhabit sub-Himalayan ranges to the north of the district of Lakhimpur. They are a people of Tibeto-Burman origin. They are tall of well

developed bodies and have the pleasant facial features of the Mongoloid type of people.

The Khamtis a people of the Mongoloid stock like the Ahoms inhabit the eastern tip of the Brahmaputra valley. They are of the Shan origin. The Khamtis are Buddhists of the Burman school. The Khamti temples are made of timber, and the various designs and carvings attached to them speak of these people as being a sensitive and artistic race. Their priests are celebrated and their holy see is known as bapu chang.

Their are Mikir Hills in the central regions of the State. They are now constituted into a separate hills district under the sixth schedule of the Constitution of India. The tribe of this region are of the Tibeto-Burman stock. There is a scattered population of the Karbis in the plains of the District of Kamrup and Nowgong as also in North Cachar. The Karbis are generally a peaceful tribe and they differ considerably in habit and character from the tribes of the rest of the hills.

Assam is a living museum, so to say of races and tribes, besides these there are other different tribes, the chief of whom are the Turungs, the Naras, the Phakials, and the like. All these tribes dwell in the Upper Assam Valley and in the Hills that lie around it, sheltering different groups of humanity cosy nooks.

Besides the Tibeto-Burmans, the Mongoloids, the Austro-Asiatics and the Dravidians, Assam is the home, generally speaking of the Aryan also. It might be that some of these people made their appearance on the east of this State, the Aryans entered its valley from the west. The Kalitas whose main profession is agriculture, are numerous, all over the State, they are supposed to be one of the earliest groups of Aryans that came to Assam. Like the Kalitas, the Brahmins, an Aryan stock are also immigrants from the west.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The people of Assam bred in ancient peasant traditions, observe a sort of primitive devotion to nature, it reveals itself in the popular festivals like the Bihus that commemorate the changes of seasons. These nature festivals that mark the advent of autumn and spring, remind one of the primitive man of agriculture who created both rituals and magic out of art.

The Bahag Bihu is a festival of dance and music, it is celebrated in mid-April, when nature like a young woman opens into a radiance of light, beauty and colour.

This is a gay popular festival associated as it is with nature "stirred" under the impact of spring rain and in it folk joy is seen at its best and highest, dance and music add to the

colour of the scene. The Bihu dances invariably precede the rains and the season of cultivation, in April when the festival is held, nature becomes bright and buoyant. The people sing and dance together, young boys and girls drawn to each other in the golden lure of dreams, songs and the plaintive Bihugits and Bongits.

The Bihu dances are a superb expression of manly art and dispart, a sing-song chant punctuated by the native drums called "dhol" forms the musical accompaniment in the main to which the people dance in gay abandon. Like the Russian Polka, the Bihu dances display a genuine folk-joy. The "Marhar Singar Pepa" an indegenous flute made of buffalo horn, grows faint and distant and the dancers dance to its dying strains. The Bihu dances express the spirit of a festivity festival. The Bihus are of unidentified origin.

Assam is a land of different races and people which has rendered the origin of the Bihus mysterious. It is held today as a popular relic of the distant Austro-Asiatic civilization in view primarily of its agricultural and pastoral origin.

The Bihu dances reveal evidences of Austro-Asiatic influences, with the Austro-Asiatic dance festivals connected with the harvest season and also seed time, constitute a popular social event. This is seen in places wherever these people have migrated. It is to be found in Java, in the Nicobar Islands,

Upper Burma and those places in India where Asiatic influences were once the dominant traits. The Bihu dances and festivals are a robust relic of this ancient civilization, and they live as such attuned to a society that is still now predominantly agricultural.

The chief amusement of the countryside are community dancing and singing, stage acting called the Bhawnas and buffalo fights etc. These items of merry-making are mostly connected with the Bihus, a popular agricultural festival. The Bihus are supposed to be of Austro-Asiatic origin and their influence on the pattern of Assamese culture, though imperceptible is potent. The habit of chewing raw betelnuts as prevalent in Assamese society today is supposed to be an Austro-Asiatic custom. It is fairly well-spread.

There are three Bihus, the Bohag, the Magh and the Kati, celebrated at different periods and cycles of the year and nature. In point of importance and ceremony, the Bohag Bihu is the foremost of them all. It is celebrated with the advent of the Assamese new year which synchronises with mid-April. This is the time when the winter veil of fog and mist is lifted and the dry bones of the earth quicken under a mystic touch. The touch is that of buoyant spring gliding into the naked bones of trees into empty fields and the hearts of men with music and joy. The Bihu festival is an enactment of the primitive urge in man for expres-

sion through rites and rituals songs and dances of a natural fact. It is the fact of nature's procreative urge which is symbolised through this festival of the Bôhag Bihu.

Folk dances are a common item of the social life of Assam and with the approach of this Bihu, held in April, every individual is enlivened with a new spirit, he is caught with "joice de vivre" and as he dances, it might be in the open field, under a banyan tree or in the shade of a bamboo or mango-grove, he does it in gay abandon. The drum beats produces a frantic music that has an appeal on the sinews of the mind and the body, the buffalo horn blows, raises the softer notes of the young hearts of both sexes and draws them into the golden world of dreams and aspirations, the texture of which is woven no less by panions born on Bihugits and Barngits. These songs are for the most part youthful vibrations and are woven round themes of love and young nature.

Of the other two Bihus, the Magh Bihu is celebrated in the middle of winter, after the harvest is collected. With bonfire and social gatherings and feasts. It can be called the Harnest Home. It shows powerful influences of the hills. To the ancient man, the community fire had a distant place in the utilitarian content of his life. The "Magh Bihu" represents the primitive aspect of life with the fire as the centre-piece as prevalent in the plains and hills. During this Bihu the bonfire is the conspicuous feature, after the harvest is collec-

ted, the earth is empty and barren.

The "Kati" is the most insignificant of the three Bihus in point of ceremony and importance, it synchronizes with the time when the green shoots in the field put forth, the initial blossoms light are burnt on this occasion and the goddess of prosperity is propitiated.

The Bihu dances have created a number of indigeneous musical instruments, "dhol" or the native drums that invisibly accompany the dances enjoy a lot of popularity. The "Mohar Singar Pepe" is an indigeneous flute made of the buffalo horn it is overwhelming in its vibrant musicalness. It is played with the Bihu dances which lends to atmosphere of Bihu joy and delight a sort of haunting melody.

Assam is rich in a number of tribal dances. The Bodos of the plains have an intricate pattern of indigenous dances. They are mostly associated with a primitive ritual called Karaipuja. The instruments that accompany these dances are similarly indigeneous. A flute called "Chifung" is most attractive in its musicalness. The gagane, generally used by these people, is another musical instruments of the Bodos. The Nagara is a south Indian musical instrument that has been long associated with Assamese cultural life from ancient times.

The "Bhawanas" an important item of folk-enjoyment are a

popular Vaishnavite stage performance introduced by Sankardev, a cycle of dramas, music and songs has grown round it. It has at the same time given birth to a new class of music called "ankienater git". They are of devotional context. They constitute life of the village namghass or congregational prayer halls, the namghass constitute the venue of their devotional dramas. The Sutradhar dance is an integral part of this religio-cultural life of the mythological dramas. The ojpali dances, mostly popular in western ssam, and non-voishnavite origin, are other significant items of their cultural life, they are usually associated with the serpent goddess Menesa.

The women of this State are mostly distinctive in their dress. They wear "mekhela" or long flowing skirt down to the ankles, a "riba" or breast cloth and a shawl, "Muga" is a regular wear of the women-folk, men prefer large wraps of eri(endi) during winter. Silk and cotton with beautiful designs of indigenous art are woven by the women in their home looms.

Gandhiji says, "Every women of Assam is a barn weaver.... And she weaves fairy tales in cloth....I fell in love with the women of Assam as soon as I learnt that they were accomplished weavers. Being weavers they have used economy in their dress without impairing its beauty or its efficiency as cover. And to me it is a sign of very high culture to see the Assamese women and girls wearing little or no jewellery".

Assam does not have a separate weaving class, here all people weave, irrespective of caste or creed or social position, and almost every house contain a loom. Sericulture and handloom weaving are the most important cottage industries in Assam, the principal variety of silk consists in "eri" (a white silk of the mulberry worm) and "muga" (a yellow buff silk).

Cane and bamboo and palm leaf work constitute an indigenous cottage industry of the rural areas, things of different artistic workmanship and daily use are made with these materials. They are mostly baskets, fans and oven-shaped hats called "japis". The Japis are often ornamented and embroidered with different designs.

Silk worm rearing is a considerable rural occupation in Assam, silk yarns are obtained through this process. The "pat" worm which yields a golden, lustrous silk is fed and reared on the "nuni" tree. Often this worm is reared on the "chapa" or "mezankari" tree, and in that case it spins a white cocoon, the eri worm's attachment to the "era" or castor oil plant has obtained for it this particular name. Generally the "eri" or the endi as it is known is slightly drab in colour, but the texture it yields is essentially of a fine durable and attractive quality. It is soft and light, but warm. Sualkuchi, a village in the District of Kamrup is the heart of this industry at present.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

There has not yet been regular architectural exploration in Assam. Some of the old relics found scattered here and there have been collected and these include sculptured images of deities chiselled stone pillars of different shapes, carved stone pedestals of pillars and finely carved panels containing figures of both human and animal heads.

The rock-cut images of Vishnu and Ganesh found in or near Guwahati go back to an early age.

Rock-cut figures have been excavated at Pandu. All these are figures of gods and goddesses. Numerous cutting on rocks are to be seen also on the western slope of Kamakhya hill. The basement of the modern Ghantakarna temple contains some stone fragments of older temples. One of these fragments is a beautifully carved frieze in which these are representation of series of garlands and animals.

Both in Umananda and Asvakranta in Guwahati, the Ahom temples were built with stones and carved images belong to more ancient temples. The Ananta-Sayi Vishnu of Asvakranta is a piece of sculpture of very high order. It belongs probably to the 10 or 11th century A.D.

The ruins existing in or near Tezpur are much more exten-

sive and varied in character. In the town proper ruins of stone building and of a temple have been found. The ruins contain carved and sculptured stones. Ruins have also been discovered in the Bamuri Hills to the east of Tezpur town and at Parbatia to the west of Tezpur town. The Shina temple at Parbatia is the oldest and finest piece of architectural work in Kamarupa. It was built probably in the 5th or 6th century A.D. Influence of Gupta is noticed in this temple.

In modern district of Goalpara scattered remains of shrines and temples have been found at Yogighopa. Dekalhowa, Masnai, Pancharatna and in Surya-Pahar. These are supposed to be of Pre-Ahom period.

Nowgong district is rich in old relics. Most of the shrines here as is evident from ruins, were dedicated to Siva and Vishnu. Stone pieces bearing various human animal and floral designs have also been found.

In Sibsagar old architectural ruins have been found in Sibsagar proper, Deapani and Numeligah. Here also the temples were dedicated to either Siva or Vishnu. The ruins consists of stone images and architectural sculptural fragments.

People of Kamarupa in ancient times had shown architectural and engineering skill in the construction of stone bridges over rivers. There is still a small stone bridge in the western

part of North Guwahati which is called "Sil Sako". The other "Sil Sako" was over a channel of the Bar Nadi. It was constructed without lime or mortar.

DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN ASSAM

Assam has been adored by nature in such a way that one finds a paradise on earth. From the largest river islands Majuli to the tiniest island Umananda on the Brahmaputra, long range of hills and mountains, various tributaries and small rivulets wild green forest with rare flora and fauna, Assam is an unique place for tourist angle of vision.

The concept of tourism is not new in this region. It has been practising here for the last 2000 years. Generally, the traveller in the past were scholars, merchants and pilgrims. The first recorded foreign traveller was probably Hiuen-Tsang. He was followed by Muslim and English travellers.

The self renewing riches of Assam attracted many invaders, but the one who left most recent and most abiding imprint on Assam were the Ahoms, a Shan tribe from Upper Burma, who entered Assam in 1228 A.D. and ruled Assam till well into the 19th century and eventually gave their name to the land. Before developing to its present form, tourism was passed through a very long period in the history of Assam.

Growth of Tourism

From the account it is clear that tourism has a long and chequered history in Assam. Its early format was mostly religious where as in modern times it has assumed one form of an industrial, economical and socio-cultural activity.

The salient characteristics of these historic trends of tourism can be described in four phases:

- i) Development of tourism in Ancient period
- ii) Development of tourism in Medieval period
- iii) Development of tourism in British period
- iv) Development of tourism in Post Independence period.

1) DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN ANCIENT PERIOD

The period from King Narakasura (or Asur dynasty upto the 13th century A.D.) is full of religious favour and cultural renaissance. According to the ancient Hindu Ghastras, the temple Kamakhya near Guwahati was the centre of Kamarupa. The famous Chinese traveller Hiun Tsang also visited Kamarupa on his tour to India. This long period of ancient history witness an unprecedented growth of religious tourism due to emergence of Brahmanical society which is responsible for the institution of pilgrimage ritual and Hindu way of life. Some of the religious centres which were developed in that period are Kamakhya,

Mahavairab, Umananda etc. Thus it is clear that Assam was one of the major religious centre for Hindus in ancient period.

ii) DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN MEDIEVAL PERIOD

In early medieval period when Ahoms were ruling has not brought any marked change in tourism development in Assam. The later Ahom rulers blessed with rare aesthetic sense, built a number of temples, palaces, monuments etc. One of the main accelerator of tourism in this time was the emergence of the "Mahapurusha Dharma" which led to the establishment of several sathas and monasteries all over Assam. Some of the tourist centres which were developed during this period were "Sive Dal", "Talatal Ghar" in Sibsagar, Asvakrata in Guwahati etc.

iii) DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM DURING BRITISH PERIOD

This was one of the most important period as far as tourism is concerned as it brought many remarkable changes to tourism in North Eastern Region. In this period for the first time the hill regions of Assam especially Meghalaya was considered as an area where several tourist centres could be developed. British ruler developed a new pattern of township in Shillong which is now one of the most prominent tourist destination in India. In fact, Shillong was the capital of Assam till Meghalaya was declared a full fledged state in 1971.

Thus it cannot be ruled out that the Britishers were the

main people who had developed and set the pace of the modern tourism in this region.

After the establishment of Shillong as health centre other pleasure and leisure resorts such as Haflong, Kaziranga were developed.

iv) DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

Post independence period can be termed as golden era so far as the development of modern tourism is concerned. After independence, commercialization of tourism has brought many striking changes and it has proved as a major source of earning foreign exchange. Tourism was given a big boost in the country by setting up India Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. (1965) and a separate Ministry of Tourism. In fact after independence, development and promotion of tourism took a significance place in country's regional economic policy and planning.

In Assam Tourism development programme was initiated since 1957 by establishing separate tourism department. Since then, the State Government in collaboration with the centre have implemented many programmes in the field of administration, accommodation, transport and entertainment infrastructure.

Different Five-Year Plans provided a number of incentives to the growth of tourism. New avenues were added and created in

almost every sector of the tourism industry. Accommodation, transport, travel, recreation, marketing, souvenir trade etc. all are being developed and modernised. Tourist outlays in various plans have been gradually increased (Table No. 2).

In the field of accommodation several types of residences such as star type hotels, luxury hotels, low income group accommodation, tourist bungalows, rest houses, dharamsalas, pilgrims sheds, yatri nivas, youth hostel, tourist huts, etc. have been constructed by both Government and private agencies.

In recent years transport and communication system have also been developed due to heavy tourist demand. Several retail tour operators have been operating successfully many luxury buses, tourist cars, ordinary buses, for tourists and pilgrims.

Besides, Government has been developing many new tourist centres for further development of tourism in the region. Apart from these many wild life sanctuaries have been developing at different places such as Orang, Pabha, Laokhawa, Pabitora, Sonai Rupe and Nambar.

The Department of Tourism, Government of India has initiated steps to produce a 15 minute general film on tourism in Assam depicting various aspect of Assamese life and culture for overseas market. Shooting for the film has already been started and is in progress, the venture is expected to increase tourist

Table No. 4
COMPARATIVE STATISTICS OF STATE AND TOURISM PLAN

State Plan	Reference Year	Particulars of State Plan	Tourism Plan
First Plan	1951-52 to 1955-56	Rs. 2050 lakhs	Nil
Second Plan	1956-57 to 1960-61	Rs. 5448 "	8.89 lakhs
Third Plan	1961-62 to 1965-66	Rs. 13244 "	N.A.
Ad-hoc Annual Plan	1966-67 to 1968-69	Rs. 8639 "	2.20 lakhs
Fourth Plan	1969-70 to 1973-74	Rs. 19839 "	19.67 "
Fifth Plan	1974-75 to 1977-78	Rs. 27792 "	25.00 "
Annual Plan	1978-79	Rs. 15066 "	8.43 "
Annual Plan	1979-80	Rs. 15968 "	11.50 "
Sixth Plan	1980-81 to 1984-85	Rs. 127901 "	250.00 "
Seventh Plan	1985-86 to 1989-90	Rs. 188843 "	520.26 "

Source: Tourist Statistics, 1989-89 and 1989-90
 Directorate of Tourism, Government of Assam.

attraction for Assam in abroad.

The programme initiated by the Central Tourism Department for increasing tourist attraction to Assam also include Bihu poster, travel circuit and computerised tourists information service in the North Eastern Region. The Department has started circulating Assam's Bihu poster all over the world for tourists attraction to Assam.

To keep pace with the fast changing world, the Department of Tourism, Govt. of India has introduced computerised tourist information to the travelling public. Concept of this facilitation is called "TOURNET" (Tourist Network). This shall ensure quick and fast information to a visitor on updated tips on tourist information, location, types of accommodation available and their tariffs, modes of transport to within cities as also airline time tables and tariffs. At present such information is available in Bombay and Delhi offices. Data base for 70 cities are now available. Plans are on to cover 700 primary and secondary cities spreading across the country.

"GOURNET" would be immensely helpful in future, once it is linked to "INDONET" (India Network) which is India's premier public data processing network. With the use of hard disc CDROM (compact disc read only memory) would have 40 cities in 20 countries. This work shall be carried out by means of dial facili-

ties of the Department of Telecommunication lines. CMC (Computer Maintenance Centre) has been entrusted with this task.

Updated information on airline schedule, tariffs, road tariffs disruptions, museum timing etc. would be readily available at these 40 domestic counters. Also satellite link up would make this information within reach in other travel agent offices abroad.

In the north-east offices namely Guwahati, Shillong and Imphal shall have this facility. Installation of terminal in these offices is likely to carry out in this year.

Tourist arrival in different tourist lodges totalled 17,409 as against 10,423 in 1985. Although the growth of tourist arrival showed an improvement but the arrival of foreign tourist is very discouraging. Only 319 foreign tourist visited in 1989 as against 2320 in 1979. The Government of India has decided to relax the R.A.P. rule to some extent which may exert influence over the inflow of foreign tourist to this State and North Eastern Region as a whole and it is hoped that quite a good number of foreign tourist will visit in coming years.

INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS

Table No. 5

Year	Assam	All India	Percentage share of Assam
1971	1180	300995	0.39
1972	1274	640422	0.19
1978	1213	747995	0.16
1979	2320	764781	0.30
1980	1000	800150	0.12
1981	50	853140	0.01
1982	132	860178	0.02
1983	32	884731	-
1984	23	852503	-
1985	40	836908	-
1986	146	1080050	0.01
1987	430	1163774	0.04
1988	595	1239992	0.05
1989	319	1337232	0.03

Source: Tourist Statistics, 1989
 Directorate of Tourism, Government of Assam.

(Fig - i)

TOURISM ORGANISATION

The Central Government plays an important role in the development of national tourism alongwith foreign tourism. The modern context of taking tourism as a form of industry is only of recent origin in India. It started relatively quite late in the developing countries. In assam the programme for tourism development started in 1957. A number of measures were taken to develop infrastructure both in plains and hill regions of the State under different Five Year Plans.

For the sake of administration, policy making and effective implementation of the programmes of tourism in Assam a detailed and systematic organisational network is at work.

There is a full-fledged Department of Tourism headed by a Minister of State rank. Its main function is to formulate policies and programmes and give direction for the development of tourism in the State. The Directorate of Tourism with Director at its Head is the main implementing authority. Besides, there is a Assam State Tourism Development Corporation whose main function is commercial. As regards the Hill Region of Assam, it has some special provisions for its development.

TOURISM ORGANIZATION IN ASSAM

Department of Tourism

Government of Assam, Guwahati

Ministry of Tourism

STATE MINISTER

Secretary

*Assam State Tourism Development
Corporation Ltd. (Guwahati)
Managing Director

Directorate of Tourism
Guwahati
Director
Joint Director

Deputy Director Planning

Deputy Director
TransportDeputy Director
KazirangaTourist Information Officer
New Delhi, Calcutta, SiliguriAssistant Tourist
Officer
TransportAssistant Tourist
Officer
InformationAssistant Tourist Officer
Information

*Its function is
commercial.

BUDGET PROVISION AND EXPENDITURE OF TOURISM DEPARTMENT, ASSAM

(Rs. in lakh)

Year	Particulars	Approved Outlay			Establishment			Building			Vehicle			Equipment			Others		
		Plan	Non-Plan	Total	Plan	Non-Plan	Total	Plan	Non-Plan	Total	Plan	Non-Plan	Total	Plan	Non-Plan	Total	Plan	Non-Plan	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1985-	General																		
86	Area	60.00	31.89	91.89	7.02	24.80	31.82	39.95	0.71	40.66	2.20	-	2.20	-	-	-	10.83	6.38	17.21
	Hill																		
	Area	4.00	1.90	5.90	1.40	1.90	3.30	2.60	-	2.60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1986-	General																		
87	Area	65.00	36.18	101.18	10.48	26.74	37.22	41.00	0.86	41.86	3.00	1.00	4.00	-	-	-	10.52	7.58	18.10
	Hill																		
	Area	5.00	2.65	7.65	0.20	2.65	2.85	4.80	-	4.80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1987-	General																		
88	Area	140.00	37.92	177.92	11.93	28.17	40.10	52.27	1.01	53.28	10.50	1.60	12.10	3.18	-	3.18	28.17	7.14	35.26
	Hill																		
	Area	9.00	3.20	12.20	2.50	3.20	5.70	6.50	-	6.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1988-	General																		
89	Area	140.00	43.32	183.32	10.55	25.98	36.53	54.52	-	54.52	9.00	-	9.00	7.00	-	7.00	40.05	-	40.95
	Hill																		
	Area	10.00	3.47	13.47	1.50	3.47	4.97	8.50	-	8.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1989-	General																		
90	Area	135.00	43.51	178.51	10.56	32.58	43.14	59.50	-	59.50	-	-	-	5.00	-	5.00	59.94	10.93	70.87
	Hill																		
	Area	15.00	3.64	18.64	1.00	3.64	4.64	14.00	-	14.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Tourist Statistics, 1989-90, Directorate of Tourism, Government of Assam.

