

# Nature-Based Tourism: A Key Factor in the Development of Tourism in Arunachal Pradesh

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## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to demonstrate the importance of Nature-Based Tourism in the growth of tourism industry in Arunachal Pradesh. The paper is mainly focused on the different types of Nature-Based Tourism which are currently performing well in the state and also to aware the people to know about the types of nature-based tourisms and its involved events. The problems of tourism development are highlighted only in few lines but the main focus was on the two major types of nature-based tourism i.e. ecotourism and adventure tourism. The main discussions is on the existing forms of ecotourism and adventure tourism in the state and to highlight how both the form of nature-based tourism can contribute to the growth and development of tourism and economy of Arunachal Pradesh. The study also consists some government planning and policy to promote tourism in Arunachal Pradesh through nature-based tourism. Apart from giving an overview of current literature and discussion, this paper also looks into present trends in ecotourism and adventure tourism.

**KEYWORDS:** *Nature, beauty, unexplored, ecotourism, responsible, conservation, adventure, paragliding, trekking, youths, rally, off-road, undulating, success*

## INTRODUCTION

Nature based tourism is a type of tourism which enabling to enjoy the beauty of nature without altering or without extracting anything during the process of visit. It is a type of tourism that depends on experiences directly related to natural attractions and includes ecotourism, adventure tourism, agro tourism, extractive tourism, wildlife tourism and nature retreats. Arunachal Pradesh – the extreme north eastern state of India is truly a well-kept secret or one of the most unexplored areas of the Himalayas with some of the most untouched and pristine natural gems in India that provides good sight-seeing and adventurous opportunities to the people. And in terms of these experiences, Arunachal Pradesh is very fortunate. It is considered as a natural paradise. Among all the seven sisters, Arunachal Pradesh is the largest state in geographical area (83, 743 Sq. Km.). It is lying in the North Eastern Region of India. Its geographical vastness is mainly consisted of natural features like hills & mountains, foothills, river valleys, plains, dense forests and some inter-montane plateaus, biodiversity, etc. There is a bright prospect

of nature-based tourism in Arunachal Pradesh. The natural beauty, scenic landscapes, flora and fauna, etc. are the natural assets of the state which always tend to attract outsiders. Apart from these, Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks, Biodiversity Hotspots, Forest Reserve, big perennial rivers, etc. are also considered as a natural pride of Arunachal Pradesh.

## EXISTING PROBLEMS

Despite many prospects and potentiality in the nature-based tourism in Arunachal Pradesh, the state is still struggling against many factors to grow in full manner. Some of the major problems are highlighted below:

1. The deteriorated roads condition and other transport connectivity.
2. Lack of Infrastructures like recreation, banking, insurance, sanitation, security, internet and communication network, power supply, etc.
3. Improper tourism planning and formulation of tourist policy.

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4. Inferior feeding and lodging services.
5. Less visiting season (Only visiting months between November to March).
6. Improper tourism education and lack of awareness among the locals.

### DATA COLLECTION

Primary data were collected directly from the field visits by attending tourism events like river festival, Paragliding Training, Mechuka Visits, etc. The data were collected from the articles and columns of local/state newspapers like Arunachal Times, Echo of Arunachal, Dawn Lit, Arunachal Front, etc. Nature-based, ecotourism and adventure tourism related blogs, facebook pages, Journals, books, etc. were also used to be a source of an information to gain more knowledge about the government planning, policies, organized events, news, etc. Moreover, the authentic data were collected from the Ministry of Tourism, India and Handbook from Tourism Department of Arunachal Pradesh. Photographs were collected from the organizers of the events such as PAA, and also from participants who participated or visited the events to witness the program.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Nature-based tourism has grown tremendously all over the country and in the state in recent years. Despite facing lots of problem in tourism sector like pathetic road condition, heavy rainfall, lack of good hotels, inferior & inadequate infrastructures, poor communication, etc., the visitors are visiting many places of Arunachal Pradesh to experience the beauty and freshness of nature. The state is unexplored in many contexts and considered as a virgin land for less influence of people over the nature. The vast geographical areas have many picturesque landscapes with many scintillating views, rich biodiversity and rich ethnic cultural diversity. This allows for a new destination to advertise themselves as truly unique, appealing to those travelers looking for rare, incomparable experience. Arunachal Pradesh is widely known for its natural beauty and richness in biodiversity. Besides that its natural areas are also offering many conditions and opportunities for the various forms of Nature-based tourism such as Ecotourism, adventure tourism, sight-seeing, extractive tourism, etc.

