



NEWSLETTER  
1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2025  
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# Rising Stories<sup>TM</sup> In The East

CLUBSIDE  
TOURS & TRAVELS PVT. LTD.



WEST BENGAL | SIKKIM | NORTH EAST | ANDAMAN | BHUTAN



## DIRECTOR'S DESK

*Dear Travel Partners,*

December brings fresh momentum to travel in the East and Northeast — clear skies, festive spirit, and rising interest in authentic cultural experiences.

This edition features:

- Magh Bihu, Assam's vibrant harvest celebration
- Shantiniketan, our hidden gem of the month
- Key hospitality and sector updates shaping the travel season

We're also proud to share that Clubside has been honoured with the AJAX Award by the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) for our contribution to responsible, heritage-led tourism — a recognition that strengthens our commitment to preserving and promoting the DHR legacy.

As travellers seek deeper stories and meaningful journeys, we remain dedicated to delivering expertise, reliability, and heartfelt service through every itinerary.

With Best Regards,  
Amit Periwal  
Director

## Clubside Honoured with the AJAX Award at DHR Awards Ceremony 2025



Clubside was felicitated with the prestigious AJAX Award at the DHR Awards Ceremony held at Ghum Railway Station on 30th November 2025. The recognition celebrates the organisation's outstanding contribution and excellence within the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway tourism ecosystem.

## Hornbill Festival: Northeast's Grandest Cultural & Hospitality Showcase

Held from 1st to 10th December, the Hornbill Festival brings together all Naga tribes in a spectacular celebration of culture, cuisine, and craftsmanship. It stands as the Northeast's biggest hospitality-driven event, drawing huge tourist footfall from across the world.

## MAGH BIHU (15th January 2026)

*Assam's Grand Harvest Festival*

**M**agh Bihu, also known as Bhogali Bihu, is Assam's vibrant winter festival marking the end of the harvest with feasting, abundance, and deep community spirit. The eve, Uruka, is a joyous night where communities construct traditional bamboo huts (Meji and Bhelaghar) and gather for a hearty communal feast by the bonfire. At dawn, the burning of the Meji symbolizes purification and prayers for prosperity. Homes then overflow with homemade delicacies like pithas, laru, and jalpaan, while open fields come alive with various traditional rural sports, offering an authentic window into Assam's rich agrarian heritage.



### Suggested Itinerary



#### DAY 1

Arrive in Guwahati and drive to Kaziranga National Park. Spend the evening at leisure amid nature.



#### DAY 2

Enjoy an optional early morning jungle activity (elephant ride / jeep safari). Immerse yourself in Magh Bihu celebrations with local communities—experience Uruka feasting and bonfire traditions.



#### DAY 3

Witness traditional Bihu rituals, rural games, and festive activities. In the evening, enjoy a cultural performance at Kaziranga Orchid Park.



#### DAY 4

Drive back to Guwahati for onward travel, carrying with you the warmth and festive spirit of Assam's harvest celebration.



### How to reach

- **Nearest Airport:** Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport (Guwahati), well-connected to major Indian cities.
- **Nearest Railway Station:** Guwahati Railway Station, a major rail hub with regular trains across India.



### Accommodation & Transport

- Choose from a wide range of comfortable stays in Kaziranga—from standard hotels to premium resorts. Travel is arranged based on group size, with options including Sedan, Innova Crysta, Tempo Traveller, and Urvania for smooth journeys across Assam's scenic routes.

*Magh Bihu is more than just a harvest festival — it is a beautiful celebration of abundance, togetherness, and the timeless spirit of rural Assam.*



### Extension Tours

*Enhance your Magh Bihu experience with nearby destinations:*

- **Jorhat & Majuli Island**  
*Explore the world's largest river island and its vibrant neo-Vaishnavite culture.*
- **Kohima, Nagaland**  
*Discover tribal heritage and picturesque landscapes.*
- **Meghalaya**  
*Misty hills, waterfalls, living root bridges, and crystal-clear rivers.*





## SHANTINIKETAN

*Where Art, Culture & Calm Embrace Your Soul*

### Why Visit Shantiniketan?

Immerse yourself in the artistic soul of Bengal at Shantiniketan. Envisioned by *Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore* in 1901 as a global center for learning and creativity, this rural hub blends history with vibrant tradition. Explore the iconic *Kala Bhavana*, marvel at sculptures by *Ramkinkar Baij*, or shop for local handicrafts at the bustling *Sonajhuri Haat*. Whether you visit for the colorful *Basanta Utsav* or a quiet walk through the *Chhatimtala*, Shantiniketan promises an unforgettable journey into art, heritage, and tranquility.