Revenue earnings of Tourism Department

Table No. 8

Year	Revenue from Accommodation (Rs.)	Revenue from Transport (Rs.)	Total (Rs.)
1985-86	5,60,556.00	1,36,433.00	6,96,989.00
1986-87	14,74,540.00	3,96,589.00	18,71,129.00
1987-88	15,25,640.00	3,39,413.00	18,65,053.00
1988-89	17,59,750.00	4,75,994.00	22,35,744.00
1989-90(P)	16,99,981.00	6,71,193.00	23,71,174.00

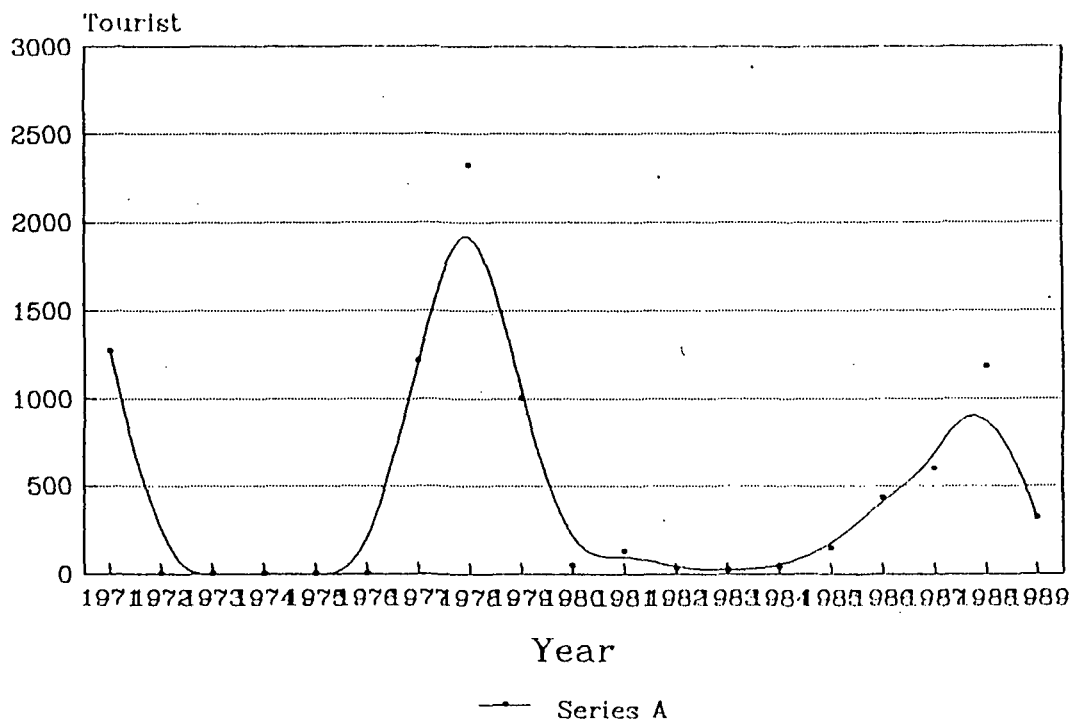
fig - (ii)

Source: Tourist Statistics 1989-90

Directorate of Tourism
Government of Assam.

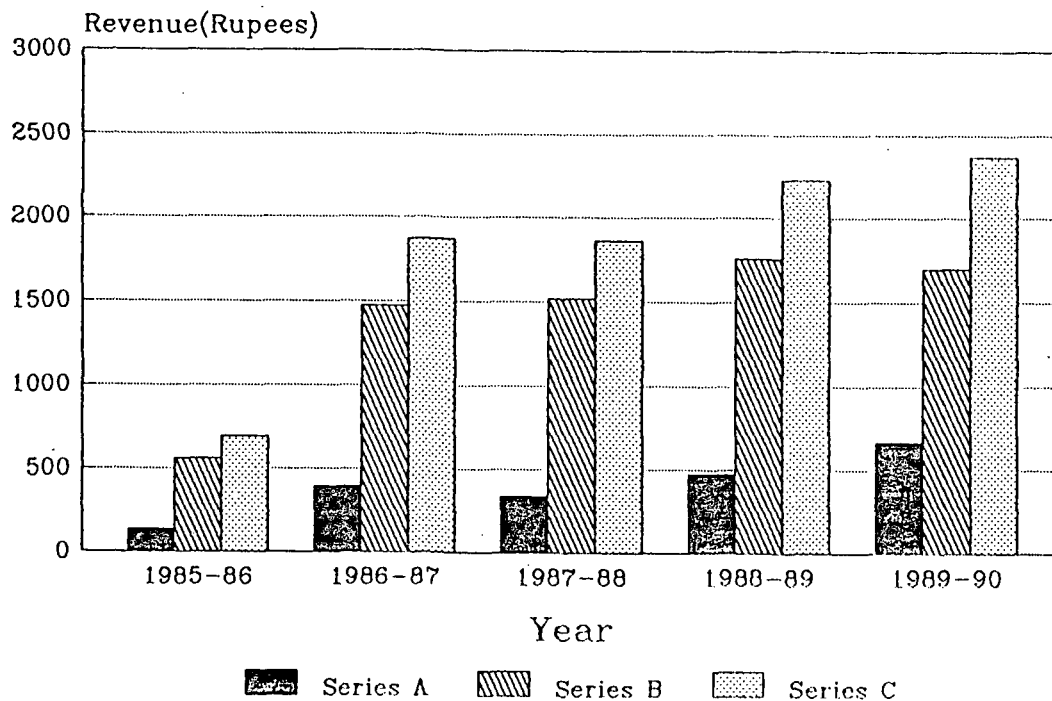
P : Provisional.

International Tourist Arrivals Assam



Source: Tourist Statistics (1989), Assam.

Revenue Earnings of Tourism Department Assam



Tourist Statistics (1989-90)
A-Transport, B-Accommodation, C-Total

The Department of Tourism have endeavoured to set a rapid pace in development of Tourism in the State. Some of the tourist spots identified by the Department such as Kaziranga National Park, Manas Tiger Project have already become internationally famous. During the last few years the main thrust of the Department was to provide infrastructural facilities like comfortable accommodation at these places of tourist interest and also to develop a network of transport facilities to these tourist destinations. Side by side, the Department have endeavoured to develop relatively lesser known places and make these places interesting to tourists and to provide facilities of transport, accommodation, water sports etc. in these places. With these objects in view the Department have constructed a picnic cottage at Chandubi, 65 kms. away from Guwahati where there is a vast natural lake surrounded by mountains and green reserve forests. Rowing and boating facilities have provided for relaxation of tourists and week-enders. New tourist lodges are under process of construction at Sibsagar, Jorhat, Arang, Guwahati, Umrangsu etc. some of which are nearing completion and others are at various stages of construction. Nagaon Tourist Lodge is opened for tourists. The tourist lodge at Diphu has been extended for more accommodation facilities and a double storied tourist lodge has been thrown open at Silchar. With central assistance, a 72-bedded Forest Lodge at Bansbari (Manas) is nearing completion.

The Department in collaboration with I.T.D.C. has already commissioned a luxury hotel "Brahmaputra Ashok" at Guwahati at a cost of Rs. 2.5 crores. In order to encourage pilgrimage to holy places, the Department have sanctioned pilgrime cottages at Belsare, Barpeta, Sadiya and Ajan Pir Dargah. The Department has also finalised schemes for construction of such cottages at Navagrah and Hajo. For providing way-side amenities at Nalbari a drive-in restaurant cum motel is under construction. A drive-in-restaurant has been commissioned at Kohara since 1985. The Government of India have agreed on principle to finance a multi-storied Yatri Nivas at Guwahati for which land have already been acquired and State P.W.D. is providing detailed plan and estimate for the same. In 1986, the Department acquired from the Government of India the "Forest Lodge", a luxury tourist lodge catering mainly to the international tourists at Kaziranga. Previously, this lodge was managed by ITDC. The Department has received central assistance for two way-side amenities schemes at Rowta and Silbheta, a tourist resort at Sameguri lake with water sports facilities and for purchase of speed boats for Majuli island.

The Department have augmented its fleet of tourist transport by acquiring car, jeep, buses. The Department have introduced a number of conducted tour to Kaziranga, Manas, Sibsagar, Shillong from Guwahati in addition to daily sightseeing trips at Guwahati and trips to Kamakhya temple.

Transport available

Table No. 9

1	Car	3 numbers
2	Jeep	4 "
3	Station Wagon	1 "
4	Mini Bus (10 seater)	1 "
5	Mini Bus (13 ")	2 "
6	Mini Bus (15 ")	1 "
7	Mini Bus (16 ")	1 "
8	Mini Bus (19 ")	4 "
9	Luxury Bus (35 seater)	1 "
10	D.C.M. Toyota (20 seater)	1 "
11	Canter (26 seater)	2 "

Source: Tourist Statistics
Directorate of Tourism, Government of Assam.

The Department also with the assistance of Inland Water Transport provides facilities for river cruise at Brahmaputra to the tourists, with central assistance a luxury cruise vessel is under construction. The Department has scheme for introducing conducted tours by luxury buses outside the State specially to cater to the need of the LTC travelling. For this purpose, luxury omnibus have been acquired.

To attract the tourists, the Department has embarked upon

a vigorous publicity campaign through sustained advertisement in national and local papers, booklets, folders, picture post cards, wall posters etc. The Department produced a 35 mm documentary film. "Along the Brahmaputra" depicting scenic beauty, important destinations, monuments, archaeological ruins and colourful cultural heritage of the State. The Department also produced a video film, "A SOJOURN IN THE WILDERNESS" in which the rare and exotic flora and fauna of Assam have been highlighted. Another 16 mm documentary film on monuments and cultural heritage of Assam has been completed.

