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## Tourism Entrepreneurship: The Potentials of Tourist Spot in Senapati District, Manipur

**R. R. Blesson Hrangao**

Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Manipur University, Canchipur, Manipur, India

### **Abstract:**

*Today, tourist inflow in Manipur has been rapidly increasing as compared to with the past decades. Therefore the sole objective of this research paper is to present herewith, the potential opportunities of tourism industry in Manipur with special focus to Senapati District and also to discuss the responsibilities of the district Entrepreneurs in creating Senapati tourism one of the best destinations of tourist in the state and country in general. As this paper specially focuses its interest to Senapati district which is also the District headquarters of the northern hill district of Manipur on the National Highway No. 2., the paper basically concentrate on 6(six) important areas which are unique in itself and worth visiting. They are:-1) Old village of Yangkhullen which is built on a steep hill, 2) Makhel, the place where the common origin of the Nagas is believed to have started, 3) The unexplored Shipao Deikulu cave of Kodom, 4) Khrouchi (moon hill) in Kodom, 5) Dzuko valley and 6) The Sadu Chiru Waterfalls besides many others which still lay unseen and unheard to the outside world.*

**Keywords:** Destinations, entrepreneurs, nagas, unexplored, world

### **1. Theme Overview**

The Senapati District is located in the northern part of Manipur. It is bounded on the east by Ukhrul District, on the west by Tamenglong District, on the north by Phek District of Nagaland and on the south by Imphal East District and Imphal West District. The District is at an altitude varying from 1061 m to 1788 m above sea level. The hills run along the north south direction and gradually slope down towards south and meet the Imphal valley.

The Senapati District was earlier known as Manipur North District, which came into existence wef 14 November 1969 with its headquarters at Karong. Later the district headquarter was shifted to Senapati on 13 December 1976. The District came to be known as Senapati District w.e.f. 15th July, 1983. The District is endowed with kaleidoscopic landscape of blue hills, green valleys, serpentine streams and rivers flowing through mountains and deep gorges. Rich varieties of flora and fauna adorn the land. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people and terrace cultivation is generally practiced by the people. Paddy, Maize, Cabbage, Potato, cereals are the main crops of the District. 80% of the area is covered by forest and remaining 20% is arable land having total land area of 3271 sq km. with an altitude of 2500 m lying in the Latitude of 24.37°N and Longitude of 93.29°E to 94.15°E

A new township and District Headquarters, Senapati is 62 km from Imphal. More than 30 government offices are located in the district headquarters. People of various ethnic communities are enjoying harmonious life in the town.

### **2. A Profile of Tourism in Manipur**

In August 1972, as a publicity wing of the IPR Department, Tourism Department of Manipur came into existence. In later years it has vibrantly evolved as one of the Independent Tourism Department in India. Manipur is geographically segregated to the extreme eastern part of the country and this little nestled Shangri-La (Jeweled land) has a legendary belief that it was discovered as a result of the delight the Gods took in dancing. Today Manipur's mythological concept of creation is revealed in her famous folk- dances. It's also a mosaic of traditions and distinctive cultural patterns.

Rich in its natural beauty, art and traditions, has given sufficient insights to many great minds which has inspired them to make such magnificent description as the "Switzerland of the East" and "Jewel of India". The people of Manipur include Nagas, Meitei, Kuki-Chin-Mizo and Gorkhas groups and Muslims and other colourful communities which have lived in complete harmony for centuries.

The tourist traffic toll in Manipur both foreign and domestic tourists during the year 2008-09 was 271 and 115300 thousands respectively wherein, in the year 2009-10 it has increased to 127929 as against 115571 in 2008-09, with an increase of 12358 over 2008-09.

The dances of the tribal people have a high artistic and aesthetic value. The folk dances of tribal people captivate the beholders with their exotic costumes and simple but graceful rhythm. Their folklore is quite rich in quality. The dances of the tribal people are ritualistic and recreational, religious and temporal. The ritual dances are performed at a particular rite or ceremony or sacrifice and these dances naturally have a spiritual and religious basis. The dances of the tribal people have a high artistic and aesthetic value.