**Table1: Domestic and Foreign Tourist Inflows in Arunachal Pradesh (2008-2015).**

Year	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2008	149292	3020	152312
2009	195147	3945	199092
2010	227857	3395	231252
2011	233227	4753	237980
2012	317243	5135	322378
2013	125461	10846	136307
2014	336028	6307	342335
2015	352176	5757	357933

Source: Dept. of Tourism, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh and Journal, *Potential of Community Based Tourism in Arunachal Pradesh, India: A Study of Ziro Valley*.

### ECOTOURISM

**Ecotourism** is defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the wellbeing of local people and involves interpretation and education” (*International Ecotourism Society, 2015*). It is a form of sustainable tourism that helps to support the nature and the wildlife. In Arunachal Pradesh, ecotourism is a recent introduction, but it is gaining so much popularity among the local people due to which it got a very important place in every tourism policy of state government. The government and the local people have started ecotourism as a measure for obtaining sustainable tourism development in the state. For the conservation of its various flora and fauna the Arunachal Pradesh Government has followed few guidelines to increase environmental awareness, protecting sensitive ecosystems and threatened species and to mobilize political, financial and social support for conservation is one of the main aims and objective of the government to introduce ecotourism in Arunachal Pradesh

**Table 2: List of Eco-Tourism and Related Projects Sanctioned in Arunachal Pradesh (2001-2002 and 2011-2012 to 2014-2015)**

State	Project	Year of Sanction	Amount Sanctioned (Rs in Lakh)	Amount Released (Rs in lakh)
Arunachal Pradesh	Water Sports Equipment at <i>Nagarjunsagar</i>	2001-2002	14	6.95
	River Rafting Equipment at <i>Siang</i> , Arunachal Pradesh		7.1	3.5
	Angling Facilities at <i>Bodak</i>		3.23	1.23
	Eco-tourism at <i>Hukanjuri</i> under <i>Deomali</i> sub division	2011-2012	487.93	487.93
	Eco-tourism at <i>Kone Gipong</i> area under <i>Dambuk, Lower Dibang valley</i>	2012-2013	468.43	468.43
	Development of Eco-tourism circuit at <i>Loki –Partung-Taluaak</i> in <i>East Siang</i> District Arunachal Pradesh (Tribal area)	2013-2014	791.31	158.26
	Construction of eco-tourism at <i>Huru Pahar, Roing</i>	2014-2015		100

Source: <http://www.arunachalpradeshstat.com>Source: *Regional Tourism Satellite Account Arunachal Pradesh, 2009-10*

**Community Ecotourism:** Arunachal Pradesh, like other North East States of India got herself in the map of ecotourism as one of the most progressive state in terms of local participants and organizing wide varieties of ecotourism events. For many local communities ecotourism has become a means of earnings. A home-stay operation, local cuisine, transport, bird-watching ponds and hides, bird guide services, selling of local products and souvenirs and cultural program performances, etc. are the main services provides by the local communities to the tourists and visitors. The local communities get direct livelihood benefits from such activities. For many local people such activities have become a means of living. The locals are also actively involved in various bird and nature conservation activities.

Functional river festivals at *Siang Valleys*, *Apatani Plateau (Ziro)* Initiative and *Tangsa Community Conservation Reserve Initiative*, *Changlang District* have been major initiatives executed by Association for Conservation and Tourism in the state. They aim at the sole motive of creating a friendly environment for tribal and making conserving the pristine environment and soulful tourism. The presence of ecotourism in the state always ensures that the tourism sector will grow continuously and provides social and economic benefits to the local communities and as well as to the state.

**Agro-tourism or Agriculture Tourism** is a new concept for the people of Arunachal Pradesh. In 2017, the state took a major step towards healthy and

sustainable agriculture with the launch of the State Organic Mission for micro, small and medium enterprises. The government also determines itself to shift to organic farming in a phased manner and promote Arunachal as an organic state. It is believe that the organic farming will ensure Arunachal becomes a major agro-tourism destination. Now, the Government of Arunachal Pradesh is trying to replace the *Jhum* Farming (a kind of shifting cultivation) and traditional agricultural activities by scientific farming method. The forests in the hills and mountains are replaced by the scientific forestry to provide a unique vegetation cover. Government is giving subsidies and agriculture loans in a very less interest to the farmers. Many private farms have been encouraged to develop tea gardens and rubber plantation in Arunachal Pradesh because such farms are very ideal for the tourist visits.

