



Tourism As a Propeller of Indigenous Entrepreneurial Growth: A Study on Few Selected Spots Of Nagaon District ,Assam

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Tourism with its wide range of constituent sub sectors has emerged as an engine for employment generation, poverty alleviation and sustainable human development. Tourism promotes international understanding and gives support to local handicrafts and cultural activists. It is now world's largest employment generating industry. The growth of tourism over the last twenty five years or so is one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena of the world.

Recently in India, there has been a great deal of focus on tourism. It is the fastest growing industry in the world with an average growth of 5% and contributing second highest amount of foreign exchange globally. This sector has been providing more than 10% of the world GDP and more than 8% of world trade employment. A great deal of research work and investigative study has been going on around the world for the development of tourism and applying it as a vital means for sustainable development.

This type of investigative study is important in its own rights. But study on tourism and its relation to local entrepreneurship with reference to Assam and its constituent districts has received a very scant attention so far.

The present study on the role of tourism in respect to indigenous entrepreneurial growth in the district of Nagaon is an attempt to highlight various areas and products of tourism based on the potentialities of the spots directed towards indigenous entrepreneurial growth and empowerment of local people.

POTENTIALITIES OF TOURISM AND ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES

METHOD OF POTENTIALITY DETERMINATION

The study seeks to identify the potentiality of some of the tourist spots with a view to developing tourism in Nagaon District, Assam. To assess the potentiality of the spots some important

aspects of tourism are identified and categorized. The opinion of the visitors on and off the spots are collected and taken into consideration in the process of analysis. The major criteria considered for this purpose are:

- a) Resource component of the spots;
- b) Accessibility of the place;
- c) Infrastructural facilities available and
- d) Level of satisfaction derived from the visit.

The respondents were asked to rank the four criteria as per their experience about the particular place. For these purpose, the respondents were asked to select any of the three ranks i.e. Good, Moderate or Poor on various aspects of the spot.

Respondent's opinions on the above standards are analyzed and the possibilities of tourism development have been assessed. Further, field observation has been done extensively to find out the untapped potentialities. The researchers could not assess the area of **Deobali, Jolah, Swang Forest Reserve and Rojagaon** on the basis of respondent's opinion as the places are yet to be identified as tourist spots as such no visitors were found present there.

Resource component of the spots

Resource component denotes the basic points for tourist interest as natural components of the spots like wild life, landscape, waterfalls etc and men made components like historical and archaeological monuments, unique culture and tradition etc.

Accessibility of the place

Accessibility means easy access to the tourist spots by any means of transportation basically vehicular transportation available in a particular locality.

Infrastructural facilities available

The facilities earlier erected by Government and private agencies for the tourist in the form of tourist lodge, boarding house, and other services are covered in this category.

Level of satisfaction derived from the visit

It is the degree of satisfaction derived by a tourist or a group of tourists after visiting to a particular spot being taken into consideration.

To find out entrepreneurial avenues in creation of infrastructure and related services, opinion of the visitors were taken on the basic facilities/services requirement for tourism. These service enterprises may be initiated by the local people either privately or in collaboration with government. Basic on spot tourism services like lodging, eating places, adventure sports, local handicrafts outlets, ethnic cultural shows, ethnic food mart etc are very important.

SOME POTENTIAL TOURIST SPOTS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES

There are quite a large number spots which can be promoted for development of tourism in Nagaon District. Some of such places with their scope of development as vital tourism spot in the study area along with the experiences of the visitors after visiting such areas are analysed.

Chapanala and Champabati Waterfall

Chapanala is situated at a distance of 23 kms from Nagaon town. The Chapanala hill range is the pride possessor of Assam's largest waterfall "Champabati". About 600 ft. in height, this is essentially a sight of scenic beauty lying at the foothills of the "Karbi Pahar". At the up spring of the Chapanala River there is the legendary Champabati Kunda and the waterfall. It was during 1999-2000, the state Government constructed a surface road from Puranigudam via Chalchali to Chapanala. The area can also be reached through other route via Barhampur - Bamuni route and Kothiatoli - Kondoli - Amlokhi - Salona route. It is a favorite spot for local and outside picnickers as well. The adjoining plain of Chapanala area displays a beautiful view of about 12 tea gardens namely Jiajuri Tea Estate, Matia Pahar Tea Estate, Kondoli Tea Estate, LungSung Tea Estate etc. The Jiajuri locality has a historical tank nearby it. Along with these, there are a large number of decorated stone sculptures belonging to 10th-12th century AD are lying here and there without taking any care for its protection

