Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat And Tourism Development In Mizoram

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Abstract
‘Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat’ is an initiative to strengthen India through empowering cultural integrity and unity in diversity among the people of different states and Union Territories. It was started by Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi on 31st October 2015 on birth anniversary of Vallabh Bhai Patel. Under this scheme, the States and Union Territories have been paired to promote cultural aspects of one another state through conferences, seminars, quiz, essay competition, etc.

India is incredible nation woven with fabrics of diverse linguistic, vibrant culture, religious views, regional and folk cuisines, dance forms, fairs & festivals, theatre, movie, handicrafts, sports, literature, etc. It enables unity in diversity and stands as a symbol of one India, that should be sustained and cherished forever. As a result, the heritage, handicraft, and cultures of the country can be revived and sustained for future generation and hence for cultural and heritage tourism development in the country.

This research paper is an observational study on “Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat” initiative of Government of India and its significance in tourism development in Mizoram.

Keywords: Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat, Tourism, Mizoram

Introduction
Tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industry across the world. According to world Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the industry is being considered and practiced as a major engine for sustainable development across the developed and developing countries. In India, tourism industry contributes 9.2% percent to the national GDP and approx. and 10 % of the total employment in the country (MoT, 2018). The Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India is continuously increasing and contributing significantly in the foreign exchange earnings and employment creation. Despite the recession, the tourism industry has shown impressive growth in the number of foreign tourist arrivals in the recent years. The country is 42nd in the world rankings as per foreign tourism arrivals in 2018.

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The *Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat* initiative, aims to strengthen interaction among people of different cultures living in different States and Union Territories of India. Under this scheme, the states and union territories have to be paired for shared interaction among communities of both the states. The exchange of knowledge of the language, culture, traditions and practices of different states are aimed to protect and promote through various activities in schools, colleges, universities and other private and government organizations and thereby strengthening the unity and integrity of people of India in various aspects.

The pairing States and Union Territories are to embark on a mission to enhance the economic, academic and cultural ties through entering into mutual engagements and activities covering the spheres of history, language, culture, cuisine, music, drama, fairs and festivals and other forms of exchange among them. The framed list of activities has been drawn up and circulated to the State Governments / Union Territories Administrations and to the key Central Ministries. The States/ UTs may choose, evolve and develop their interaction pattern based on the suggested list as per operational suitability in the course of their interactions.

### Engagement matrix between states and Union Territories for 2019-2020

1. Bihar : Tripura & Mizoram
2. Chandigarh : Dadra & Nagar Haveli
3. Delhi: Sikkim
4. Goa: Jharkhand
5. Gujarat: Chhattisgarh
6. Haryana: Telangana
7. Himachal Pradesh : Kerala
8. Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh: Tamil Nadu
9. Lakshadweep : Andaman & Nicobar
10. Madhya Pradesh : Manipur& Nagaland
11. Maharashtra: Odisha
12. Puducherry : Daman & Diu
13. Punjab : Andhra Pradesh
14. Rajasthan: Assam
15. Uttarakhand : Karnataka
16. Uttar Pradesh : Arunachal Pradesh& Meghalaya

### The Objectives Of ‘Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat’

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<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>The Core Objective</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To celebrate The Unity in Diversity and strengthen the fabric of cultural bonds among communities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To Promote The spirit of national integration and unity in diversity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To Showcase The rich heritage, culture, customs and traditions for which the country is known.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To establish The engagements among communities of different states.</td>
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To create an ecosystem for promoting learning and sharing best practices with the pairing states.

Source: ekbharat.gov.in

Key activities for states conducted under ‘Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat’:

1. Academic exchange
2. Cultural exchange
3. Celebrate Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat Day of pairing states
4. Dissemination of states about the paired states
5. Food festivals culinary exchange
6. Learning the language of paired states
7. Sports events
8. Tourism exchange
9. Translation of Books
10. Youth festivals

Source: https://ekbharat.gov.in/

Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat In Mizoram

Mizoram is paired with Bihar under ‘Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat’ flagship programme. In this initiative of Government of India, the emphasis is to promote mutual understanding between people of Mizoram and people of Bihar. The cultural aspects and activities of Mizoram are being promoted among the people of Bihar through organizing seminars, workshops, quiz competitions, essay competition, etc in schools, institutions and university and vice versa. Here in Mizoram, Mizoram University, NIT, Central Schools etc organized several cultural activities viz. songs, dance forms, quiz competitions, essay competitions. The cultural aspects of Mizoram viz. language, literature, cuisine, festivals, cultural events and tourism are being promoted in Schools, colleges and universities in Bihar.

Tourism Development In Mizoram

Mizoram is the land of lush green hills gently floating in misty white clouds. Its beautiful people exude happiness, hospitality and selfless service. The state is covered with highest 86.5% of forest areas dominated by thick bamboo groves, vibrant wildlife, sheer cliffs, magnificent waterfalls, unique landmarks of myriad folklores and picturesque villages of houses and land of picturesque hills and peaks. There are numerous sub-tribes, viz. Maras, Kukis, Lushais, Lais, etc. have vibrant customs, social practices and dialects enriching the tribal and cultural heritage of the state. The festivals and dances of the Mizoram have ancient tribal flavour. The popular celebrations in the state are the Christmas, New Year's Day, the Chapchar Kut etc. The most popular dances of the state are Cheraw (Bamboo Dance), Khual Lam (Dance for Guests) and Chheih Lam (Dance of Joy).

The state is geographically located in the Shivalik range of Himalaya. The scenic landscapes of bluish hills and mountains, steep rocky cliffs, serene lakes and deep valleys of gurgling streams plunging down form spectacular waterfalls at various locations. The hilly terrain makes the state an ideal destination for various outdoor sports and adventurous tourism.
activities. The state has huge potential for revenue generation, employment creation and infrastructure development through promoting cultural and community based ecotourism. Besides having rich potential for community based ecotourism development, the tourism in the Mizoram is in infant stage. The lack of awareness, skilled human resources, advertising, stakeholders’ positive attitude and poor linkage of tourism sector with other interrelated sectors of the local economy resulting in lower distribution of the benefits among the community members have been observed in the state Mizoram. This is further leading to loss of interests among locals in being a part of tourism development. However, the unique natural and cultural ecology of the region and vibrant traditions of the communities along with rich natural heritage makes it as an ideal destination for both domestic and international tourists.

Challenges For Tourism Development In Mizoram

I. Continuous decrease in forest cover area and wildlife.
II. Inner Line Permit documentation formalities for domestic tourists.
III. Separate inner line permit for foreign tourists.
IV. Limited transport connectivity- road, rail and air.
V. Lack of safe drinking water supply
VI. Limited option for vegetarian travellers
VII. Lack of local community awareness about tourism development.

Conclusion
The vibrant tribal culture, heritage and nature based tourism attractions and destinations show huge potential for tourism development in Mizoram. In the last few years, it has been observed that, the new generation people are migrating to urban areas for the job and better lifestyle. They are moving towards urban area for job opportunities and better lifestyle. It is leading to loss of culture and heritage, while growing rate of urbanization is leading towards minimizing the forest cover and damaging wildlife in the state. The Ek Bharat Shresth Bharat initiative aims to exchange, exhibit and promote culture, heritage and tourism in the state and India at large.

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