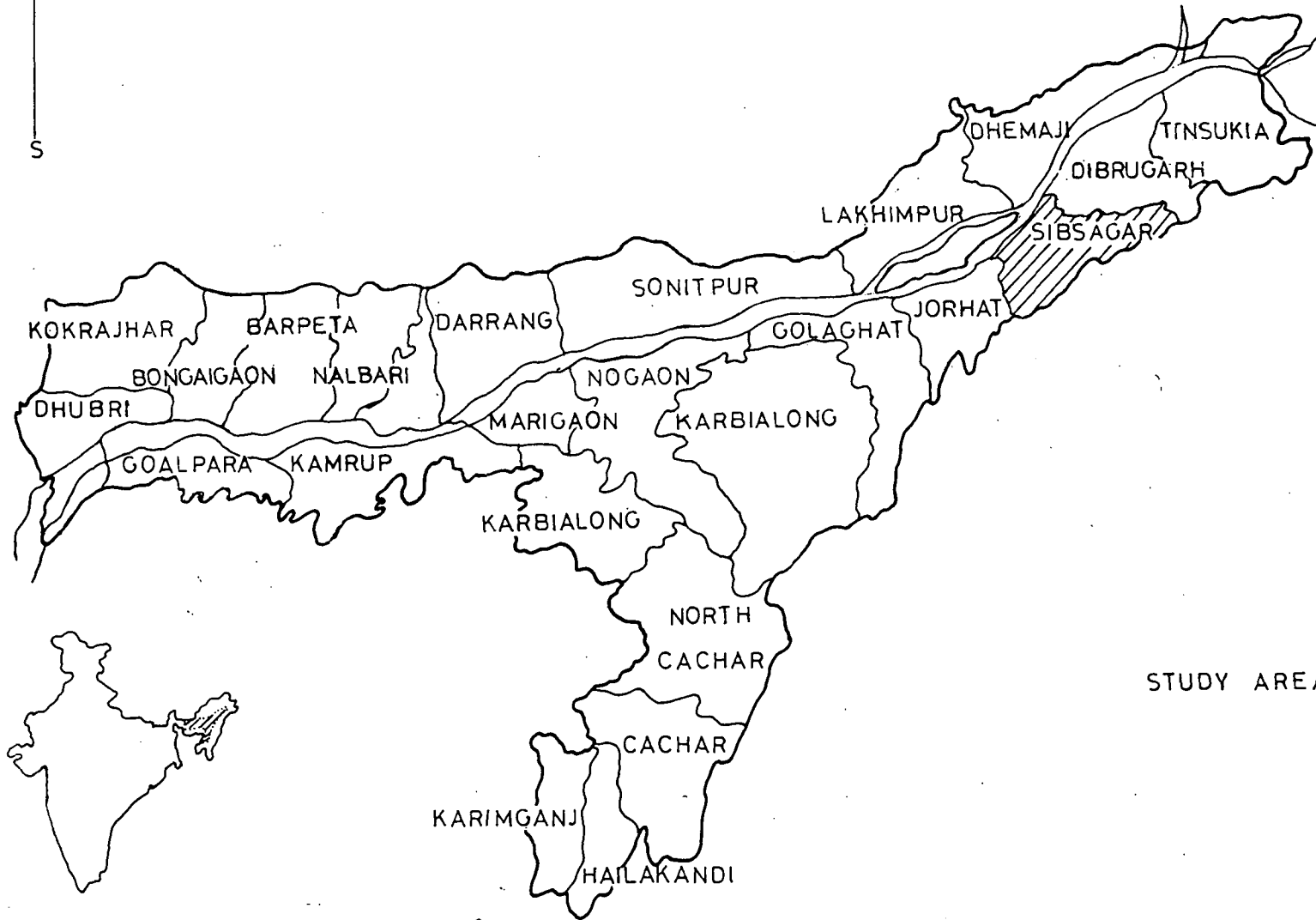
For the systematic development of tourism, Government have marked out nine separate tourist circuits in the State and efforts are being made to develop them in an integrated way. They are :

- i) Guwahati-Kaziranga-Sibsagar
- ii) Guwahati-Manas
- iii) Guwahati-Silchar
- iv) Guwahati-Tezpur-Bhalukpong
- v) Guwahati-Sibsagar
- vi) Guwahati-Diphu-Haflong
- vii) Tezpur-Bhalukpong
- viii) Tezpur-Kaziranga (via Kalia-Bhomora bridge)
- ix) Tezpur-Orang sanctuary.

As a result of all these efforts the number of tourists visiting Assam have increased considerably. In the year 1989-90, 2,86,020 tourists visited Assam as against 2,18,074 in 1986-87.

CHAPTER III

ASSAM



STUDY AREA



SIBSAGAR

Introduction

The very name Sibsagar conveys the feeling of historic wonder and admiration which attained its pinnacle as the capital of entire Assam during the reign of Ahom Kings, Swarga Deo Gaurinath Sing, with about 10,000 followers had to flee this capital at the height of Moamerica. During their reign the Ahom Kings created a number of historical monuments of rare historical and archeological significance many of which although in dilapidated condition present before us a full version of a highly developed technique of sculpture. The seven storied Kareng Ghar (known as Tatatal Ghar) which was completed during the reign of Rajaswar Sing, had three of its stories underneath the ground which connected it with the Dikhan river by its tunnels. Very near to this royal palace stands a sturdily building made of bricks which was built in 1704 Saka, during the reign of King Rudra Sing and it was under Royal Pavillion of the Ahom Kings popularly known as Rong-Ghar. To the part of this magistically built two storied building there stands the huge and gorgeous Joysagar Tank with its blue 318 acres of land (including its banks) which was made by King Rudra Sing in memory of his mother Joymoti in 1734 A.D. Ahom Queen Ambika Dug the Sibsagar Tank which covers an area of 255 Acres on the bank of which stands

the sacred temples of Lord Shiva, Lord Bishnu and goddess Durga. Mention must also be made of the famous durgah of Azan Peer the 17th century Muslim Saint at Sauraguri about 9 km. to the North-West of Sibsagar town. Cradled in the midst of scenic splendour of nature, this capital of the Ahom King was naturally adopted by Britishers as their headquarters after the famous treaty of Yandaboo. Even when the Upper Assam Region was divided into two District, namely, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur by the Royal Proclamation of 1838 A.D. Sibsagar continued to be the District Headquarters. Unfortunately for Sibsagar, the District Headquarters were shifted to Jorhat in the year 1911. Sibsagar has regained its lost position when it was formally declared as new District with headquarter at Sibsagar on July 1, 1983.

Not only this town was the capital of Assam and a centre of all political activities during the preceding centuries, it had also been the nerve centre of the Assamese Art, culture and literature. Situated at a distance of 355 km. to the East of Dispur, the Sibsagar with its historic monuments of rare archaeological significance in the midst of scenic splendour of nature blooms with the activities of a full fledged Industrial Town and presents before us enormous potentialities for occupying an important place in the country's map.

Topography

1. Location : The Sibsagar District is situated in between

94-95° and 95-20° Longitude East and in between 26-55° and 27-15° Latitude North. The sub-division has elevation of 86.6 metres above the sea level. The Sibsagar is at a distance of 355 kms. to the East of the Dispur and is bounded on the east by Dibrugarh District and Arunachal Pradesh, on the South by Nagaland and its West is Jorhat and on the North the Lakhimpur and Dibrugarh District. There are two sub-divisions namely Sibsagar and Charaideo.

2. Area : The total area of the district is 2602.9 sq. kms. out of which an area of 1933.75 sq. kms. covers Sibsagar sub-division. There are four revenue circles namely Diman, Amguri, Sibsagar and Nazira. There are even numbers of development blocks. There is one Municipal Board, the Sibsagar Municipal Board and two Town Committees one at Nazira and other at Amguri. There are 53 number of villages in this sub-division.

3. Physical features: The Sibsagar sub-division can be divided into two broad divisions namely the low lying areas on the South of river Brahmaputra. The low lying areas are characterized by marshy places and "char" and "Becl" areas which are generally flooded every year. No major crops are grown here and these are full of seeds and other grassy land. The char areas are cultivated during the Rabi seasons. The other parts of the sub-division consist of plain areas which extends upto Charaideo sub-division.

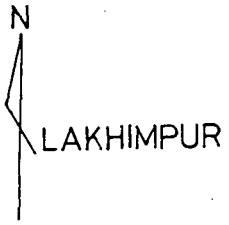
There are several big rivers in the sub-division. The mighty Brahmaputra flows on the North side of the sub-division. The whole of the drainage of the sub-division finds its way to the Brahmaputra. The Desang river in the Dibrugarh touches this sub-division for a few miles forming the boundary between Dibrugarh and Sibsagar before it falls into Brahmaputra. Other rivers are namely Desang, Dikhan and Darika. The Jhanji river forms the western boundary of the sub-division. The river system in this sub-division makes the soil fertile and cultivation of crops easier. The sub-division is flood prone also for the same reason. The sub-division is very famous for its tanks and marshy beel areas.

Special features: Sibsagar can be described as a District floating on the oil. The Oil and Natural Gas Commission has its Eastern Region Headquarters at Nazira in Sibsagar District. The Commission undertook exploration of oil in 1957 and have found large oil fields in Takwa, Galaky and Rudrasagar areas.

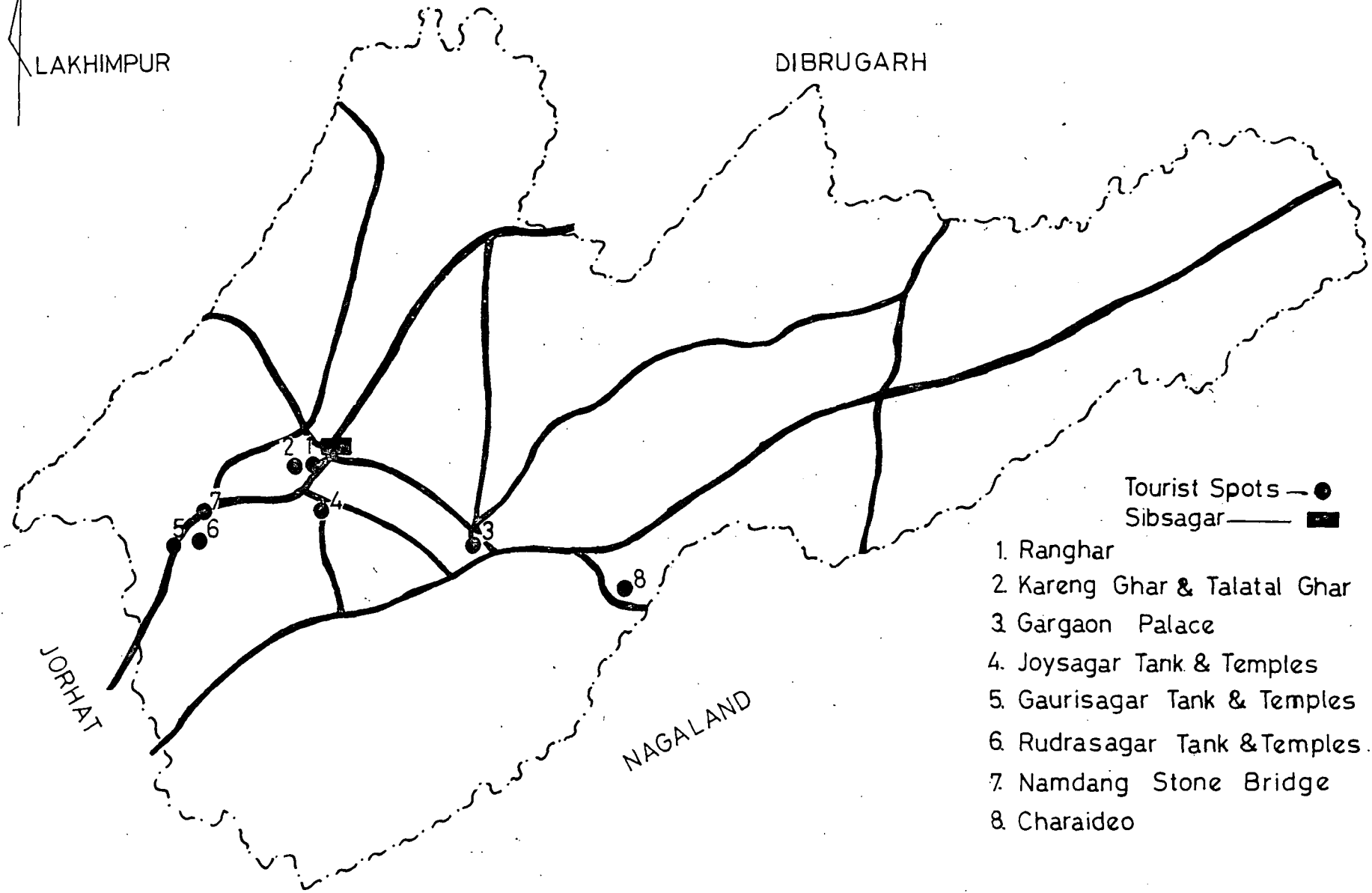
TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN SIBSAGAR

