

Rising StoriesTM In The East

WEST BENGAL | SIKKIM | NORTH EAST | ANDAMAN | BHUTAN



DIRECTOR'S DESK

Dear Travel Partners,



Wishing you all a very Happy Durga Puja and Dussehra! As September draws to a close, East India enters its most awaited festive season. The glow of lights, the sound of dhak, and the divine presence of Maa Durga fill the air with joy and devotion. On October 2nd, Dussehra marks the eternal victory of good over evil—a reminder of hope, renewal, and new beginnings. With this spirit, we look forward to a season filled with celebrations, travel, and togetherness.

This month also brings important travel updates—the Government of India has revised the Protected Area Permit (PAP) regulations for foreign tourists visiting Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram. We are keeping a close watch and will ensure our partners and travelers remain well guided for smooth journeys into these culturally rich destinations.

In this issue, we take you into the heart of the region's cultural calendar with the grand Wangala Festival in Meghalaya and the hidden charm of Ziro Valley in Arunachal Pradesh. From harvest rituals to vibrant tribal traditions, and from scenic valleys to untouched wilderness, the season ahead promises to be one of the most exciting times for travel in the East and Northeast.

Here's to a month of light, culture, and meaningful journeys—we expect this festive season to be one of the most inspiring and memorable yet.

With Best Regards,
Amit Periwai
Director

Remembering the Legendary Voice of Assam



Zubeen Garg
(1972-2025)

We are deeply saddened by the passing of Zubin Garg, the legendary voice of Assam. His soulful melodies touched millions and will forever remain in our hearts. Our heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, and admirers. May his soul rest in peace.

New Permit regulations of Nagaland, Manipur & Mizoram

Foreign nationals travelling to above states have to apply for Protected Area Permit (PAP) through the given link <https://indianfro.gov.in/eservices/> For more information, please contact us.

FESTIVAL WATCH: CULTURE IN FULL BLOOM

Wangala Festival – Tura, Garo Hills, Meghalaya

Dance of a Hundred Drums

Every November, the Garo Hills of Meghalaya resound with the powerful beats of drums during the grand Wangala Festival, also known as the “100 Drums Festival.” Celebrated by the Garo community as a thanksgiving harvest festival, Wangala is one of Northeast India’s most vibrant indigenous celebrations, blending age-old rituals with spectacular performances.

Over several days, Tura transforms into a cultural stage where tradition, music, and dance come alive. Dedicated to the Sun God, the festival is marked by rhythmic drumbeats, colorful traditional attire, and ceremonial dances. The highlight is the convergence of hundreds of drummers and dancers performing in unison—a sight that leaves every visitor mesmerized.

Adding to the experience, visitors can savor authentic Garo delicacies, witness age-old rituals, and immerse themselves in the indigenous way of life. For culture seekers, the Wangala Festival offers a deep dive into the living traditions of Meghalaya’s hills.



Wangala Festival – Tura
(07 November 2025)

Suggested Itinerary



DAY 1 Guwahati – Tura

Arrive at Guwahati and drive to Tura, the heart of the Garo Hills. Evening at leisure.



DAY 3 Tura

Immerse yourself further in the festivities, savoring Garo cuisine and interacting with local communities.



DAY 2 Tura

Full-day exploration of the Wangala Festival. Witness traditional rituals and the grand 100 Drums performance.



DAY 4 Tura – Guwahati

Return to Guwahati for onward travel, carrying unforgettable memories of Meghalaya’s cultural heartbeat.

➤ How to reach

- Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport, Guwahati.
- Guwahati Railway Station.

➤ Accommodation & Transport

- Guests can stay in cozy guesthouses or standard 3-star hotels, with Innova Crysta recommended for comfortable travel on hilly routes.

Extension Tours

Enhance your cultural journey with visits to nearby highlights:



Kaziranga National Park

Famous for the one-horned rhinoceros and diverse wildlife.



Shillong

The “Scotland of the East,” known for its lively culture and scenic beauty.



Cherrapunjee

Famous for its living root bridges and misty landscapes.