Table 1
Respondents' opinion on the Chapanala Site

Categories	Good		Moderate		Poor	
	Respondents	%	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
Resource component	210	84.00%	40	16.00%	0	0.00%
Accessibility	32	12.80%	187	74.80%	31	12.40%
Infrastructure	0	0.00%	24	9.60%	226	90.40%
Level of satisfaction	82	32.80%	168	67.20%	0	0.00%

Note: Total sample size 250, on spot 70, off spot 180 (Source: Primary field survey)

Observations: On analyzing the data (Table-1) collected from a sample of 250 visitors it is found that resource component of the area is quite high. 84% of the respondents extended their views on high resource component of this site. Whereas on accessibility aspect 74.8% opined that it is average. However, with regard to the infrastructural facilities at the site 90.4% of the respondents considered it to be very poor. The area in its existing state could satisfy only 32.80% of the respondents whereas,

67.2% of the visitors were moderately satisfied.

The area is not too far from the district headquarters but the condition of the roads is not in very good condition that creates hardship to the tourist. From the accessibility point of view Chapanala site is average as more than 88% of the respondent's observation is either good or moderate although only 12.4% says it is good. All the respondents 100% are satisfied by visiting this site in spite of inadequate infrastructure and troublesome access to the site.

There is scope of introducing an ideal package of activities like trekking, cycling, para gliding and such other sports in the adventure segment. The tracks like Chapanala to Sambheti (9km), Chapanala to Silimtola via Anjakpani, Andharpani and Sikarigaon (30km) are suitable for exploring the natural beauty of the area. It will provide an opportunity to experience rural and ethnic culture of the Karbi people to attract tourists. The area of Chapanala is also ideal for cycling venture for experiencing the beauty of the hilly landscape and the sprawling tea gardens around. The area offers ample scope for promoting Tea Tourism.

The area can enjoy relatively a long tourist season over six months. However, people from within and outside the district visit the spot for picnic purpose during the month of November to January. It is only on the day after the Saraswati Puja (Sukla Panchami) thousands of people throngs the area on religious purpose. Considering the components of the tourist resources and its accessibility the area is better off in catering domestic as well as foreign tourist on a large scale. But the major hindrances are the lack of publicity and inadequate tourism infrastructure in and around the area. It has been found that only four sheds are constructed by tourism department for the visitors for taking rest but these are not maintained properly.

No development package has so far been announced by the Government neither in the current fiscal year nor during the recent past. Proper maintenance and development of the spot will turn the area into a place of immense opportunities for development of tourism. Adequate motivation and orientation of the local residents can reintroduce Chapanala to the rest of the world with its mystic antiquity, cultural diversity and unique physiographic attributes.

- **Entrepreneurial status/occupational pattern of the inhabitants**

The area is characterized by comparatively higher growth rate of population. As per 2001 census the number of total population stands at 11625. The size of population is causing a major socio economic challenge in the locality such as unemployment; this has affected the standard of living and lowered the socioeconomic harmony in the area. The census 2001 shows that 59.07% of the people do not engaged in productive activities and only 32.47% are engaged. Most of the people of this area are engaged in agricultural and other allied activities. Under these circumstances tourism can be a primary option for generating avenues for part time and permanent engagement for the people of this area.

It has been observed that only two small and temporary stalls are located in the spot and it has also been found that for the maintenance of the area the contract was given on lease basis to a local youth by ATDC. The lessee has been authorized to collect entry fees for vehicles entered into this

site. This system could provide temporary engagement to only four local youths engaged in collection of levy on a very meager remuneration. It has been observed that employment avenues created by tourism related work is very meagre.

