

# Ecotourism in Mizoram: A Strategy for Conservation of Nature with the Financial Opportunities of Local Communities

Sukanta Sarkar<sup>1</sup>, Suman Kalyan Chaudhury<sup>2</sup> and Saidur Rahman<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Economics, Berhampur University, Odisha, India*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Business Administration, Berhampur University, Odisha, India*

<sup>3</sup>*Department of Sociology, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, U.P., India*

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## ABSTRACT

The paper discussed the conservation of nature and the financial opportunities of local communities through ecotourism in Mizoram. It has been found that ecotourism is useful for increasing conservation and economic growth. It can be useful for promoting the nature and culture of the people. Mizoram is also called as the "Land of mountains." Mizoram is famous for the ecotourism initiatives. Foods in Mizoram are popular among the tourists. The state has various types of fauna, and mammal species. The major challenges for the growth of the tourism sector is the underdeveloped infrastructure. The state has only one airport. Public transport is difficult in night. Therefore, tourism department should introduce innovative ideas for the promotion of tourism in the state.

*Key words:* Hotels, Hospitality, Revenue, Tourist and Tourism.

## Introduction

Ecotourism is natural based activities that increases the interest of people about certain places. Such activities will be economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable and helpful for the wellbeing and conservation of the areas (Pushpalatha, 2020). Local people will be benefited through such tourism without affecting their culture and customs. Sustainable ecotourism benefits both the visitors and the local peoples (Raja, 2016). The term tourism was introduced in the 19th century and it is associated with the sustainable tourism (Phukon *et al.*, 2020). Sustainable tourism is involved for the development of both the present and future generation (Pradhan, 2013). Tourism basically means movement of the

people outside the houses and the visited various places. Tourism industry is considered as a bigger industry in terms of employment and foreign earnings (Kim *et al.*, 2006). It is useful for improving communications among the peoples and solving various social disputes (Assadzadeh and Nasab, 2012).

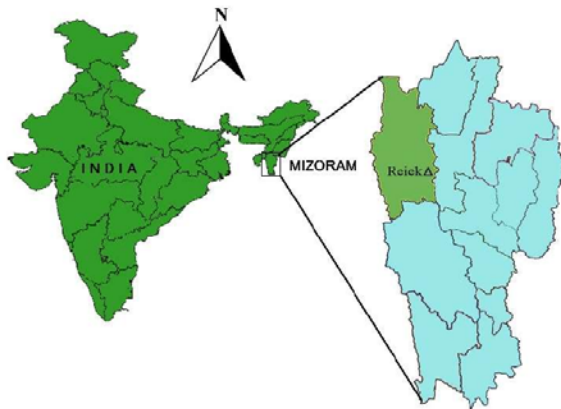
Ecotourism is useful for increasing conservation and economic growth. Travellers can witness the beauty of the natural environment and also learn about the culture of the ethnic peoples (Joshi and Dhyani, 2009). Ecotourism can be useful for promoting the nature and culture of the people. Mizoram has diversified culture and natural spots which opened the opportunities for development of ecotourism (Edward and George, 2008). Lakshadweep Islands, North-East India, Kerala,

(<sup>1</sup>Former Doctor of Literature Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Faculty Member, <sup>3</sup>Associate Professor)

Himalayan region, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands have the enormous scope for the growth of ecotourism (Shrestha and Parajuli, 2020). The objectives of this paper is to study the status of ecotourism in Mizoram and its significances for the local communities.

## Materials and Methods

**Study area description:** Mizoram is a state in north-eastern region of India. The state has international border with Bangladesh, and Myanmar. The state has 11 districts and spread over 21,081 km<sup>2</sup>. Aizawl is the capital of the State and total population is 1,091,014. Population per square kilometre is 52/km<sup>2</sup>. Mizo and English are the official language of the State.



**Design and approach:** The present study is based on the secondary data. The data has been collected from different reports of the Department of Tourism, Govt. of Mizoram, Mizoram Tourism Statisticsetc. Various journals and books have also been referred in the present study.

**Method of analysis:** To reveal the growth of tour-

ism industry of Mizoram in general and the economic perspectives of the industry in particular, different methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis, and text analysis were performed.