The colorful tribesmen are the dwellers of the Blue Mountains which surround the green and fertile valley in the centre. Each of these tribes has their own distinct culture and tradition which find expression in their dance, music, dress, customary practices and pastimes. A tribesman represents a tradition, a way of life, a cultural heritage and love for life and beauty. The culture of tribesmen, their love and need for leisure and creation find eloquent expression in their various dances and music. Dance and music have been part and parcel of tribal life. They are very simple and their way of life is gay.

### *2.1. Concepts of Tourism*

Tourism today signifies the movement of a large number of people from one place to another, from different strata of society from their hometowns for more than a day and for purposes other than business. By and large, it is widely admitted that tourism is one of the few sectors that can bring about a real growth to the economy without creating significant regional or economic disparity. Tourism is also recognized as the most promising industry globally, which possesses tremendous capacity for growth and revenue generation.

### *2.2. Tourism Entrepreneurship*

Tourism Entrepreneurship can be harnessed as a significant force for the alleviation of poverty as well as for the protection of environment and traditional cultures, attaching economic value to natural and cultural heritage, creating employment and generating foreign exchange earnings. It is not surprising that the world's largest industry is looked upon as a central force for advocating peace. (UNWTO, 2004).

Tourism entrepreneurship in a simplest term can be defined as "an individual or group of individual persons actively engaged in the activities of Tourism like Creation, Maintenance and such developmental activities with innovative and optimistic ideas and foresight". On the other hand it may be a Government aided, NGOs and Local bodies concerned with the continual development and promotion of tourism avenues.

## **3. Methodology**

The proposed research work is descriptive as well as exploratory, in the nature as it is data-based. Accordingly conclusion will be achieved based on the result of the data as such collected. The type of data which the researcher used in this research paper is basically the primary data. Consequently, secondary data are also been referred, so as to draw a meaningful research and in achieving the aim of contributing to the society about the blind side of tourism opportunities in the district of Senapati, Manipur.

The research study is of direct personal interview with the respondent, such that the use of questionnaires and Schedules are neglected in the process of collecting the desired information from the informant. A pilot survey study was conducted for the research study. However, realizing the need of accurate information for a successful research, the researcher adopted the technique of direct Personal interview with the residents of the particular site of the study and the age old persons whom the researcher thinks worth interviewing for getting the desired information comprising both the gender. Apparently, the researcher also interview some of the organizations, unions executives and entrepreneurs of which their records are also referred to draw a meaningful conclusion.

In the process of collecting the secondary data the researcher also refers to books, journals, magazines, periodicals, articles, papers, etc.

## **4. Review of Literature**

The research study aims at attaining significant impact in order to exhibits the distinguishing features of the present select areas and to adhere certain optimistic and revival policy measures that would possibly encourage change and development in the overall tourism realm in the state and contribute the unknown and unconquered beauty and wonders to the outside world. Hence, literature reviews are done in such many important areas.

Pepita Seth, Heaven on Earth. 2012. Described the popularity of Gunvyur temple of Kerela in the tourism realms of the country locally known as Guruvayurappan, a deity whose precious idol was, according to myth, originally worshipped by Lord Vishnu and present its relative significance amongst the generation. Erberto Lo Bue (Ed.), Wonder of Lo: The Artistic Heritage of Mustang, 2010. Showcase a special introduction to the Cultural History of Lo (Mustang) with distinguishing features, paintings, caves, monuments and so forth. It also depicts the importance of reviving such historic treasures in the field of tourism industry. K. Warikoo, Cultural Heritage of Jammu and Kashmir: 2009. Discusses the State lasting contribution to Indian philosophy, arts and aesthetics, historiography and various other aspects, thus becoming an inalienable part of India's spiritual and national consciousness. Himanshu Joshi, Unknown Himalayas, 2008. in this book entitled "Unknown Himalayas" the author exhibits a clear and beautiful picture of the Snow-clad peaks rising majestically in the horizon, mysterious lakes reflecting the mountains ringing them, massive glaciers and fast-flowing rivers, a world stamped by divinity. Dai, Mamang Arunachal Pradesh, the Hidden Land, 2002. The author attempt to present a view of the tribal world in the context of the environment that surrounds them. Even today very little is known about Arunachal Pradesh. Very little is known about the explorers and adventurers who travelled here and provide the first glimpses of this hidden land. The purpose of his book is to record images, myths and some of the customary practices of life in these hills that seemingly are changeless, but may be changed forever in the fast paced world of today.