• **Opportunities for entrepreneurship**

Local people will get ample opportunity to promote entrepreneurial activities in the service sector like running and maintaining budget hotel and restaurant, working as travel guide, providing trekking materials and equipments etc. Further opportunities will come up in transportation and communication sector, local transporters can act as a feeder from the highway to the tourist spot. If adventurous activities like trekking, Para-gliding are introduced, local

people will get opportunity to open up outlets for providing trekking gears, gliding outfits and other gears. The local people will also be able to provide cycles on rental basis to the tourists for the cycling activities in and around the spot. They will also be able to engage themselves as trekking guides and navigators to the tourists.

Ethnic culture of the Tea tribes and Karbi people can also be presented professionally to attract the tourists. Local artists and other groups can be trained up on cultural aspects to present their art and culture to the visitors.

Silghat

Silghat is located at a distance of about 48 kms to the Northeast corner of Nagaon town under Kaliabor sub-division. The most important historic monument of the district i.e. the 'Kamakhya temple is situated there. It was constructed by the King Pramatta Singha in 1746AD. The temple is revered by the local people as holy site, and well known among the Shakti worshippers (those who believe in sacrificing animal lives for well being of men). One of the important religious events organised here annually is the 'Ashokastami'. On this occasion thousands of devotees annually visit the site to take holy dips in the nearby Brahmaputra. Another important temple is the "Trishuldhari" (Lord Shiva) temple which is located in a cave attracting a large number of visitors.

Table-2

Respondents' opinion on the Silghat site

Categories	Good		Moderate		Poor	
	Respondents	%	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
Resource component	115	82.14%	25	17.85%	0	0.00%
Accessibility	96	68.57%	24	17.14%	20	14.28%
Infrastructure	0	0.00%	8	5.71%	132	94.28%
Level of satisfaction	38	27.14%	93	66.42%	9	6.42%

Note: Total sample size 140, on spot 19, off spot 121 (Source : Primary field survey)

• Observations

Data shown in Table-2 clearly indicates that the resource component of the area is good and this has been opined by 82.14% of the visitors. On the accessibility segment the area seems to have a good connectivity as 68.57% of the respondents considered it to be good. However, the tourism infrastructure seems to be very poor as 94.28% of the respondents regarded the existing facilities as poor. At this present status the area has ability to provide a moderate level of satisfaction to the majority of visitors.

The area has rich natural landscape especially along the river Brahmaputra. The Silghat peak and the big “Samantagiri” hillock and the “Hatimura” hillock add tremendous scenic viewership to the place. The area offers wide range of tourism opportunities from landscape tourism, pilgrimage, adventure tourism, water sports tourism in a single package within an area 2 sq .km. The area has enough potential for water sports activities like sailing, boating, rafting etc. which can be carried out in the river Brahmaputra. The area is also suitable for cycling and trekking.

Regarding requisite components of tourism the area is moderately equipped. The area can enjoy a long tourist season for over six months provided it is developed to its optimum level in the tourism sector with basic amenities. No foreign tourists have visited the spot for the last 8 to 10 years. This is due to lack of exposure in the media and adequate publicity. Moreover, the frequency of local visitors is also very thin. It is only during the occasion of “Ashokastami” (Basanti Puja) in the month of April people gathered in a large scale. Very recently some developmental projects have been undertaken by the department of tourism to promote tourism in this area. One of such schemes is Project at Silghat (Development of Kamakhya temple & recreation activities for which an amount of Rs 15 lakhs been sanctioned and the work is in progress. However, the area needs more funding and initiative from the authority for developing itself as a spot of tourist importance.

• Present Entrepreneurial Status and entrepreneurial avenues

Based on primary data and observation it is found that, entrepreneurial scenario in the area is very poor especially on the service sector. Other than the regular businessmen and traders no enterprise has come up associated with tourism. The entrepreneurial activity associated with tourists and visitors taking place here is quite temporary and that is basically only for a week. During the “Ashokastami Mela” different traders and some local entrepreneurs in and around this place open their stalls there with different products for sale to the visitors.

Developing model villages in and around this site multiple benefits can be derived such as direct benefit to the villagers with all modern facilities, attracting the domestic and foreign tourists to see the model village and other natural and adventurous tourism components. In such model village some cottages can be developed to provide it to the tourists as their accommodation during the period of their stay. Such cottages will give birth to some other entrepreneurial works like promotion of local art and culture, providing accessories and equipments for recreational activities like tandem biking, boating facilities, rafting etc. For this sort of work huge investments are not necessary but it needs a

vision for promoting tourism.