## Results and Discussion

Mizoram is blessed by nature. Every year's thousands of people attract for the state due to its beautiful hills stations, tea gardens, ethereal waterfalls, wildlife sanctuaries, festivals and friendly people (Joshi and Dhyani, 2009). September to March is the best time for visiting Mizoram. During the time climate is generally more pleasant and comfort. Tourist are generally avoiding to travel in rainy seasons (Karmakar, 2023). Mizoram is famous for the ecotourism initiatives. Foods in Mizoram are popular among the tourists. The state has various types of fauna, and mammal species. Mizoram is also called as the "Land of mountains." The state has six wildlife sanctuaries and two national parks. Thorangtlang Wildlife Sanctuary, Khawnglung Wildlife Sanctuary, Tawi Wildlife Sanctuary, Ngengpui Wildlife Sanctuary, Murlen National Park, Lengteng Wildlife Sanctuary, Dampa Tiger Reserve, and Blue Mountain (Phawngpui) National Park are the popular places. Chheihlam, Sawlakai, and Cheraw are the famous dances of the Mizo people (Zimik and Barman, 2021).

The above Table 1 discussed the state-wise domestic and foreign tourist visits in North-eastern States of India. It has been found that Assam, Sikkim, and Tripura are attracting more number of tourists then the other states. Nagaland is least popular among the tourists, preceding by the Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Manipur. Growth rate of tourist are declined in 2021 due to the covid pandemic. Aizawl have various popular places. It is

**Table 1.** State-wise Domestic and Foreign tourist visits in North-eastern States of India

State	2020		2021		Growth Rate (%)	
	Domestic	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign	DTV 21/20	FTV 21/20
Arunachal	42871	961	102915	182	140.06	-81.06
Assam	1266898	7285	1409161	536	11.23	-92.64
Manipur	49669	3139	49371	648	-0.60	-79.36
Meghalaya	24734	2311	154409	411	524.28	-82.22
Mizoram	30890	265	87232	234	182.40	-11.70
Nagaland	10979	518	23968	325	118.31	-37.26
Sikkim	316408	19935	511669	11508	61.71	-42.27
Tripura	127815	31877	177816	5	39.12	-99.98

Source: India Tourism Statistics, 2022, p.139.

perfect place for the adventure sports, like as para gliding, and rafting. Lunglei is a beautiful city in the state. It is the perfect place for the nature lovers having the diversified flora and fauna. Solomon's temple, Durtlang hills, Mizoram State Museum, Vantawang falls, Tamdil lake, KV Paradise, Reiek heritage village, Phulpui grave, Tuirihiau falls, Falkland parks, and Phawngpui peak are well-known tourist places (Saikhom, 2021).

**Table 2.** Year-wise Tourist Arrival in Mizoram

Year	Domestic	Foreign	Total Nights Halt
2011 - 12	63,512	744	89,942
2012 - 13	64,631	712	96,912
2013 - 14	64,583	906	98,420
2014 - 15	67,554	862	101,561
2015 - 16	66,583	830	101,838
2016 - 17	67,223	987	100,966
2017 - 18	68,679	1,155	111,444
2018 - 19	88,122	1,014	132,131
2019 - 20	159,534	2,143	164,386
2020 - 21	20,474	90	30,276

Source: Tourism Department of Mizoram 2022.

The above Table 2 discussed the tourism arrival in Mizoram. It has been found that number of domestic and foreign tourists are increased continuously, but it was declined in 2020-21 due to the covid pandemic. Domestic tourist arrived was 63,512 in 2011-12, and was reached 159,534 in 2019-20, and was declined 20,474 in 2020-21. Foreign tourist arrived was 744 in 2011-12, and was reached 2,143 in 2019-20, and was declined 90 in 2020-21. Total nights halt was 89,942 in 2011-12, and was reached 164,386 in

2019-20, and was declined 30,276 in 2020-21.

Mizoram is a Christian dominated state. Koat Pitha, Paanch Phoron, Arsa Buhchiar, Vawksa Rep, Misa Mach Poora, Dal with eggs are the famous food among the people. Phawngpui Peak is the highest peak of the state located nearly 300 km south of Aizawl. Falkawn village is a model village of lifestyle of the Mizo people. It shows the livelihoods and cultures of the Mizo people. It is located nearly 22 km away from the capital. Dampa Tiger Reserve is located nearly 125 kilometres have the unique place of variety of flora and fauna. Vantawng Waterfalls is located 137 km away from the capital is the mesmerizing waterfalls. Hmuifang is a hills station which located nearly 50 km away from the capital is popular for the adventure and wildlife-related activities (Rubita, 2012).