**Angling and River Festivals** are some popular events which are performed in many areas of Arunachal Pradesh as a part of ecotourism. *Siang River Festival* at *Yingkiong, Tuting & Pasighat*, *Yomgo River Festival* at *Aalo & Paya Village* (West Siang) are some popular ecotourism events happens in Arunachal Pradesh. Beside that an Angling events are also conducted as a part of ecotourism and for awareness campaign. *Darak Angling Festival* was organized on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2019, in which 65 anglers participated. It was a part of ecotourism, in which the tourists and the locals were informed about the rare species of fishes and their conservation techniques.



**Bird watching Ecotourism or Avitourism** is a branch of nature-based ecotourism where a tourist travel objectives are mainly focused on or around bird watching. Here the main focus is on observing and identifying birds in their natural habitats. Arunachal Pradesh has an exceptional richness in avian diversity. Some of the protected areas in Arunachal Pradesh that are exclusively for bird watching are *Eagle nest, Zemithang, Sangti Valley, Tawang area, Nameri, Dirang, Sela Pass, Shangti Valley, Mandala, and Bhalukpong*. Amongst all these, one of the most prominent birdwatching spots in Arunachal Pradesh is *Mandala-Phudung* forest region, which also happens to be an **Important Bird Area (IBA)**. *Blood Pheasant, Snow Partridge, Himalayan Monal, Gould's Shortwing, Grandala, Tibetan Blackbird, White-browed Tit Babbler*, three species of *Grosbeaks, Brown Bush Warbler, Red Crossbill, Blanford's Rosefinch, Temminck's Tragopan, Kessler's Thrush*, and *White-bellied Redstart* are the major bird species which are worth to watch during avitourism in such places.

**Societal Eco-friendly Activities:** Due to the awareness campaign and involvement of community in ecotourism, several institutes and organizations like Government institutes, NGOs/Societal Organizations, NSS, NCC, school and colleges have been actively participating in the conservation of biodiversity and to make surroundings clean in Arunachal Pradesh. Littering and wastages are minimized in several localities due to making and using of local eco-friendly dustbins. Hunting and fishing activities are also banned in many parts of Arunachal Pradesh due to the efforts of NGOs and many other social activists. The villagers are local youths are convinced to do eco-friendly activities by which they can generate income like handicrafts, bamboo/cane baskets, cane dustbins, etc.

## ADVENTURE TOURISM

**Adventure tourism is defined as the movement of the person from one to another place outside their comfort zone for exploration or travel** with a certain degree of risk (real or perceived), and which may require special skills and physical exertion. Adventure tourism is fairly a new concept in the tourism industry and very new for Arunachal Pradesh. But, due to 50 per cent growth in tourist arrivals over the past few years, the government is seeking to promote the state as a hotspot area for adventure tourism to attract the youngster and adventure loving people from different parts of the world and within the countries. Endowed with some of the best trekking routes, **Arunachal Pradesh** offers best adventure and a quite inimitable

experience, **number of things to do** while exploring its true identity on foot, to the tourists in the form of exciting adventure sport called trekking through many hotspots of trekking with the snow covered hills and the natural beauty it provides.

Apart from natural beauties, the natural variedness in the relief features, dense forests, turbulent river streams, etc. offering a various conditions for the adventurous and risk involving games.

In December, 2015, a project has been sanctioned by Ministry of Tourism under the *Swadesh Darshan Scheme for Integrated Development of New Adventure Tourism Theme* of the circuit with central assistance of around Rs 9713.67 crores (\$14 million). The project Development of *Nafra- Seppa- Pappu, Pasa, Pakke Valleys- Sangdupota- New Sagalee-Ziro- Yomcha* was sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism in December 2015 for Rs. 97.14 Crores. Following are the selected tourist destinations which comes under this programme; *Jirigaon, Nafra, Nakhu, Nafra to Nakhu Trail, Nachibon, Ratte Anung, Pachchi, Kafila Village, Tourist Complex at Lumdung, Patta Sadang, Rebang, Mibang Sele, Pakke Haling, Nicho Haling, Seba, Taro Yar, Lafang Sohung, Doimukh, Pije Rang, Sandupota, Kola Camp, New Sagalee, Joram Top to Hubu Putu, Convention Centre at Ziro, Craft Haat and Amphitheater at Ziro, Kardo Hill, Little Boje, Yomcha, Helipad at Lumdung, Gera Lake*. The facilities developed under this project includes Helipad, Wayside amenities, trekking trails, Rafting Centre, Log Huts, craft bazaar, Eco Park, Tourist facilitation centre, parking, multipurpose Hall, festival ground etc.