## 5. Objectives

Based on the above literature reviews the following objectives are adopted and are sought to achieve its ends,

1. To study the district rich and hidden potentials of tourism scope.
2. To study the role of district entrepreneurs in the state tourism industry.
3. To thoroughly study the selected tourism destinations in the district.
4. To address revival policy measures based on the findings.

## 6. Need of the study

Manipur is a land of culture, flora and fauna blessed with peace loving population agglomerated to the north eastern states of India called as the seven sisters. Rich in its natural beauty, art and traditions, has given sufficient insights to many great minds which has inspired them to make such magnificent description as the "Switzerland of the East" and "Jewel of India". The people of Manipur include Nagas, Meitei, Kuki-Chin-Mizo and Gorkhas groups and Muslims and other colourful communities which have lived in complete harmony for centuries.

Though Tourism Department of Manipur came into existence in august 1972 under the IPR Department, it is no doubt still at its infant stage of which, so many has to be done to make Manipur one of the most focused tourism destination in the country and the world at-large. Manipur is geographically segregated to the extreme eastern part of the country and this little nestled Shangri-La (Jeweled land) has a legendary belief that it was discovered as a result of the delight the Gods took in dancing. Today Manipur's mythological concept of creation is revealed in her famous folk- dances. It's also a mosaic of traditions and distinctive cultural patterns.

Senapati, which is also the district headquarters of the northern hill district of Manipur on the National Highway No. 2, is indeed a land of rich culture and traditions. Varieties of flora and fauna are found in the district despite its geographical rough topography. It can be noted that Senapati has remained hidden and unexplored for too many decades though in this present era of fast and dynamic changing world, the government has done exceptionally upto some extent with the rapid increasing tourist incoming in the state in the recent decades. However, the attempts of the tourism department of the state and the Government has left undone in so many pros and cons of tourism opportunities in the district of Senapati. Therefore, it is this paper, aimed at arriving into a picturesque and amicable outlay of the opportunities of tourism industry in the district in accordance with the entrepreneurial perspective in making Senapati a world best tourism destination.

This research paper deals with the natural flora and fauna, culture and traditions, architects, Stonehenge, waterfalls and two unexplored caves of which some of them are discussed with its pictures in the later part of the paper.

## 7. Role of District Entrepreneurs in Tourism

Seeking, Finding and the unending exploration activities is basically the entrepreneur, both in nature and in character. The District is endowed with kaleidoscopic landscape of blue hills, green valleys, serpentine streams and rivers flowing through mountains and deep gorges. Rich varieties of flora and fauna adorn the land. Many such similar opportunities have remained hidden, untouched and unexplored with the failure of state intervention and vis-à-vis. Therefore, in this aspects, the important of district entrepreneurs and its role in grabbing the opportunities of tourism destinations which has been hidden since time immemorial and if so taken up the right action could have lifted the tourism industry of the state atlarge to the next level or the most demanding tourist destination across the country and the world in particular.

Failures of Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurship Development Programmes in the district have led the district Entrepreneurs to many threats and unwanted conclusion as an entrepreneur. This sorry figure could have been neglected if the responsible Authority has taken the right decision in due course and at the right time. To rectify such needless shortcomings, calls the timely and rightful intervention of the responsible authorities of the state.