Lawkhowa and Burhachapori Wild Life Sanctuary

Lawkhowa and Burhachapori wild life sanctuary is situated in the northern part of Nagaon District at a distance of 25 km from the town and about 15 km from the highway that connects Kaliabor and Tezpur characterized by large tract of alluvial grassland, low alluvial savanna woodland and tropical semi evergreen formations. This sanctuary once proved as an ideal home for the precious one horned rhinoceros. The sanctuary also houses a small number of tiger population. Asiatic Buffalo, leopard cat, wild boar, civet cat, hog deer etc are some other animals that are found in the sanctuary. A large variety of migratory birds can be viewed in this spot. Among the birds swamp partridge, black necked stork, lesser adjutant stork, wreathed hornbill, grey pelican are very important besides a large variety of ducks are also found. The area is rich in scenic beauty with the mighty Brahmaputra flowing by the side.

Table-3.
Respondent's opinion on the Lawkhowa and Burhachapori wild life sanctuary

Categories	Good		moderate		Poor	
	Respondents	%	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
Resource Component	13	27.65%	25	53.19%	9	19.14%
Accessibility	4	8.51%	23	48.93%	20	42.55%
Infrastructure	0	0.00%	6	12.76%	41	87.23%
Level of Satisfaction	9	19.14%	31	65.95%	7	14.89%

Note: Total sample size 47, on spot 12, off spot 35 (Source : Primary field survey)

• Observations

Data collected from 47 sample visitors met on the spot and off the spot have been tabulated in Table-6.3. The table shows that most of the visitors felt that the resource components (80.84% respondents) and the accessibility (57.44% respondents) of the area are either good or moderate. So far as the infrastructure is concerned 87.23% respondents are dissatisfied and considered it to be very poor. This area at the existing state could provide a moderate level of satisfaction to the tourists because of inadequate infrastructure and problem of easy access.

The sanctuary can be an ideal site for bird watching and exploring native flora and fauna. Cycling can be an ideal mean to take a trip around the area and enjoy the natural beauty. The Brahmaputra River is flowing along the Northern boundary of the sanctuary can also be suitably

utilized for water sports in the summer. The area can enjoy tourist season over three months from November to February apart from the summer season. The accessibility of the area is very poor. The roads are also in a very dilapidated condition. Large portion of the sanctuary are illegally occupied by encroachers. There is no proper control of the authority to preserve the rich bio-diversity and the wild life of the sanctuary. Population of birds has significantly decreased as they are regularly hunted by the local people for commercial purpose. Large variety of birds are caught and sold in the local market causing threat to their existence. Due to lack of publicity foreign tourists seldom visit the spot. Even the presence of domestic tourist is very rare.

- **Existing entrepreneurial activities and opportunities in the locality**

The area is mainly surrounded by people from agricultural background and the rate of literacy is very poor. From this area 60 local youths have been selected as sample and it is found that 12% of them are illiterate, 50% could not complete HSLC (10th standard). Most of the youth got engaged in agriculture and fishing occupation. Entrepreneurial activity among the local youth is very rare due to lack of awareness and scope because the flow of outsiders to this place is very less. Because of natural beauty and pilgrimage sites in this area there is ample scope for developing this site as a place of tourist importance. But this step needs enough awareness on the part of the local people along with initiative from the govt. and other agencies working for promotion of tourism. Launching of this site as a place of tourist interest can boost up the economy of this area along with its nearby villages. Tourism can enlarge the scope for entrepreneurial growth in the sectors like lodging, boarding, and transportation in and around the site. Further opportunities will also come up in the sports sector like boating, rafting etc. This can be developed in the Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode where local people will also get opportunities for employment. Moreover, the local people can also be able to provide cycle on rental basis to tourist which will provide them a source of income. Cycling is a carbon friendly activity increasingly preferred in the western countries. This model has been found in other places of tourist attractions where cycle could be used for traveling without disturbing the ecology of the area.