As the adventure tourism has become very popular among the local youths and the numbers of tourists are increasing every year due to the following adventure sports:

### 1. River Rafting

Due to the presence of fast flowing rivers with having rapids mainly flowing through deep gorges of Arunachal Pradesh offers an opportunity for the adventurers to perform river rafting in this state. Many large rivers such as *Siang, Lohit, Dibang, Subansiri, Yomgo, kameng, kamla, Noa Dihing*, etc. give an excellent rafting ambience while doing it, fighting through turbulent waters and snow-fed rivers. The streams in Arunachal Pradesh has very high rapids and challenging waters of raging speed of the rivers making it the absolute perfect rafting destination in India makes it a popular extreme sports and attracts a lot of adventure lovers. Even in river festivals and Military drills rafting events are organized in several big rivers.

Some of the important rivers rafting routes are: - along *Siang (Brahmaputra)* from *Dibrugarh* to *Yingkiong*, *Yomgo (Siyom)* from *Mechuka* to *Aalo* and up to *Pangin*, *Kameng (Seppa- Bhalukpung)*, and *Dibang (Anini- Assam Border)*, *Subansiri River (Taliha- North of Daporijo)*, *Lohit River* from *Sadiya* to *Parshuram Khund* and up to *Hayuliang*.

## 2. Paragliding

Among all the adventurous activities in Arunachal Pradesh, paragliding sport has acquired a special place due to its wide participation in several key areas of Arunachal Pradesh in the field of tourism. The sport is fairly new to the state, but to promote tourism in Arunachal, the tourism department is reaching out to the local communities to make Arunachal Pradesh “a paragliding paradise of the North East.” And for that, the tourism department took some major steps to introduce various activities in the state including a training camp at *Paya* (2021), near *Aalo*, *Lumduung* (2019), *Pappu Valley* Paragliding Festival cum Competition and *Mechuka* Festival which engage in many adventure activities. To boost up paragliding activities among the local people and particularly, youths, Arunachal Open Paragliding Accuracy Championship-2020 was held at *Yazali*, *Lower Subansiri* District in Arunachal Pradesh from 12th to 15th January, 2020. To encourage the youths to participate in the paragliding competition, the tourism ministry has distributed paragliding and other adventure sets to the *Paragliding Association of Arunachal Pradesh (PAA)*. The paragliding and other adventure sets were distributed under the *Chief Minister's Paryatan Vikash Yojna (CMPVY)*.

The *Paragliding Association of Arunachal Pradesh (PAA)* is registered under section 3 of the societies Registration Act 1860 in Itanagar on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018. The main objective of the association is to provide a national platform for the paragliding community in Arunachal Pradesh and to promote, develop, control and regulate the sports of paragliding. PAA has surveyed and found some places of Arunachal Pradesh to be most feasible locations for carrying out paragliding activities in the state. The selected places are *Basar* at *Lepa Rada*, *Anini* in *Dibang Valley*, *Mechukha* at *Shi Yomi*, *Dambuk* at *Lower Diban Valley* and *Paya* near *Aalo*, *West Siang*. The efforts of *PAAP* are appreciable and the tourism department is committed to support the association for developing the state as one of India's prime adventure destinations besides encouraging people to take up paragliding for offering services to visitors. Even a paragliding school in London wants to explore Arunachal once *MHA* lifts restrictions on the visit of foreign tourists. From all of these it can be

concluded that the future of Adventure Tourism is very bright in Arunachal Pradesh and so the Tourism Industry. By seeing the rapid growth of Paragliding in Arunachal Pradesh, many other similar adventure sports and activities such as skydiving, hot-air balloons, hang-gliding, base-jumping, wing-suit flight, etc. are putting their bold steps in the state.