## 8. Six Potential Tourist Destinations in Senapati District

### 8.1. Old village of Yangkhullen

The village of Yangkhullen is built on a steep slope on the hills. Yangkhullen village is the largest Zemei village located 47 km from the National Highway 2 on the Maram-Peren Road. The primitive social and economic life is still prevailing in the village. It is home to a stone erection very similar to Stonehenge. Some of the tallest stones are seven meters tall and one meter thick. Yangkhullen is a home of rich tradition, wherein the age old practices were evident even in this generation. One of the most distinguishing features of Yankhullen apart from the stone erections is the age old King Residence (House) ever since, which has maintained well and attractively by the villagers and in which the present village chief reside.

### 8.2. Makhel

Makhel or Khrafii is a sacred place for many ethnic communities where they settled and migrated long back. There are historical monuments like i) The Sacred Banyan trees which are believed to have grown from the tomb of the Naga mother. ii) The Farewell Monolith. iii) The Trio Monolith (3 km south to Makhel). iv) The Dispersal tree at Sajouba (2 km north to Makhel). v) The Hailstorm Stone. vi) Village Settlement Stone. vii) The Lucky Stone etc.

Khrafii is located some way of 40 Kms. from the District Headquarter lying adjacent to the National Highway No. 2 between Maram-makhan and Tadubi which is just a stone throw from the Highway. This legendary place is beautified by its stone wall and a Banyan tree in the Middle.

### 8.3. *Shipao Deikulu/ Shipao cave of kodom*

Most excitingly, the Shipao cave of kodom has remained unexplored till date. It is interesting to know that the cave was a home of a dragon which resembles half human and half wild beast (tiger). The Shipao Deikulu is located in the Peiri River stretching 15 Kms(approx.) from Kodom village. The cave is of 5 (five) identical caves in the same particular location extending its height of 50 Ft. (Approx.) from the ground. Kodom is located in the extreme eastern part of Senapati District (70 Kms. from the District Headquarter) bordering Ukhrul in the east and Nagaland in the North.

Big mystery remained since decades and decades; it is revealed by the native inhabitants that no one has ever trodden the cave as far they could remember in their memory except Prou Pou Ziio the Great and Legendary Father of the Phaomais.

### 8.4. *Khrouchi (Moon Hill) in Kodom*

The Khrouchi (khrou-moon and Chi-hill/mountain) is located in the Border of Kodom and Phuba Thapham (15 Kms(approx.) from Kodom village). It is believed that the cave which lie in this mountain was used by the forefather of the Phaomais (Kodom) named "Prou Pou Zhiio" a legendary Knight who on his expedition into the thick of the forest came across a wild Cock (Rhei) carrying a Moon like Pearl. Chasing against all odds, he finally got the possession of the pearl and hide the moon like pearl in the bowl of mountain cave.

The wondrous feature of the Mountain cave is that it gives accommodation to every small and large pilgrim. This pilgrimage practice is carried on even in today's time by many neighboring villages and by the people of Proumais (kodom, lakhamai and siron). At the top of Khrouchi we can have a bird eye view across the eastern part of Manipur exceeding even to some parts of Burma.

### 8.5. *Dzuku Valley*

It is a very beautiful evergreen valley and the most picturesque place in Senapati District bordering Nagaland. The most beautiful months of the valley starts from June and continues till early September every year. Apart from the Lily there are three major types of flowers which flourishes in the valley such as white, yellow and Pink. It is famous for its rare terrestrial lily called Dzuko Lily and the enchanting snow clad valley during January & February. The highest peak of Manipur Mount Iso is also located behind this valley.

### 8.6. *Sadu Chiru Waterfalls*

One of the most popular tourist and picnic spot in Sadu(near Ichum Keirap village)27 km (17 mi) from Imphal, in the Sadar hill area of Senapati district is the Sadu Chiru Waterfalls. Hundreds of tourist flocks to this place to enjoy the view of this waterfall and the natural beauty surrounding it. It Consist of three falls with the first fall about thirty meters high. On the side of it, a newly park or garden-'Agape park' is situated. It is owned and managed by Kamlun Telien of Ichum Keirap.