1) Kareng Ghar and Tatatal Ghar : A seven storied palace having three storeys underground known as Talatalghar and the Upper storeys known as Karengghar built by King Rudra Singha (1696-1714) is only 6 kms. from Sibsagar town. There were two underground tunnels from the Tatatal Ghar connecting Dikhan river

TOURIST SPOTS IN SIBSAGAR DISTRICT



DIBRUGARH



Tourist Spots — ●
Sibsagar — ■

1. Ranghar
2. Kareng Ghar & Talatal Ghar
3. Gargaon Palace
4. Joysagar Tank & Temples
5. Gaurisagar Tank & Temples
6. Rudrasagar Tank & Temples
7. Namdang Stone Bridge
8. Charaideo

and Gargaon place which were later blocked by the East India Company.

2) Rang Ghar: A two storied oval shaped pavillion from which Ahom royalities watched elephant fights and other sporting events. It was built by King Pramatta Singha (1744-1791) and stands close to the Kareng Ghar.

3) Gargaon Palace: Gargaon, the principal town of Ahoms built by the XVth King Suklenmung in 1540, lies 13 kms east of Sibsagar. The old palace was destroyed and the present seven storied palace was rebuilt around 1762 by King Rajeswar Singha.

4) Jaysagar Tank and Temples: The tank was built by King Rudra Singha in memory of his mother, Joymoti, a patriotic martyr in 1697 at Rangpur (5 kms). It covers an area of 318 acres and on its banks three temples were built in 1698 by the same monarch. These are the Joydol (Vishnu Temple), the Shivedol and the Deviodol which are highly revered.

5) Gaurisagar Tank and Temple: The Gaurisagar tank was built by Queen Phuleswari Devi (1722-1791) and was dedicated to goddess Durga. It is 150 acres under water and on its banks stand the Devidol, Shivedol and the Vishnudol temples. Gaurisagar is only 12 kms. from Sibsagar.

6) Rudrasagar Tank and Temple: Built in 1773 by King Lakshmi

Singha in memory of his father King Rudra Singha. On its banks stands a Shiva Temple, 8 kms. from Sibsagar town.

7) Namdang Stone Bridge: The bridge, a cutout from a single solid rock over the Namdang river 12 kms. from Sibsagar was constructed by workman brought from Bengal during the reign of King Rudra Singha in 1703. Today the N.H. 37 passes over this bridge.

8) Charaideo: The original capital of the Ahom Kings, built by Sukapha, the founder of the Ahom dynasty, in 1253 A.D. is 28 kms. east of Sibsagar town. It is famous for the numerous "Maidams" or burial vaults of Kings and other members of the royal families.

9) Ajan Pir Dargah Sarif: At Saraguri Chapori, 22 kms. from Sibsagar stands Ajan Pir Dargah Sarif. Ajan Pir was the first Muslim Saint to compose "ZIKIRS" in Assamese language (160 nos). On the day of the "VRS" thousands of devotees gather here to pay homage to the memories of this great Muslim reformer.

Other places of Shrines of Interest: There are a great number of Vaishnava satras, Muslim Dargahs, Buddhist and Sakta shrines. There are more than 500 tanks, vaults, earthen forts and "Rajbaries" (castles), belonging to the Ahom, Manipuri, Jaintia and Aren princes and Kachari Kings.

TRANSPORT ACCESSIBILITY

Sibsagar is one of the most easily accessible tourist

spot in Assam. It has good transport facilities both external and internal. Sibsagar is conveniently connected by good motorable roads with the major towns of the State.

As far as the transport facility is concerned, the nearest airport Rowrah in Jorhat is 55 kms away from Sibsagar town. Indian Airlines Corporation operates flights between Guwahati and Jorhat (Rowrah). Simaluguri is the nearest railway station which is only 16 kms from Sibsagar town. It is directly connected with Guwahati by regular train services.

Enough transport facilities are available from Sibsagar to Kaziranga, Jorhat, Nagaon, Tezpur, Diphu, Majuli etc. The ASTC buses provide regular services to entire Upper Assam regions. Apart from these transport facilities, regular conducted tours are organised by some travel agencies.

ACCOMMODATION

Sibsagar has reasonably good accommodation facilities. The hotels, bungalows, lodges provide good shelter and accommodation to the tourists. Besides there are some hotels of moderate rates - like Piccolo, Kareng, Priya, Brahmaputra, etc.

Rate charges of these hotels are not fixed and different hotels have different rate charges. Rate charges of government accommodation ranges from Rs. 8 to Rs. 20 per day and for a person not on duty it ranges between Rs. 50 to Rs. 80. Hotels

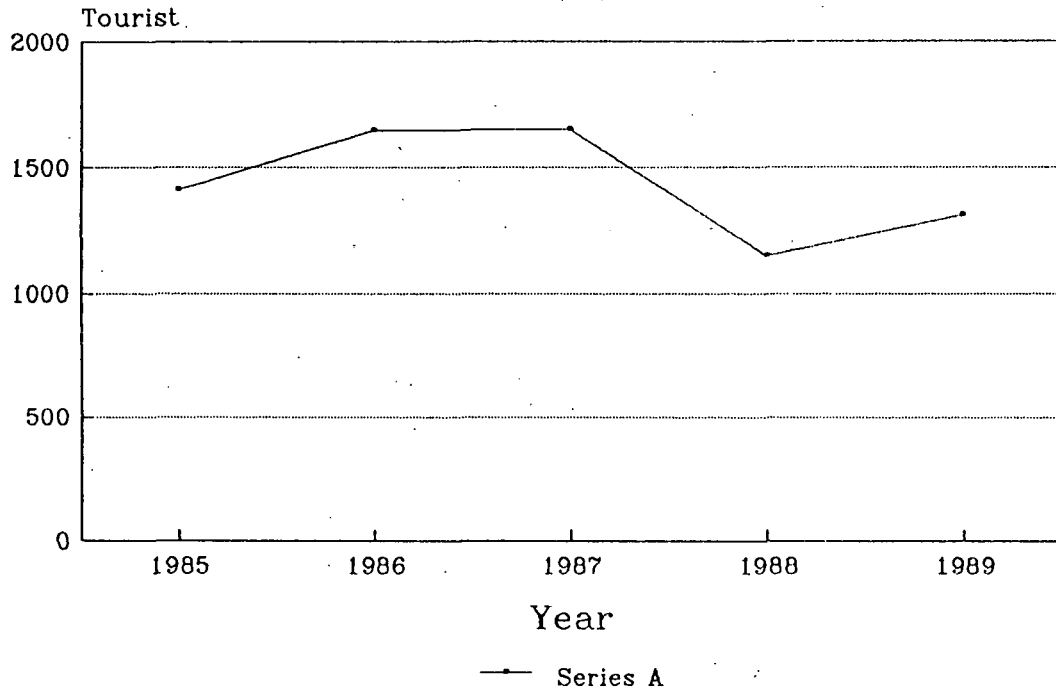
of European style charge Rs. 60 to Rs. 200 for single bed room and Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 for double bed room while for the entire suit they charge Rs. 200 to Rs. 300 per day. Hotels of Indian style have comparatively low rate charges. In an Indian style hotel for a single bed room it ranges from Rs. 25 to Rs. 50 and for double bed room Rs. 30 to Rs. 80 per day. But except western type hotels and some of the Indian style hotels most of the accommodation do not provide modern furniture and good cuisine facilities.

Sibsagar faces an accommodation crisis during the peak season in January and February when more than 100,000 tourists arrive here on "Sive Ratri" day. During the peak season it needs more or less expensive and moderately priced hotels and hostels.

TOURISM CHARACTERISTICS : TRENDS AND ANALYSIS

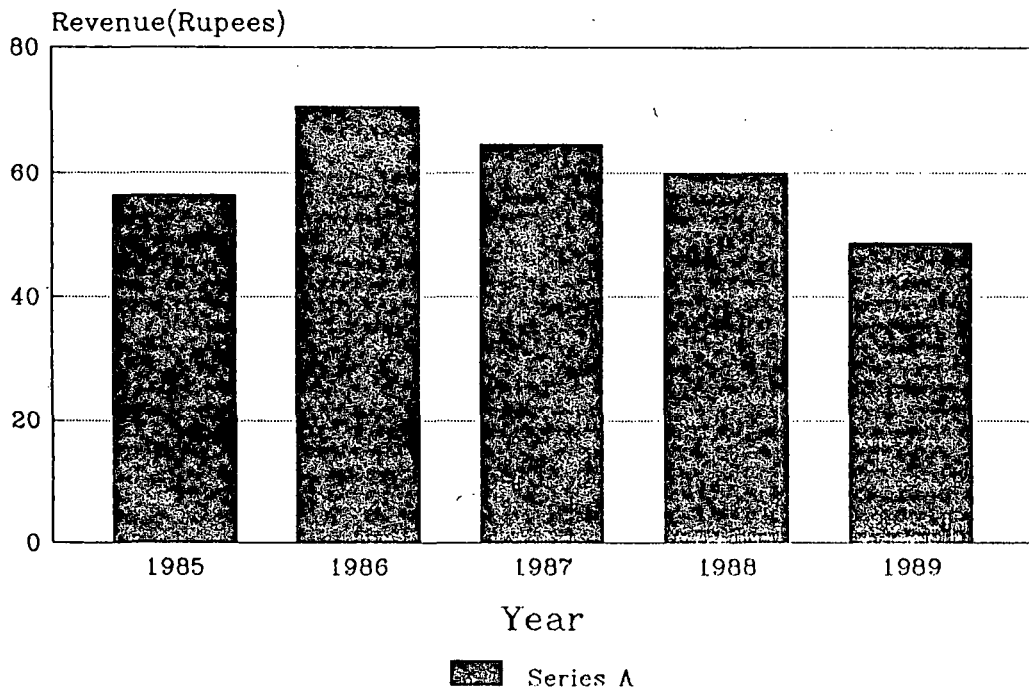
Assam is always regarded as one of the holiest regions of India and a large number of people travel to Assam every year on pilgrimage. With its renowned places of pilgrimage it has succeeded to a great extent in promoting domestic tourism in the form of what is called "Tirth Yatra" or religious tourism. A large number of colourful fairs and festivals are celebrated throughout the year, but there are certain special occasions such as Ambubachi fair at Kamakhya, Rash fair at Majuli, Dol Utshab in Barpeta Kirtanghar, Urs festival at Pea Macca, Hajo

Tourist Arrival in Sibsagar (Based on Tourist Lodge Statistics)



Source: Tourist Statistics (1989-90)
Govt. of Assam.