Baduli Khurung (Bat Cave), Kondoli

Baduli Khurung is a rocky area with dense vegetation 3 kms from Kothiatoli, Amlokhi on the south east direction approximately at a distance of 24 kms from the Nagaon town. The place has a large cavern formed by many small caves, which houses thousands of bats of various sizes that resembles a big honey comb. This BADULI KHURUNG is shrouded in antiquity and is a source of various lore among the inhabitants of the area. A boat made of stone is found to be placed near the bat cave. The hilly range of the cave offers a panoramic view of the green surroundings.

Table .4

Respondents' opinion on the Baduli Khurung site

Categories	Good		Moderate		Poor	
	Respondents	%	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
Resource Component	78	72.22%	30	27.77%	0	0.00%
Accessibility	83	76.85%	25	23.14%	0	0.00%
Infrastructure	0	0.00%	3	2.77%	105	97.22%
Level of Satisfaction	22	20.37%	86	79.62%	0	0.00%

Note : Total sample size 108, on spot 23, off spot 85 (Source : Primary field survey)

• Observations

The Table-4 clearly reflects the existing status of tourism in the spot. The resource component seems to be quite high as 72% of the respondents felt that the existing resources are good enough and none has said that it is poor. The accessibility is also good as 76.85% of the respondents give their observation. But the infrastructure is very poor as is opined by more than 97% of the respondents. The area at its present status could offer a moderate level of satisfaction to the visitors.

The accessibility of the area is good. The roads however are not in a good condition. Regarding resource component the area is adequately equipped with its various possibilities of Archeo-Tourism, Landscape Tourism, and Cave Tourism. The Kondoli tea estate, Sukimbari tea estate closed to the spot provides ample opportunity for the growth of tea tourism in the locality. However, it has been found that there is lack of initiative from the Government to protect this unique historic cave. The staircase leading to the cave is not available so the people cannot have close look of it. If no immediate measures are taken by the government or authorized private agencies to protect the historic stone boat, ancient temples, and the cave itself is likely to be lost forever. The Archaeological Department should come forward to protect the site and the tourism department can very well promote the area as an important tourist spot.

• Existing entrepreneurial activities and its future opportunities

No entrepreneurial activities related to tourism could be found near the spot due to poor tourist/visitors arrivals. However, if this site is properly developed tourism can open up various entrepreneurial opportunities for the local people in this area. The future entrepreneurs will be able to go for opening restaurants, cottages for tourists' accommodation, and in transportation segment. Moreover, the traditional bamboo products made by the local people especially by the TIWA and

KARBI people will also get a good market.

Samoguri

Samoguri is located at 18km east of Nagaon town. The area could be an ideal place for nature loving tourist. The main attractions of the area are the migratory birds come in the winter season. The place is rightly called as PAKHI TIRTHA (birds' pilgrimage) where one can see various species of birds in large numbers in the SAMOGURI Lake. The DHOL PAHAR (hill) range with the placid Samoguri lake adds another attractive dimension to the spot, enhancing it's natural landscape. The place is situated nearby the NH 37 highway. With extensive marketing of tourism the area can very well exploit the transit tourists passing through the district.

• Observations

The observation of the respondents reveals that the resource component of the area is good enough; this has been reflected from the views of the 54% of the respondents. The accessibility is also good. The infrastructure here seems to be good as 56% of the respondents expressed their opinion in this regard as good. The area at current status is able to provide good or moderate level of satisfaction to the visitors as only 3.75% give negative comment.

The area has been developed in recent years to cater to the tourists and a number of projects are on for development of the infrastructure. On the recreational aspect an amusement park in the model of Accoland of Guwahati is under construction. A barge is also available for a pleasure trip on the lake.

Table 5
Respondents' opinion about the Samoguri Site

Categories	Good		Average		Poor	
	Respondents	%	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
Resource Component	43	53.75%	37	46.25%	0	0.00%
Accessibility	72	90.00%	8	10.00%	0	0.00%
Infrastructure	56	70.00%	21	26.25%	3	3.75%
Level of Satisfaction	54	67.5%	26	32.50%	0	0.00%

Note : Total sample size 80, on spot 65, off spot 15 (Source : Primary field survey)

• Existing Entrepreneurial Activities and opportunities

The down town food court in collaboration with ATDC has been providing both lodging and fooding facilities to the visitors. But no local entrepreneurship associated with tourism could be found in the locality. However, ongoing promotional activities of the tourism in the locality is likely to generate opportunities for local people, provided government takes necessary steps to include private

parties in the process. The maintenance of the area can be given on lease to the local youths under an organized banner, the lake offers enormous scope for a floating restaurant and if this can be introduced by the concerned authority it will be an added attraction for the visitors.