## 9. Statement of the Research Problem

Senapati is a situated 60 (sixty) Kms. from the mainland valley to the north eastern part of the state. The national Highway No.2 cuts through the middle of the district Headquarter and bordering the state of Nagaland. Senapati is generally populated by the Tribal's, wherein some of the mainland Indian populace has started residing in the recent decades due to their business activities. Some of the major ethnic communities of Senapati District are: Poumai, Mao, Maram, Thangal, Zemai, Liangmai, Rongmei, Tangkhul, Meetei, Kuki, Nepalese, Vaiphei, Chothe, Chiru, Maring.

Dominated by the tribes with difference in culture and dialects, has contributed largely to the shortcomings of the researcher during the course of research study. The social structure and taboos of the tribes and particularly the villages has kept some restraining impact on the detailed analysis of the research work. Despite of such significant hindrances the researcher aims in stressing people's needs towards the maintaining of tourism spirit and conservatism in the district. This study could well be a first step towards sensitizing governmental agencies to the special needs of the valley-hill tribes of Manipur and evoking better appreciation of the unique features of the state tourisms and their varied available tourism opportunities in the state in general.

The researcher also regretted in the time lapse of the research study of which many more hidden opportunities of tourism in the district is held unexplored and undiscovered. The absence of road connectivity and communication system has all the more added the researcher a brainstorming hurdle in the smooth and successful conduct of the research work.

## 10. Findings

Extensive coverage of the research study and the information thus acquired during the course of research work exhibits the following certain realistic findings which serve as a meaningful impetus for drawing revival policy measures. Some of the findings which are worth discussing are listed below:

1. Free trespassing of animals and less renovation has led to its degradation.
2. Funding for maintaining and conserving of these sites are almost neglected.
3. Carefree garbage's or free disposal of waste materials.
4. Poor road connectivity and failure of means of communications.
5. Reluctant approach of the villagers to make if popularized due to their culture and taboos.
6. Minimal intervention of Government and their agencies.
7. Absence of rest house.
8. Less Research and Development (R&D) activities.

### 11. Policy Recommendations

Based on the above study made and findings, the researcher hints out the following optimistic suggestion which could at large contribute to achieve the desired purpose or aims of tourism industry in the district/state of Manipur.

1. The government should take up immediate and remedial measures for its revival and funding schemes should be adopted.
2. Connectivity of roadway and communication system should be initiated.
3. Tourism education to be imparted among the younger generations.
4. Construction of rest houses and canteens should be initiated.
5. Free trespassing and loitering of domestic animals should be avoided with proper fence.
6. Research and Development strategies should be initiated for more explorations and discoveries.

### 12. Conclusion and Outlook

Manipur, a little Shangrila located in North-East India, is a Jewel of India. This little corner is a paradise on Earth where Mother Nature has been extra generous in her bounty. Least touched and least discovered Manipur promises to be the great tourist discovery of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. An oval shaped valley surrounded by blue green hills, rich in art and tradition has inspired description such as the "Switzerland of the East" with its cascading rapids, tripling rivers, varieties of flowers, exotic blooms and lakes. The people of Manipur include Nagas, Meitei, Kuki-Chin-Mizo and Gorkhas groups and Muslims and other colorful communities which have lived in complete harmony for centuries.

From the above research study we can conclude, opportunities of tourism in the district are bounty and can be explored and discovered to add into the realms of Manipur tourism to make the state tourism rich and world best tourist destinations. Given the needful education and training to the district Entrepreneurs, the researcher believes, opportunities which are hidden and unexplored in the district would befittingly contribute to a large adorable extent of the state tourism department in achieving the aims and objectives of making or creating Manipur the best tourist destinations.

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