Revenue Earnings in Sibsagar (Based on Tourist Lodge Statistics)



Source: Tourist Statistics (1989),
Govt. of Assam.

and Sivaratri fair at Sivadol drew large number of tourists/ pilgrims within the State as well as outside the State.

Tourist Arrival in Sibsagar.

Table No. 10

Sl.No.	Year	Tourist arrivals (occupancy)	Revenue collection (Nos.)
1	1985	1409	56404
2	1986	1647	70535
3	1987	1651	64517
4	1988	1152	59837
5	1989	1311	48736

Fig (ii), (iv)

Source: Based on Tourist Lodge Statistics
Tourist Statistics, 1989-90, Directorate of Tourism
Government of Assam.

The Sivadol is the largest Hindu temple in Assam in both for its height and size. The temple was constructed by the Ahom King Siva Singha on the bank of Sibsagar tank. Sivasatri fair is observed in grand style in the Sivadol every year.

Methodology: The problem of measuring tourism is difficult and rather a complex task as it involves various types of relationship in reference to socio-economic and space-time aspects. To understand general characteristics of tourists in Sibsagar a detailed field survey was conducted meticulously. Two questionnaires one for getting information from management of

different types of hotels and other for interviewing the tourists were prepared.

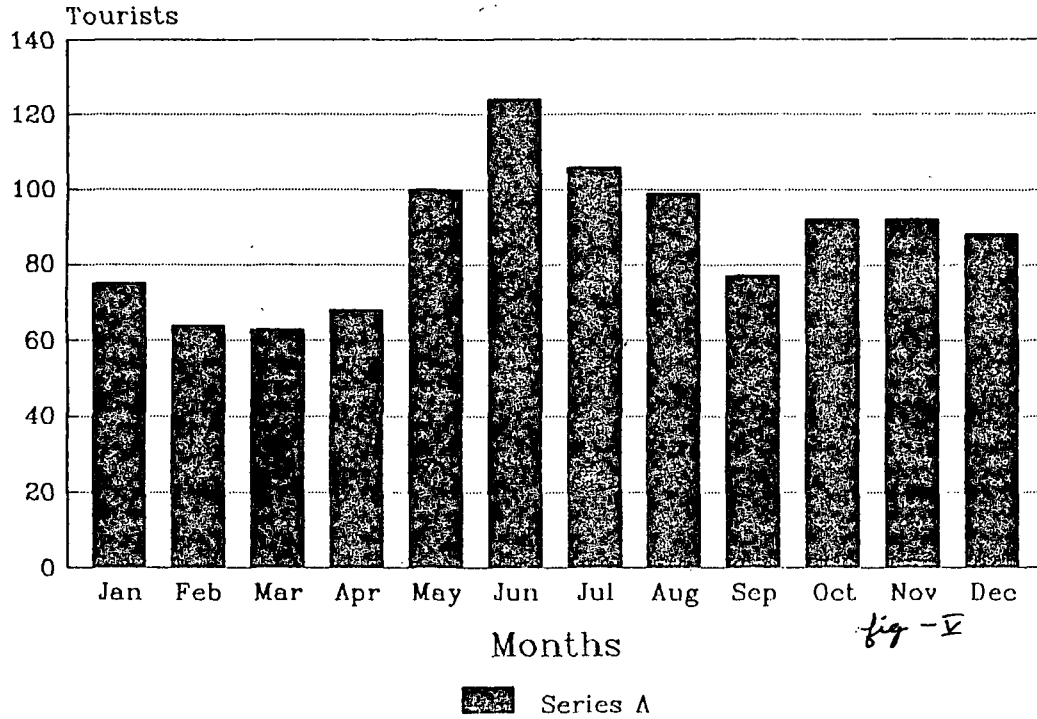
The time was selected on 12th February 1991 i.e. during the spectacular Sivaratri fair, on this occasion people from within the State and outside the State assembled at the temple to pay homage to Lord Siva. The data collection was done by sample survey on the basis of field work. In all these surveys some 108 tourists were contacted and interviewed for getting informations regarding their tourism behaviour. All these informations were later on systematically arranged tabulated and analysed to have a clear view of the state of affairs regarding tourism in the region. However with the constraints of time and special resources available for field research only a small number of tourists could be contacted for interview and thus the data generated are not enough and variable for any closer analysis, monthly they have been converted into percentage to show the behavioural trends.

According to the analysis of all information some salient characteristics of tourist behaviour come to the fore. They may be summarised as below.

a) Profession of Tourists

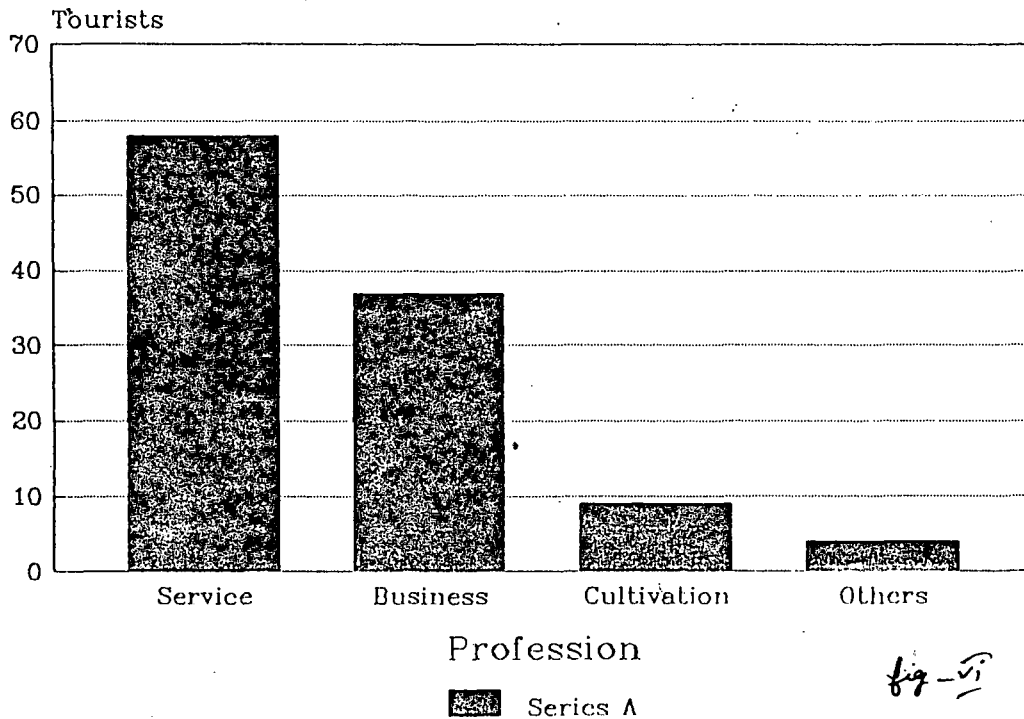
As regards to profession-wise distribution of tourists in Siva Dol (Sikhsagar) about 53.7% of the tourists were service

Seasonal Influx of Tourists (Based on Tourist Lodge Statistics)



Source: Tourist Statistics (1989-90)

Profession Wise Distribution of Tourists In Sibsagar (Feb, 1991)



Source: Primary

holders followed by businessmen of about 34.3%. Some 8.3% tourists were cultivators and 3.7% tourists were comprised of students, lawyers, Doctors and self employed persons.

Profession-wise distribution of tourists

Table No. 11

Sl.No.	Profession	Actual No. of Tourists	Percentage
1.	Service	58	53.7%
2.	Business	37	34.3%
3.	Cultivators	9	8.3%
4.	Others	4	3.7%
Total		109	fig - vi

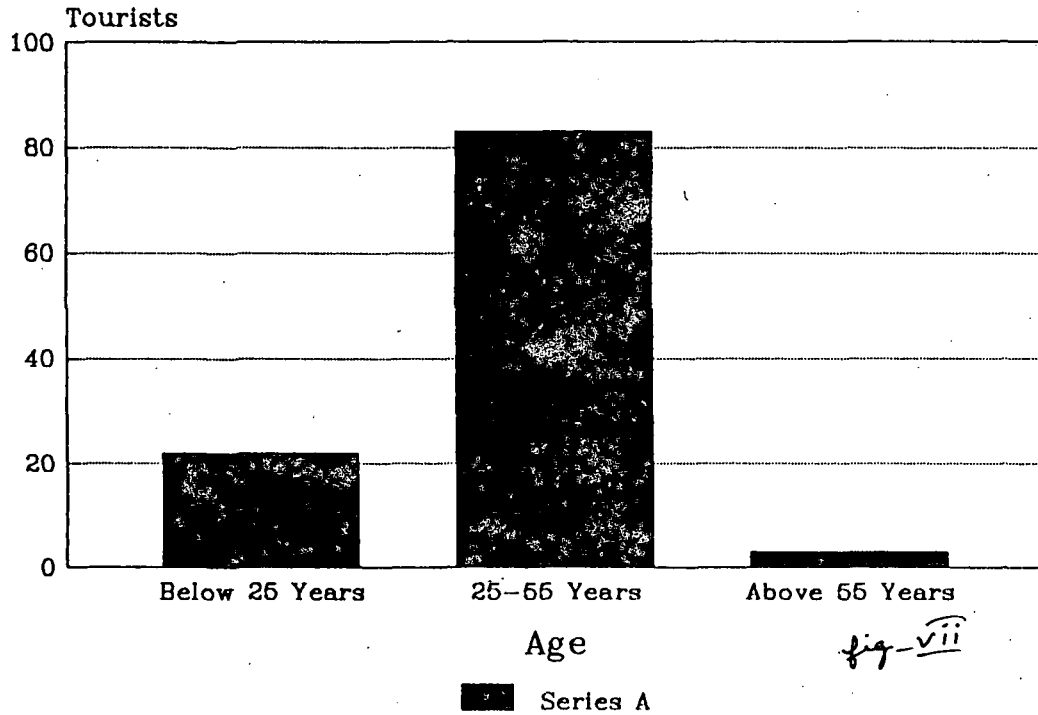
b) Age structure of the Tourists

Table No 12

Sl.No.	Age group	Actual No. of tourists	Percentage
1.	Below 25 years	22	20.3%
2.	25 to 55 years	83	76.9%
3.	Above 55 years	3	2.8%

fig - vii

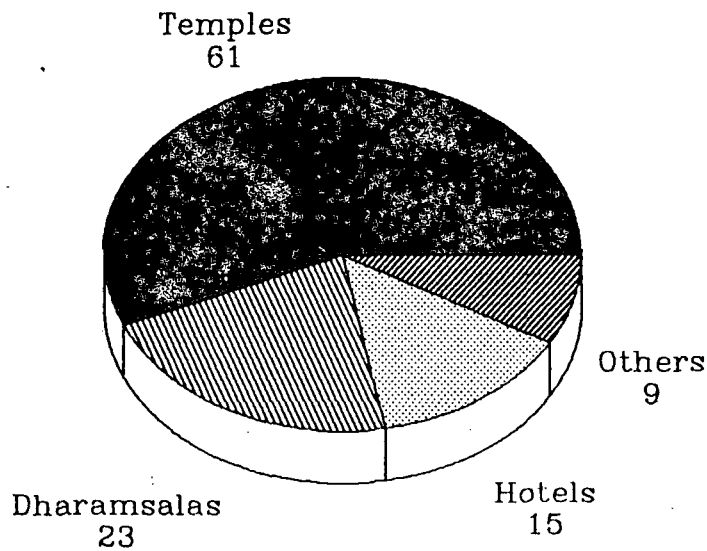
Age Structure of Tourists In Sibsagar(Feb,1991)



Source:Primary

fig-vii

Preference of Accomodation Types In Sibsagar(Feb,1991)



Source:Primary

fig-viii

In the survey it was found that majority of the tourists are young and middle aged. About 77% of the tourists were in the age group of 25 to 55 years. Below 25 years accompanied their elders mainly to help them. Their percentage was 20.3%. Some 2.8% of the tourists were above 55 years, they came with their family for "darshan" and recreation.

c) Preference for accommodation types

It was found in the survey that majority of the tourist preferred to stay with the temple priest. Their percentage was near about 57%. Around 21.3% of the tourists liked to stay in Dharamsalas or Relatives, some 13.9% from the upper middle class liked to stay in hotels, and about 8.3% comprising Govt. employees stayed in Dak Bungalow.