Rajagaon (Tengaralangsui) Area

The place is situated at a distance of 55 kms south of Nagaon district headquarter adjoining Karbi Anglong border. The area still remains unexploited for tourism purpose in spite of enough potential. The resource component of the locality is very encouraging. The area is rich in flora and fauna with tropical grasslands, the Karbi hill alongside the area adds enormous scenic beauty to the entire spot. The socio cultural set up is ethnic. The accessibility of the place is good. The place can offer a good package of nature tourism with ethnic social components.

• **Existing entrepreneurial status and avenues**

As the area is characterized by ethnic way of life, no industries or entrepreneurial activities come up in the area. The approximate population under Nagaon sub division is 986 and all the inhabitants rely on bamboo culture and have been developing their economy based on bamboo craft practices. However, it is found that they do not have the required market exposure for their products and majority of the people are living below poverty line. Nevertheless it is one of the largest bamboo clusters of Nagaon district. The products based on bamboo are found to be very artistic and bound to capture a large market provided they are given a proper marketing platform. The tourism sector in this regard can do a lot by offering them wide market exposure and demand for the products. Besides it will also give them opportunity to establish cottages and other tourism services based on ethnic model. This will obviously attract large number of tourists to the place.

Deobali Jaloh (lake)

Deobali is located at 18 kms west of Nagaon town near Raha. This vast wet land is extensively covered by reeds (*Phragmites Karka*) and Nol grass (*Imperata Cylindrica*), Gaint reed (*Arundo Donax*) providing an ideal breeding ground for variety of birds. This stretched wet land habitat for over hundred bird species including the globally endangered ones covering an area of about 40 sq. Km. The area is yet to be exploited as a tourist attraction in spite of its vast potentialities. There are about 137 birds species found in Deobali Jaloh (pond) ten of these are globally endangered like Manipur Bush Quail, Greater Adjutant Stork, Swamp Partridge, Bistal Grass Warbler, Wide Eyed Poacher etc.

Deobali can be an ideal site for bird watching and for Ornithologists. Thousands of migratory birds converse here¹⁴. However, there is initiative neither from the tourism department nor forest department to promote the area for tourism purpose. The Bombay Natural History Society in December, 2004; identified it as one of the Important Birds' Areas (IBA) out of 46 IBAs in Assam. But the area is now exposed to unabated encroachment and fishing. The Government should declare the area as a bird sanctuary to protect it from the encroachers. The Hahila beel near Deobali is another wet land with rich vegetations where large varieties of migratory birds could be seen during winter season.

• Entrepreneurial opportunities

There is ample scope for development of entrepreneurship by promoting Deobali area as a spot for tourist importance. Entrepreneurial avenues can be directed towards establishment of basic tourism facilities like restaurants, dhaba, cottage resorts, moreover local transporter can be developed for easy conveyance between NH37 and the spot.