The above Table 3 discussed the number of tourist spots, tourist lodges, availability of rooms and beds in Mizoram. Aizawl have the highest number of tourist lodges, followed by the Siaha, Lawngtlai, and Kolasib. Aizawl district have the highest number of available rooms and beds. Khawzawl district have the lowest number of available rooms and beds. Kolasib, Serchhip, Lunglei, Khawzawl, and Hnahthial districts have highway restaurants (Priya and Dhiren, 2016).

Kolasib is well-known for its culture and natural beauty. Tlawng river is the best attraction of place. Tamdil Lake is located 100 km east of Aizawl and is a human-made lake. This lake is also the livelihood of the local fisherman's. Thorangtlang Wildlife Sanctuary and Saza Wildlife Sanctuary are the two popular biodiverse area of Lunglei. Champhai is known

**Table 3.** Number of Tourist Spots, Tourist Lodges, Availability of Rooms and Beds

District	No. of Tourist Lodges	No. of Rooms	No. of Beds	No. of Highway Restaurants	No. of Picnic Spots
Mamit	7	86	115	0	0
Kolasib	6	49	106	1	0
Aizawl	13	117	252	0	2
Champhai	5	50	102	0	0
Serchhip	5	82	130	1	0
Lunglei	4	49	87	1	0
Lawngtlai	7	34	73	0	0
Siaha	9	32	59	0	0
Saitual	3	18	47	0	1
Khawzawl	1	8	20	1	0
Hnahthial	2	11	21	1	0
TOTAL	62	536	1012	5	3

Source: Tourism Department of Mizoram

for the stunning natural scenery. It is also called the "Rice Bowl of Mizoram." Kungawrhi Puk cave, Tiau Lui river, and Lianchhiari Lunglen Tlang are the other tourist places in Champhai. Mamit town is known as the "Orange Garden of Mizoram."

The above Table 4 discussed the revenue collected by tourism in Mizoram. It has been found that the revenue collection from tourism is increased. Aizawl district collected the highest revenue collection, followed by the Lunglei, Lawngtlai, and Serchhip. The major challenges for the growth of the tourism sector is the under developed infrastructure. The state has only one airport. Public transport is difficulty in the night.

## Conclusion

Mizoram is blessed by nature. Mizoram is called as the "Land of mountains." The state has six wildlife sanctuaries and two national parks. Aizawl have the highest number of tourist lodges. Aizawl have various popular places. It is perfect place for the adventure sports, like as para gliding, and rafting. Lunglei is a beautiful city in the state. Solomon's temple,

Durtlang hills, Mizoram State Museum, Vantawang falls, Tamdil lake, KV Paradise, Reiek heritage village, Phulpui grave, Tuirihiau falls, Falkland parks, and Phawngpui peak are well-known tourist places

Revenue collection of the state from tourism is increasing continuously. Aizawl district collected the highest revenue collection, followed by the Lunglei, Lawngtlai, and Serchhip. The major challenges for the growth of the tourism sector is the underdeveloped infrastructure. The state has only one airport. Public transport is difficulty in the night. Although there are challenges, but the state has more potentiality for the growth of ecotourism and income earning opportunities for the local peoples.

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**Table 4.** Revenue Collected by Tourism in Mizoram (Rs. in lakh)

Year /District	Revenue Collected from			Total
	Tourist Lodge	Highway Restaurant	Picnic Spot	
2011 - 12	147.23	5.49	0.91	153.63
2012 - 13	157.71	12.92	1.01	171.64
2013 - 14	213.20	24.55	1.32	239.07
2014 - 15	197.40	24.17	1.30	222.87
2015 - 16	201.72	19.53	0.91	222.16
2016 - 17	215.12	20.74	0.73	235.91
2017 - 18	288.96	20.89	0.25	250.10
2018 - 19	280.27	13.66	0.27	294.20
2019 - 20	298.84	6.58	0.27	305.70
2020 - 21	36.02	0.00	2.36	38.38
District-wise (2020 - 21)				
Mamit	2.84	0.00	0.00	2.84
Kolasib	1.89	0.00	0.00	1.89
Aizawl	12.60	0.00	2.36	14.96
Champhai	2.16	0.00	0.00	2.16
Serchhip	3.48	0.00	0.00	3.48
Lunglei	7.15	0.00	0.00	7.15
Lawngtlai	4.36	0.00	0.00	4.36
Siaha	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.50
Saitual	0.35	0.00	0.00	0.35
Khawzawl	0.69	0.00	0.00	0.69
Hnahthial	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	36.02	0.00	2.36	38.38

Source: Tourism Department of Mizoram, 2022.

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