Table No 13

Sl.No.	Types of Accommodation	Actual No. of Tourists	Percentage
1.	Temple Priest	61	56.5
2.	Dharamsalas	23	21.3
3.	Hotels	15	13.9
4.	Others	9	8.3

fig (viii)

d) Previous experience

When the tourists were asked about their previous experience

in this town, some 50% of the tourists replied that they had visited this at three or four occasions. Some 37% tourists were in their second trip, while 12% tourists conferred that it was their first visit to the place. A number of tourists have also expressed their willingness to visit this temple again and again as they are deeply moved by its beauty and environment.

Frequency of Tourists visit

Table No. 14

Sl.No.	Frequency of visit	Actual No. of tourists	Percentage
1.	First visit	13	12.0%
2.	Twice visit	40	37.0%
3.	Thrice or more	55	50.9%

fig IX

Tourists opinion and comments

Most of the tourist were satisfied with the transport facility of this town both external and internal. Some 85% of the tourists have expressed their satisfaction over the transport facilities in Sibsagar. Some tourists about 4.6% have found it of average standard and felt that internal transport should be made more effective. Only 1.9% tourists have found transport facilities both external and internal as comfortable, easily available and effective but a bit costly.

Lastly the tourists were asked to make their own observation on various aspects of tourism in Sibsagar. Majority of the tourists have the opinion that the behaviour of the local people is very friendly and co-operative.

The important remarks of the tourists are summarised below.

- i) About accommodation majority tourists expressed their need for a Yastrinivas or a Dharamsale or Rest House with fooding facility near the temple.
- ii) Insufficient drinking water was remarked and as such improvement in the present system of water supply was suggested in the temple premises.
- iii) Improvement of local transport is suggested. They also requested to provide direct transport facilities from the Transport/Railway stations to the temple or to other tourist attractive places.

Impact of Tourism

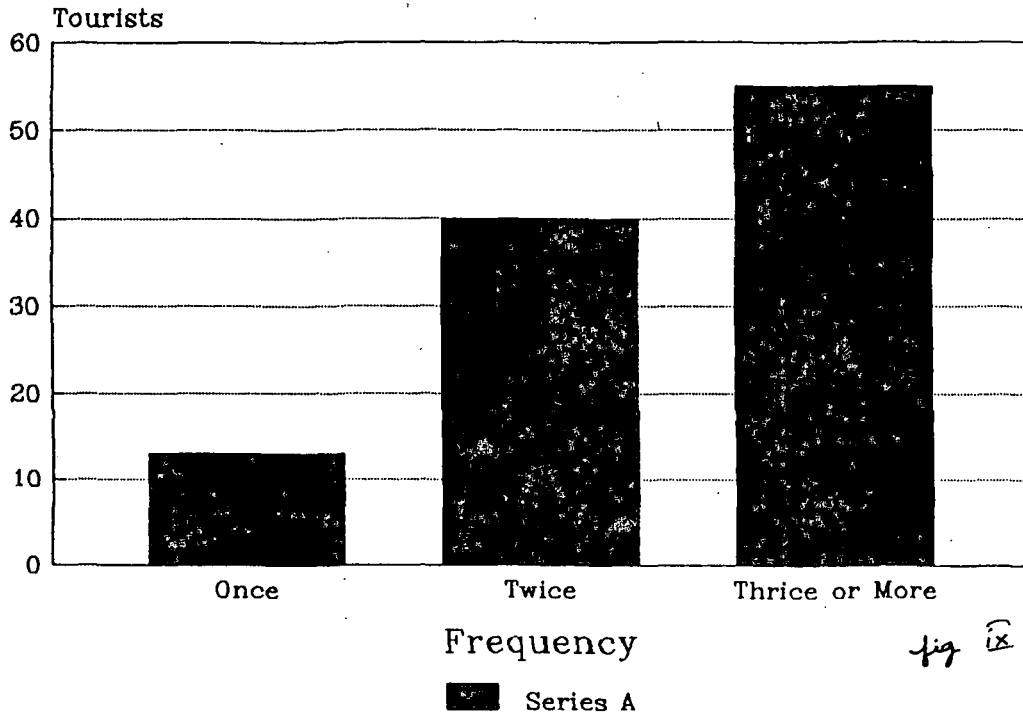
For a developing country like ours endowed both with huge natural wealth and human resource etc. tourism has a special significance for it can help largely in the economic development particularly of backward areas. The significance of tourism as a foreign exchange earner has become all the more important in the context of country's trade deficit. It brings a number of

other benefits too like international understanding and co-operation. In the case of India with its size and diversity, tourism may generate a feeling of national integration. Thus tourism works in a number of ways and its impact are numerous and varied.

Economic impact: Recreational travel includes growth on three levels - national, regional and local, but the quantum of this growth will be different from level to level. These include increases in employment and income in several sectors of economy, development of infrastructure and a number of industries which are only due to tourism. Thus tourism may pave the way for total development of the region which could not be developed otherwise. Such benefits of tourism may sometime be offset by various operational cost and socio-cultural problems. However the growth generated will compensate more than the loss in the long run.

There has been a progressive rise in the number of tourists coming to Sibsagar District for the last few years and the increase in tourist activities has definitely an impact on the economy of the region. However, relevant data analysing this aspect at this stage are not available.

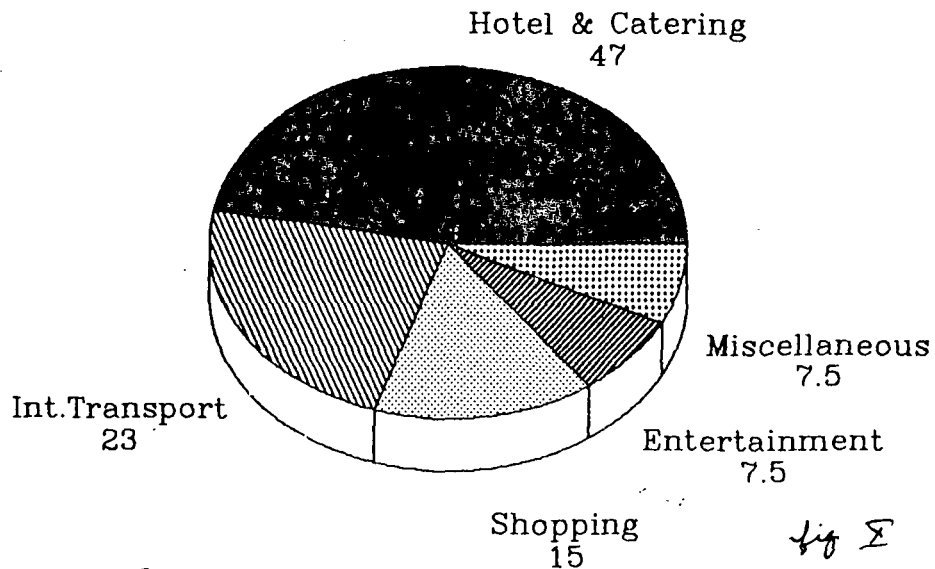
Frequency of Tourists' Visit In Sibsagar (Feb, 1991)



Source: Primary

fig IX

Tourists' Expenditure Pattern In Sibsagar (In %)



Source: Primary

fig X

Tourist expenditure pattern

Table No. 15

	Items	Expenditure (in percent)
1.	Hotels and catering	47.0%
2.	Internal Transport	23.0%
3.	Shopping	15.0%
4.	Entertainment	7.5%
5.	Miscellaneous	7.5%

fig 2

Tourism related industry and employment potential

Tourism as an industry has peculiar features, apart from its job generating capacity. It is not a single industry but a loose confederation of a number of other industries. To some it is a market and to other it is an industry. Geographers name it a landscape industry, because the product of tourism are made of natural beauty, dramatic landscape and cultural heritage etc.

The Government of Assam declared tourism as an industry recently in order to give tourism a special boost by making a number of concession for its growth. The nature of tourist industry manifests itself in a number of related trades such as transport, accommodation, entertainment, souvenir and shopping

etc. The origin, growth and the development of sub-sectors depend upon the stage and status of tourism development in the region.

Provision of better and comfortable accommodation is considered to be the main thrust of modern tourism industry. Rather it is the heart core of present day tourism. Mainly three types of accommodation are available in Sibsagar towns: (1) classified hotels (2) Hotel indigenous and (3) Tourist bungalows.

In the category of classified hotels are included hotels of western style. In a rough estimate there are about 89 such hotels with a total of about 200 bed capacity. There are around 5 to 10 persons employed in each such hotel. Because of the comparatively high rate charges these hotels serve mainly elite class domestic tourist of India. In the field survey it was observed that the average number of persons employed in each such hotels ranged from fifteen to twenty. However the employees here are mostly seasoned and average paid.

Indigenous types of hotels are mostly used by domestic general tourists. Those hotels are mixed types some are good and even excellent but majority of them are in bad shape. Hardly they provide all the necessary facilities. Their employment potential too is very weak. Employees are comparatively low paid.

The third category of accommodation consists of various types of Government houses i.e. tourist bungalows, circuit house, inspection house, etc. Barring tourist bungalows, accommodation capacity of these establishments is somewhat limited. They are mostly used by Government officials. The persons employed are Government servants. Hence employees are regular and comparatively better paid.

Thus we can conclude that tourism industry proves to be a somewhat labour intensive activity which consumes various type of labour force in different capacities and in turn supplies commodities in the form of good services to the tourists. The excess unemployed labour force can easily render services such as masons, carpenters, porters, rickshaw pullers, hotel guides, waiters, tourist guides, etc.

CHAPTER IV

TOURISM IN ASSAM - RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

The tourism history in Assam is as old as the human occupation of the region itself. Most of the sacred places associated with ancient religious beliefs are situated in the South Bank of Brahmaputra. It is also interesting to note that the ancient township of Pragjyotispur (present Guwahati) developed near Kamakhya.