## 3. Mountaineering

Arunachal Pradesh is lying in the Eastern Himalaya Region. It has high lofty and snow laden mountains in its northern part near the Indo-Chinese Border. Most of the mountains which are lying near the Indo-Sino border are snow-fed mountains having an average height of 4000-6000 meters above the sea level. Some of the important peaks of Arunachal Pradesh are *Kangto* (7090 m), *Nyegi Kangsang* (7050 m), *Gorichen* (6488 m), *Chomo* (6000 m), etc. The mountains of Arunachal Pradesh provide an excellent and endless scope for mountaineering and climbing. Apart from the lofty mountains, glaciers like *Meerathang* Glacier (16,600 feet) are offering climbing and trekking opportunities to the climbers. The site is also popular for stellar views and stargazing.

*Tapi Mra*, *Tine Mena*, *Kishon Tekseng*, *Taka Tamut*, *Tashi Yangjom*, etc. are the mountaineers from Arunachal Pradesh who successfully climbed Mt. Everest in their attempt and now they are serving as an example for the youths in the world of mountaineering. Many young and energetic locals are following their footsteps. By looking to the potential and all the possibilities of adventure tourism in Arunachal Pradesh, the Ministry of Tourism - Government of India has established the country's first adventure sports institute — the *National Institute for Mountaineering and Allied Sports (NIMAS)* — at *Dirang* in *West Kameng* district. The main objective of the Central government is to provide structured training in mountaineering as well as aero and aqua sports.

## 4. Trekking & Hiking

The tourists opt to visit those places which are less visited by the people and expecting adventure and a great visual impact of natural environment. The Pristine ecosystem of Arunachal Pradesh and its rugged terrains has endowed with some of the best trekking routes. Foreign Tourists, particularly adventure are regular visitors who come here to explore the numerous trekking routes located in the mountains of Arunachal Pradesh. The less explored and untouched vegetations of Arunachal offers good trekking opportunities to the people. While performing trekking activities, **the state** offers best adventure and a quite inimitable experience, **number**

**of things to do** while exploring its true identity on foot, to the tourists in the form of exciting adventure sport called trekking through many hotspots of trekking with the snow covered hills and the natural beauty it provides. The region offers unforgettable visits for tourists interested in trekking & hiking in meadows, wild life sanctuaries, national parks, forests, mountains, valleys, etc.

The tropical and subtropical climatic condition of Arunachal Pradesh offers a mixed type of vegetation in most of its geographical area. Therefore, it's provides a home for many floral and faunal species. The hills and mountains of Arunachal Pradesh offers an ideal opportunity to the trekkers trekking through the challenging terrains with excellent stock of various flora species is utterly unique and breathtaking makes its ambiance refreshing and beautiful. Trekking experience in the rare wilderness of Arunachal Pradesh is a very challenging task and a visitor can observe variety of experiences from exotic birds and animals, picturesque landscapes, flora and fauna, mind-blowing waterfalls, to distinct heritage and culture.

There are different trekking expeditions or main treks in Arunachal Pradesh like Tribal Villages Trek, High Altitude Trek, Siang Valley Trek, Talley Valley Trek and Cultural Tours which take tourist trekking through beautiful villages and Tsangpo River and along the Indo-Tibetan border.

Siang Valley Trekking Route is a nice route in Arunachal Pradesh. This trek includes the Tsangpo River and the Adi tribe. The trekking route from Daporijo to Mechuka is a mind blowing route for the enthusiastic trekkers. The Bailey trail, amidst the thick forests and high peaks of Gorichen and Kangto, is a trek that will leave you in awe of its picture-perfect landscapes and the Dirang River. Trekking and Camping in the mountainous areas are also very common in Arunachal Pradesh. West Kameng and Tawang Districts are mainly known for trekking and mountaineering. The Gori Chen base camp trek which ends at a monastery is known to be one of the toughest trails, yet equally rewarding thanks to its unbeatable scenery and technical challenges. The hills and the sight of the Shiva lingam atop them will definitely make you want to go on the Ziro Valley trek. Thus, here one can find a good number of trekking trails that one should discover like. Trekking around Tawang Chu is the most challenging and exciting trek route of the state.

There are many trekking routes in Arunachal Pradesh which provides exciting and thrilling experiences to the trekkers. Some of the mind blowing trekking routes is:

- *Bomdila- Daimara-via-Ramlingam and Chakku* (Distance 100Km) in 6 Days on any time.
- *Bomdila- Seppa* (Distance 120Km) in 8 Days on any time.
- *Along- Mechuka* (Distance 85Km) in 7 Days on any time.
- *Daporijo- Taksing* (Distance 250Km) in 25 Days on September.
- *Pasighat- Tuting* (Distance 80Km) in 7 Days on December – January.
- *Pasighat- Mariang* (Distance 80Km) in 7 Days on December – January.
- *Daporijo- Along* (Distance 50Km) in 4 Days on any time.