Swang Forest

Swang forest area is situated at a distance of about 6 Kilometers from Chapanala atop Karbi hills within the district of Nagaon and covers an area of 44 sq. kms. The area can be promoted as an ideal site for experiencing wild life and exploring the rich flora fauna of the place. It has rich semi ever green formations and is an ideal habitat of tiger, elephant and hornbill. The neighboring hill ranges as Parkop Pahar (hill), Bura Pahar (hill) make it an ideal spot for appreciating landscape and natural beauty. The area has a rich population of wild animals and birds, some of them are regarded as endangered species. Wild animals like Royal Bengal tiger, leopard, leopard cat, Clouded leopard, Barking deer, Hog deer, Wild boar, Asiatic black bear, Sloth bear and some other wild animals could be seen in this area¹. Besides, the area is a home for various species of birds like Pythe, Falconet, Eagle, Wreathed HornBill, Peacock Pheasant, Pied Horn Bill, Sultan Tit, Pompadour Pigeon, Fire Tail Sun bird, Large tail night jar etc². This area could be a better option for bird lovers as it hosts large varieties of birds, including some endangered varieties. Native life and culture of the Karbi as well as the Tea tribes may prove to be another source of attraction for tourists. This area is connected to Kaziranga National park through the Burha Pahar hill range; this route can be very well exploited for trekking. This type of provision will no doubt help to pull large number of tourists from Kaziranga also. Tracks like Swang-Sombeti, Kantengaon-Baygaon and Swang-Bura Pahar- Bagori-Kohora are some ideal place for starting both long and short distance trekking expeditions ranging from 20 kms to 45 kms. Such trekking ventures can provide enough scope for exploring the life of the local Karbi people, their dance and festivals, art and craft including weaving. With a stunning all round views the area is suitable for development as an ideal tourist spot complete with ethnic village, trekking routes and other sporting facilities. The area could be developed as a showcase of ethnic culture with habitat and lifestyle of tribes. Food habit is unique among tribes as they still prepare their food by using bamboo poles and primitive equipments. Besides natural beauty, the specialty of the area is the availability of abundant varieties of butterflies, a part of the area can be developed as a butterfly park too. Eco-tourism can be a reality here with special emphasis on butterflies, and wide range of flora and fauna. There is scope to introduce a golf course in this area with little bite of thought and some investment.

The resource component of tourism in the place is abundant and can enjoy tourism period over six months. Though the accessibility of Swang area is poor yet journey to the location is quite adventurous. The area offers tremendous opportunity to develop wild life

¹ Divisional forest office, Nagaon/ Green guard ,NGO

² Divisional forest office, Nagaon/ Green guard ,NGO

tourism with some adventurous features. The tourists can also have the experience of staying in a tree house in this locality which will really provide great excitement for the tourist. This area is so rich in its resource components that it contains almost all categories of nature based tourism in one stop (may be termed as “**MEGA NATURE BASED TOURISM**” on the line of the present day departmental stores). With the availability of abundant number of buffaloes, a **buffalo ride** can be arranged for the tourist to explore native flora and fauna of the forest because of thick vegetation and undulating elephant ride is difficult in the area. This buffalo ride will be a noble feature not seen anywhere else till now. If organized professionally this buffalo ride will attract tourists to take the new taste of buffalo riding. This buffalo can also be utilized in other tourism venues wherever possible as a unique selling point (USB) of the district tourism.

- **Entrepreneurial opportunities**

The local people of the area are still living on subsistence agriculture with unique ethnic social setup and almost all the people are living below the poverty line (with per capita income INR 176 pm). Tourism in this locality can be well exploited which is likely to bring in ample opportunities for various engagements. Entrepreneurial initiative can be canalized towards establishment of an Eco-village complete with all amenities for the tourist concentrating exclusively on environmental goods and services. Resorts and cottages based on natural products can be ideal entrepreneurial choice for the local people. Moreover they can also get engagement as trekking guides.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Tourism service has emerged as the most instrumental phenomenon in the economic and social development of the society. It is often insisted upon that tourism ranked higher in sphere of its role in accelerating the economic development of a state or country in terms of employment generated and service exporting sector. Tourism development is significant not only for the rural areas but for any area whether it is situated in rural or urban does not arise since it develops the hidden potential and explores future scope. It is essential in a district like Nagaon since many viable tourist spots are lying almost unutilized or underutilized. Other sectors of the economy can grow based on the growth and development of the tourism industry in an area like the Nagaon District.

Nagaon district with its varied cultural backdrop presents a good case in implementing a successful itinerary provided there is improvement in infrastructure and entrepreneurial activities at the initiative of the govt. and the private parties. With the inauguration of a tourist package comprising Bordowa - Chapanala - Samaguri - Silghat, Kamakhya for example an entrepreneurial growth in the district can be achieved which can be a role model for growth in other districts of Assam highlighting the spots within the district. In Nagaon, both Baishnavite and Shivite religious tourism can be successful with adventure tourism as a stimulus for participation by domestic tourists and foreign tourist as well.

If properly formulated, implemented with imagination and managed professionally through well-demarcated public-private collaboration tourism as a growth engine in the district of Nagaon can be a reality.

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