In post independence period a marked change is noticed in the concept of tourism. Religious motives are no longer the dominant factors for tourist. Sight-seeing, change of climate, pleasure, wild-life etc. are some of the new dimension which has added to the earlier cause. It is in this context that tourism has assumed a new shape in Assam. But tourism in Assam suffered a major setback due to lack of attitude by both the Government and the people. Even the people of India know very little about the region except that some shrines devoted to Hindu pilgrimage situated here. Whatever has been done in the name of development of modern tourism in last two decade has not adequately been publicised or effectively planned.

The development of tourism in Assam is not an easy job as it has for so long been neglected and endowed with so many complex problems, but one thing is certain that if tourism is developed in scientific way it will pave immensely valuable asset for the region itself. Answer to most of its economic problems like poverty, unemployment can be found if incentive is given to

develop this labour intensive tourism industry.

For proper development of tourism phenomenon the basic problems which gripped the region reversely are to be first identified so that some rational measures may be suggested for their proper eradication and improvement. Some of the problems that need special attention in the development to tourism may be analysed as follows:

1) The greatest of the problem is lack of proper security which is the stumbling block for allowing the industry to develop. But this phenomenon is not only confined to this region. It was equally prominent retarding the growth of tourist flow in highly tourist prone areas like Kashmir and in Darjeeling before the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Government and Gorkha Leaders. Despite the Government's effort however one tourist zone after another is being shut down by extremist activity. The government's effort to bring all the extremist outfit to the negotiation table and maintain peace and tranquility in the region should be in the top of the agenda for developing the industry in this region.

2) Another major problem in the region is the shortage of easy and safe transport. The difficulties of access are severe and facilities are almost negligible. Roads are quite insufficient and have been constructed haphazardly. The opening of

roads to many new areas and the interior parts holds a still greater promise for tourism in this region.

3) One of the main reasons for the inadequate growth of tourism industry in this region is due to the fact that foreign tourists are not allowed to travel freely in the State. Assam was declared as a restricted area during the war with China in 1962 but the State Government had the power to issue temporary Restricted Area Permit for upto 15 days to the foreign tourists. But during the Assam Agitation in 1980 this power was taken away from the State Government and this had an immediate affect on the arrival of foreigners in Assam. For example in 1979, 2320 foreigners came to Assam. Even in 1980 till June, 1000 foreign tourists visited the State. But in 1981, the number was drastically reduced to 50. Till then the number is increasing slowly and reached 595 in 1988.

4) The problem relating to accommodation - their quality, number and distribution pattern etc. also very serious in the region. Mostly good hotels owned by the Government or other private agencies are concentrated only at Guwahati. But total bed-nights provided by these hotels become awfully inadequate during the peak season. For low or middle class tourists accommodation facilities are there but such hotels are ill-equipped and ill maintained. Common or low paid tourists mostly visit centres of pilgrimage rather than scenic spots. But inadequate accommo-

dation capacity in all the temples of Assam like Kamakhya, Sivadol, Mahavairab, Umananda is the main problem for the genuine devotees who do not prefer to stay either at hotel or such other places in the city or towns for various religious reasons. And for these low income group tourists, there is hardly any accommodation facilities even if they wish to visit these places. On the contrary, there is no proper and regular arrangement to accommodate tourists at places like Lakhimpur, Majuli etc. So inspite of their attraction all these places do not pull tourists in considerable number. Further almost all accountable hotels are concentrated at certain selected places.

5) Another problem of high magnitude is the lack of basic amenities like water, electricity, hospitals, postal communication, banks, chemists, general merchandise etc. which play a big role in the development of tourism. Except few important places, these facilities are quite short and meagre or sometimes absent at a number of places, especially in the interior of the region.

Facilities for entertainment like theatre, museums, clubs, libraries, souvenir, shop, books and newspaper stalls which are basic requirements of modern tourism are markedly lacking at a number of tourist spots.

6) The lack of information about the region and about a number of its places important both from religious and scenic point of view is also one of the major reason for the slow growth of the industry. Apart from the traditional spots like Kaziranga

and Manas other spots like Bhalukpong, Sibsagar etc. are perhaps least advertised or publicised. The places of historical importance like Tezpur, Sibsagar are not exposed fully. Advertisement of some tourist spots are so low that it remains vacant for most part of the year as few people know about them.

7) In Assam Floods are a recurring phenomena. The disaster due to floods not only affect the transport and communication system in Assam but in entire North East by destroying roads, bridges etc.

8) Lack of tourism consciousness among the people is also a major problem, without which scientific development of tourism is not possible. People of the region are not acquainted with tourists and do not regard it as a real source of livelihood, education, knowledge, cooperation and brotherhood.

9) Though the process of tourism development has been initiated by a number of agencies of local, regional and state level yet the rate of growth is still very slow. Desired results could not be achieved for want of rational policy, planning and programming. Lack of systematic organisation and co-operation among various agencies are mainly responsible for the bad shape of the industry. Lack of Government incentives for its retail trade is also one of the major problems.

Planning Measures

An analysis of the above problems clearly show that they need some special attention and effort for their eradication and improvement. Tourism is a proposition that should be promoted on priority basis and it require proper strategy for its planned development. Tourism is the only labour intensive industry which can minimize the unemployment problem, if it is properly developed.

Any planning for tourism development should be considered as an integral part of the overall national plan for economic development. Tourism planning means an integrated development of tourism resources and tourist activities to derive the optimum benefit in terms of social, economic and ecological objectives. Any integrated approach to tourism development needs careful planning based on detailed survey of the tourism potential base area and studies of future customers based on surveys and forecasts. In order to achieve the desired goals some immediate, short term, long term and perspective projects should be prepared.

The measures that may be taken up for the development of tourism are summarised below :

1. A detailed survey of the entire region should be planned to make a classified inventory of all present and possible

tourism, recreation, pilgrimage - resources and sports. A tourism planning Atlas of the region based on micro research and survey using even remote sensing technology should be prepared by an apex national organization on scientific lines. This would certainly pave the way for all further development of tourism trade and industry.

2. The second point of focus is necessarily the basic infrastructure specially transport and accommodation required for the development of tourism. Road system which is life line of the tourism industry should be connected with important towns and cities. Travel circuits route already in operation should be popularized. Travel agencies and tour operators should be encouraged by giving incentives to operate in these travel circuits.

Accommodation is the basic components of tourism industry. Comfortable and cheap boarding facilities should be made available at all tourist spots, to suit the needs of all sorts of pilgrims and tourists. Dharamshalas or Yatrinivas should be set up near famous temples which draw tourist in large numbers. Provision should be made to make drinking water available at almost all places.

3. Tourism consciousness is a prerequisite condition for

tourism development in a region. All possible measures should be taken to educate people about the importance of tourism its religious, recreational and educative value and encourage them to participate at all levels.

4. Activities focussing regional cultural traits like festivals, fairs, dances and music etc. should be properly patronised and artists should be given proper facilities and subsidies to develop and display their traditional art.

5. Traditional handi crafts should be given proper boost-up to enable them to cater to the modern needs and fashion. It is only thus that souvenir market can be fully enriched. Government should come forward with an action plan to provide basic raw materials, necessary capital and marketing facilities to the local craftsmen for developing and producing better items of souvenir trade.

6. Sufficient number of trained guides are essential for the development of tourism in the region. They should be well versed with the geography and culture of the land. A guide training centre may be opened at some appropriate place in the region.

7. Proper initiative should be taken to popularize winter sports, mountaineering, trekking, etc. and more package tours

should be provided to the tourists.

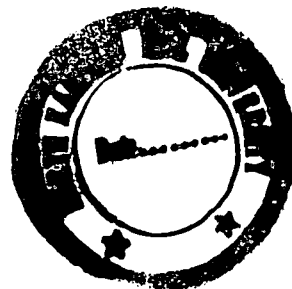
8. Tourism should be provided a respectful place in the academic curricula of the universities and colleges. Proper incentives be given to the researches on various themes of tourism in marginal areas.

9. In Assam floods are a recurring phenomenon. Every year one or the other part of the State is engulfed by floods, resulting in much loss of life and property, great human suffering and disruption of transport and communication. The disaster due to flood not only affect the transport and communication in Assam, but it also affect the communication of entire northeast by destroying roads, bridges, buildings and other public properties. The Government should give proper attention for the prevention of floods and rescue, relief, rehabilitation, restoration of roads, buildings, bridges, etc. The prevention of floods should be attempted through the construction of embankments, dykes etc.

10. The Restricted Area Permit (RAP) which acts as a barricade for the easy flow of tourists into the State should be withdrawn. The endeavour on the part of the Central Government will not only enhance tourism in Assam but also the tourists will be able to enjoy the fascinating national beauty and glimpses of the wild life in entire northeast.

11. Despite the Government's optimism, however one tourist zone after another is being shut down by extremist activity. The lack of proper security problem is continuing to disrupt the normal life in Assam. The latest agitators, through their violent methods and bands have crippled the tourism industry. In order to restore peace and normalcy the Central and State Government should make every possible effort to find a solution to the problems. Proper security arrangement should be provided in all the tourist spots.

Thus it is clear that tourism is the most important of all the resources available to man in this region. If tourism is developed through careful planning, it is sure to bring revolutionary transformation in the whole economy.



REFERENCES

- Burkart and Medlik : Tourism - Past, Present and Future,
Heinemann, London.
- Wahab, Crampon,
Rothfield : Tourism Marketing, Tourism International
Press - London.
- Smith Stephen : Recreation Geography, Longman, London
and New York.
- Bhatia, A.K. : Tourism Development - Principles and
Practices Sterling Publishers, New Delhi.
- Sing, A.P. : Himalaya Tourism and Development,
Chugh Publication, Allahabad.
- Bryden John, M. : Tourism and Development, The University
Press Cambridge.
- Bendre V.P. : Tourism in India, Perimal Prakashan
Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
- Doswell, Roger : Case Studies in Tourism, Eldon Press,
Oxford.
- Burton, T.L. : Recreation, Research and Planning
Allen and Unwin, London.
- Gupta S.P. and Krishna
Lal : Tourism Museum and Monument in India,
Oriental Publication, Delhi.
- Kaul, R.N. : Dynamics of Tourism (3 Vos.): Sterling
Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

- Sing, P.N. : Successful Tourism Management, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi.
- Sing, T.V. and Kaur, J. : Studies in Tourism, Wild, Life Parks, Conservation, Metropolitan Book Company, New Delhi.
- Singh, S.N. : Geography of Tourism and Recreation Inter India Publication, New Delhi.
- British Tourist Authority : Tourism in Context, London.
- White, J. : History of Tourism, Leisure Art, London.
- Barua, Hem : Red River and Blue Hill, LBS Publication, Guwahati.
- Das, H.F. : Geography of Assam, National Book Trust, New Delhi.
- Report of the Working Group on Development of North Eastern Region, During the Seventh Five Year Plan. Information and Public relations, North Eastern Council, Shillong
- Jagjit Sing : Guwahati 1987, Trade and Tourism Directory, Link Advertising and Marketing Service, Guwahati.

AMU Library
 Acc. No. 102662
 Acc. by [Signature]
 Date 9/9/94
 Class by
 Sub Heading by
 Entered by
 Transcribed by