## 5. Camping

Arunachal Pradesh is blessed with scenic natural beauty, pleasant climate, rich biodiversity, rare wild life, historical sites, distinct cultural and ethnic heritage and warm and welcoming people. Such facilities offers lots of advantages to the visitors who like to participate in some adventurous activities in the state. Camping is a light /less risk adventure activity in compare to other aspects of adventure tourism. Normally, camping is associated with other events of adventure tourism such as hunting, fishing & angling, trekking, rafting, biking, etc. But in many parts of Arunachal Pradesh Camping is done for sole purpose like refreshing, adventure, entertainment, etc. *Siang Angling Camp, Camp Urban Jungle, Camp North-East Guide – Ziro, Encamp Adventures - Forest Camping, Ziro, Dibang Valley Jungle Camp, Abor Country River Camp, Roing Eco Lodge Camp*, etc. are mainly offering all sorts of camping activities. Beside that other adventure tourism activities are increasing in tremendous rate which influence the camping activities in positive note.

## 6. Biking in Arunachal Pradesh

Biking is a new trend of adventure tourism which is growing very rapidly in Arunachal Pradesh. Many youths of Arunachal are teaming up with the youths of neighboring states like Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, etc and forming a team of bikers to visit some particular distant places. Arunachal is the exact place for every biking enthusiast who searches for that road not taken and who wants to try new experiences. A bike road trip with friends in Arunachal Pradesh gives a unique experience to the bikers. While riding towards a definite destination a biker have to observe lots of changes in physical landscapes, vegetation, cultures, people and their habits, etc. Bike expeditions are increasing day by day in the state due to the active participation of



youths and warm hospitality of the locals. Also, due to the increase in tourist events like River Festival, Orange Festival, *Mechuka* Festival, *Paya* Eco-Tourism, etc. which attracts lots of youth from different states of India.

*Mechuka* and *Manigaon* are the biker's favorite destinations in *Shi Yomi* District. Some biking expeditions are also performs from *Guhawati* (Assam) to *Nameri*, *Nameri* to *Dirang*, *Dirang* to *Tawang*, *Tawang* to *Zemithang*, etc. The route between *Bhalupkong* – *Tawang* is counted amongst the topmost motor biking trails in India. Testing endurance at every turn, this crazy ride can introduce tourists to different cultures. Pasighat to *Mechuka* is one of the best biking route preferred by most of the bikers from state as well as from other states because Pasighat is lying near most of the big towns of Assam and very easily accessible through any means.

## 7. Car Rally

Car-motor sports are a hard/higher risk adventurous activities which are openly perform in the toughest environment and the most terrains of the world. Rally driving is the most exciting form of motorsport in the world because it encompasses the best aspects of all the other adventure sports. In the case of off-road car rallies, Arunachal Pradesh has made its identity. A significant improvement in road infrastructure and presence of *Trans-Himalayan Highway* which connect east-west corridor of Arunachal Pradesh provide a very ideal condition for the racers. Arunachal Pradesh has one of the toughest motorable highways, which are very challenging task for the off-road car racers. The undulating terrains, steep turns & bends, dense forests, numerous perennial streams, etc. make the racing/rally more risky, challenging and full of adventures. In recent years, many car-motor rallies has been organized and concluded in Arunachal Pradesh. Due to the active participation of renounce racers like *Gaurav Gill* and highly decorated automotive companies like *Mahindra*, *Toyota*, *Volkswagen*, *Yokohoma*, etc. the numbers of tourists are increasing in Arunachal Pradesh. The state government is also gearing up for more tournaments due to the positive growth of visitors in the state.

To encourage the off-road car racing and to promote tourism activities in Arunachal Pradesh, the state government has initiated many Car rallies:

- The first Tri-Nation (India-Myanmar-Thailand) friendship car rally 2016 for mapping connectivity, promotion of trade & investment and re-establish cultural & historical linkages was flagged-off by Chief Minister Late *Kalikhho Pul* at Itana, on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2016. The International Car

Rally marked the 25th commemorative year of the India-ASEAN friendship. The car-motor drivers from India, Myanmar and Thailand took participation in this car rally.