To fully experience Shantiniketan's heritage, culture, and serene village life, 2–3 nights is ideal—perfect for exploring Visva Bharati, Sonajhuri, and nearby sacred sites at a relaxed pace.



### Suggested Itinerary



#### DAY 1

Kolkata to Shantiniketan (4–5 hrs) Drive to Shantiniketan and explore the historic Visva Bharati campus. Highlights include Kala Bhavan, China Bhawan, Uttarayan Complex, Chhatimtala, and the Prayer Hall. Overnight stay.



#### DAY 2

Visit Sonajhuri Tribal Village, known for its forests, Adivasi settlements, Kopai River, and the scenic Khoai region. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. Later visit Kankalitala, a revered Shaktipeeth located by the Kopai River. Overnight in Shantiniketan.



#### DAY 3

After breakfast, drive back to Kolkata (4–5 hrs).



### Visitor Information

- **Getting There:** The most popular route is by train from Kolkata to the Bolpur Santiniketan Railway Station, a journey of approximately 2.5 to 3 hours.
- **Best Time to Visit:** The winter months, from November to March, are the most popular due to the pleasant weather conditions for sightseeing. Monsoon season offers lush greenery.
- **Accommodation:** A range of options is available, including hotels, resorts, and homestays.
- **Museum Timings:** The Rabindra Museum is closed on Wednesdays and Thursdays.



### Shantiniketan at a Glance

Tagore's legacy, Shantiniketan is a unique cultural hub blending Visva Bharati's open-air learning with the serenity of the Khoai region. It stands as a living gallery, showcasing the genius of artists like Nandalal Bose and Ramkinkar Baij.



### Shantiniketan: Bengal's Cultural Heartbeat

- UNESCO World Heritage Site founded by Rabindranath Tagore.
- Home to Visva-Bharati University and its iconic open-air classrooms.
- Famous for vibrant festivals like Poush Mela & Basanta Utsav.



# ON THE GROUND: SECTOR-WISE TRAVEL BUZZ



## ● **Fortune Select Siliguri: ITC Hotels Unveils Its Premium Gateway to the Himalayas**

ITC Hotels has launched Fortune Select Siliguri, which opened on 19th November, offering a 70-key premium stay. With elegant rooms, exclusive vegetarian dining, and modern event spaces, it serves as the perfect gateway to Darjeeling, Sikkim, and Bhutan.



## ● **Darjeeling to Enforce New Pet Regulations from January 2026**

From January 2026, Darjeeling will require visitors to carry dog vaccination cards and follow strict waste-disposal rules. A new annual dog licensing system and ₹500 spot fines aim to ensure responsible pet ownership.



## ● **Sundarbans to Close for Tiger Census on December 11–12**

The Sundarbans will shut to tourists on December 11–12 for an extensive tiger census using 1,400 camera traps. The survey will track tiger and prey populations across 4,100 sq km with real-time data reporting.



## ● **Supercar Rally to Roar Through Sikkim This December**

From December 11–15, Sikkim will host a Supercar Rally featuring Lamborghinis and Porsches across Gangtok, Natsu La, and Zuluk. Supported by the Indian Army, the event aims to promote tourism and showcase Sikkim's scenic routes.



## ● **Ginger Dimapur: IHCL Signs Its First Hotel in Nagaland**

IHCL has announced its entry into Nagaland with the signing of Ginger Dimapur, a new greenfield project. The upcoming hotel marks a significant milestone for the brand as it expands into the Northeast's emerging travel and business hub.



## ● **Sikkim Hosted the 13th International Tourism Mart 2025**

Sikkim showcased its acclaimed sustainable tourism model as it hosted the 13th International Tourism Mart in Gangtok from 13–16 November 2025. Delegates from 19 countries, industry leaders, influencers, and tourism officials participated in the event.

## NATIONAL TOURISM AWARDS



National Tourism Award  
Best Domestic Tour Operator  
For North East including Sikkim  
2019 - 2020



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## Offices at

Kolkata | Siliguri | Darjeeling | Guwahati | Port Blair | Thimphu

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