DESTINATION DECODE: THIS MONTH'S HIDDEN GEM

Discover Ziro Valley

The Cultural Gem of Arunachal

Tucked away at 1,500 meters in Arunachal Pradesh's Lower Subansiri district, Ziro is a tranquil valley of pine-covered hills, emerald rice fields, and a cool climate. It is home to the Apatani tribe, known for their bamboo houses, paddy-fish farming system, and colorful festivals like Myoko, Murung, and Dree.

Recognized as a UNESCO Tentative World Heritage Site, Ziro blends natural beauty with cul-



tural richness. From vibrant villages to vast wilderness, it is both peaceful and full of life.

Stay options range from eco-lodges to cozy homestays, where travelers can enjoy Apatani hospitality, local cuisine, and folk traditions.

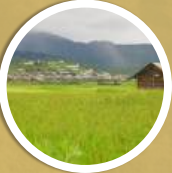
Adventurers can trek to Kile Pakho and Dolo Mando, explore the Talley Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, or attend the world-famous Ziro Music Festival, which draws global artists and travelers.

Suggested Itinerary



DAY 1

Arrive from Guwahati via Tezpur, enjoy a relaxed evening in Ziro.



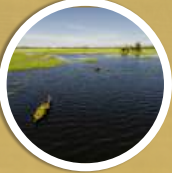
DAY 2

Explore Apatani villages, try local rice beer, and visit Kile Pakho for breathtaking views.



DAY 3

Trek to Dolo Mando or Talley Valley Wildlife Sanctuary.



DAY 4

Continue to Majuli Island or nearby destinations.

➡ Best Time to Visit

- March to October – Ideal for festivals and lush greenery.
- September – Don't miss the Ziro Music Festival.
- November to February – Cool weather, perfect for trekking.

➡ Recommended Duration of Stay

To fully immerse yourself in Ziro's landscapes and culture, we recommend at least 2 nights—or 3 nights during festival season.

➡ Our Recommended Stays in Ziro:

- Ziro Valley Resort – Comfortable stay with valley views
- Siiro Resort – Scenic and peaceful, near paddy fields
- Ziro Palace Inn – Cozy, centrally located
- Apatani Homestays – Authentic local experience



Ziro is more than just a destination—it's an experience of harmony between people, culture, and nature. Whether you're walking through rice fields, listening to tribal chants by a bonfire, or dancing under the stars at the music festival, Ziro will leave you enchanted.

Things to Do in Ziro

- Ziro Music Festival – enjoy indie bands in a natural setting.
- Village Walks – meet Apatani tribe, learn their traditions.
- Paddy Fields & Pine Hills – great for photography.
- Talley Valley Wildlife Sanctuary – trekking and bird watching.
- Kile Pakho & Midey – scenic viewpoints.



ON THE GROUND: SECTOR-WISE TRAVEL BUZZ HIDDEN GEM



Red River Retreat – Where Wilderness Meets Elegance

Experience serene luxury just five minutes from Kaziranga National Park. With forest views, pet-friendly stays, and the signature Red River Royal Villa, your perfect retreat awaits.



Sikkim Opens Dok-La & Cho-La for Battlefield Tourism

Starting next month, domestic tourists can visit Dok-La and Cho-La under the new Battlefield Tourism initiative. With strict security and eco-friendly measures, only 25 vehicles and 25 bikers will be allowed daily, ensuring a safe and sustainable experience.



From Flower Show to Orchidarium – A World of Orchids Awaits

Explore the newly inaugurated Orchidarium at Ridge Park, Gangtok, featuring 70% live orchids and rare exotic species. Enjoy a seamless visit with QR-based entry and immerse yourself in the beauty of indigenous and global orchids.



Dew Dale Resort, Baratang – Now Reopened with 16 Rooms

Escape to the untouched beauty of Baratang Island at Dew Dale Resort, now back in operation after a long break. Nestled amidst lush forests and serene beaches, it's the perfect retreat for nature and adventure lovers.



Kaziranga National Park Reopens Bagori Range from Sept 26

Celebrate Puja amidst Assam's pride, Kaziranga! Bagori Range opens Sept 26, Kohora in Oct, and Elephant Safari from Nov 1—experience the wild like never before.



Free Cloakroom at Darj Zoo

Visitors can now explore the hilly zoo hassle-free by depositing their bags safely at the free cloakroom.

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