- International Friendship Car Rally Association based in Arunachal Pradesh is the organizer of the historic event of the India *ASEAN* Friendship Car Rally 2018.
- The 33<sup>rd</sup> Indian National Rally Championship 2020 was conducted in Arunachal Pradesh which was won by *Gaurav Gill*.
- The inaugural Trans Arunachal Drive 2021 was organized by Arunachal Pradesh Tourism, in partnership with *Mahindra Adventure* and *JK Tyre*, to promote the unbelievably scenic state. The 15-day drive through Arunachal Pradesh traversed from east to west, across 16 districts, and was split in three zones – Eastern, Central and Western.

## 8. Other Adventure activities

The establishment of *National Institute for Mountaineering and Allied Sports (NIMAS)* at *Dirang* (mandate in 2012) and introduction of Physical Education in *Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU)* as a main course (Separate Discipline) in 2015 open the doors for many local youths who aspired for the adventurous activities. The institutes offer people to experience a variety of challenges of outdoor surfaces as well as pursue a career in adventure sports. Due to the active involvement of these institutes and contribution of local people and state government many other adventure sports are sprouting out. Some of the adventure sports which are gaining popularity among the locals and the visitors are boating, kayaking, skydiving, rappelling, river crossing, rock climbing, ice skiing, hang-gliding, hot air balloon, etc. Boating and kayaking are performing in many areas, many locals has to make it source of earning during tourist visiting river festivals or for sightseeing. Ice-skiing hasn't fully developed in the snowy areas of Arunachal Pradesh but in some instances this sport is clearing its way to establish itself.

Due to awareness and knowledge of tourism among the locals many youths and seniors are coming forward and cooperating in the development of adventure tourism in the state. Many outsiders are coming and learning and trained up with the locals in *NIMAS* and help to establish different forms of adventure sports in Arunachal Pradesh. One of the major aims is to contribute to the local economy through sustainable employment.

## Photo Gallery



Paragliding Festival at *Lomdung*



Mahindra *Thar* Car Rally



Paragliding Training at *Paya*



Rappelling



Trekking



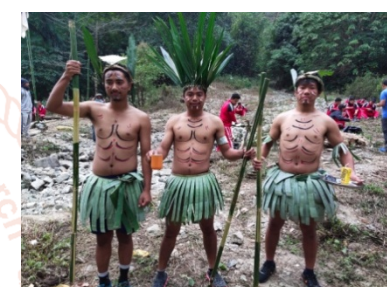
Rafting at *Yomgo, Paya*



Forest Camping



Hot-Air Balloon at *Mechuka*



Youths in river-festival



River Crossing



Leadership Camp at *Hoj*



Kayaking at *Poma River*

## Conclusion

The paper presented that Arunachal Pradesh has an enormous potential for developing nature-based tourism because it has lot of variation in topographical and climatic condition which has supported the growth of luxuriant forests, which are providing shelter to several floras and faunas, adding beauty to the landscape. Natural scenic beauty, undulating landscapes and cultural attributes of the state are seems to be the most important attractions for the visitors. So, the mountain ecosystems have provided ideal conditions for the promotion of nature-based tourism in Arunachal Pradesh. The tourist growth is rapidly increasing in the State and this indicates that if proper and adequate infrastructures are developed, the State can be a tourist hub. The existing environment and the

landscapes of the state are suitable for the growth of Ecotourism and Adventure Tourism, as well as other Nature-based Tourism. To check the degradation of environment and to initiate sustainable & responsible tourism, the government has advocated for the ecotourism in the state and appreciated the locals by encouraging the community tourism in many tourist centers of the state. Bird-watching, river festivals, agro-tourism, community tourism, etc. are the events to boost up ecotourism in the state. Apart from ecotourism, the state has also witnessed the growth of adventure tourism in the state. Adventure sports like paragliding, rafting, trekking, camping, biking, angling, etc. are very popular now amongst the local youths and visitors who seek for real adventure are coming to this unexplored world to participate in these types of events. Together, the ecotourism and



adventure tourism has increased the tourist inflow and can boost economic growth of the State by generating additional income and employment for local people of the State. There is a need for proper planning and management of tourism & environment so that both can sustainably grow together in the state without negotiating with each other. By encouraging the nature-based tourism among the local people we can make Arunachal Pradesh as a “most favored destination” for tourists. Lastly, all we can say that the future of tourism in Arunachal Pradesh is very bright.

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