

Union Minister of Tourism and Culture Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat Inaugurates 12th Edition of International Tourism Mart in Kaziranga

Shri Shekhawat Highlights the Rich Cultural Legacy and Tourism Potential of Northeast India

Tourism Mart to Showcase Northeast's Potential with a Focus on Promoting Sustainable Tourism

Posted On: 27 NOV 2024 4:49PM by PIB Delhi

The 12th Edition of the International Tourism Mart (ITM), in Kaziranga in Assam was inaugurated today by Union Minister for Tourism and Culture Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in presence of Chief Minister of Assam Dr. Himanta Biswa Sharma and Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Shri Pema Khandu.



Union Minister Shri Shekhawat in his address underscored the Northeast's legacy, cultural diversity, and natural wealth emphasizing its rich cuisine, crafts and biodiversity.

This ITM is a remarkable opportunity for Northeast India to showcase its rich culture and diversity to the world and also offers a platform for people from across the globe to witness the extraordinary heritage of this region, he said.

He further highlighted the significance of hosting the ITM in Kaziranga, stating that it reflects the increasing

importance of the Northeast on the national stage. Mentioning the event in Kaziranga as special, the minister said that over the past decade, development in the region has accelerated.

The Minister noted that hosting ITM in Kaziranga aligns with the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Kaziranga being declared a national park. He acknowledged the park's remarkable growth, with its area expanding from 400 sq. km to 1,300 sq. km in the last 10 years.



This event not only celebrates Kaziranga's legacy but also provides a platform to explore the vast tourism potential of the Northeast. The region holds immense potential and this Mart serves as a gateway to enhance it, Shri Shekhawat stated.

The minister also added that the tourism potential of India is set to grow more in the coming years, with the Northeast playing a pivotal role in this growth.

Chief Minister of Assam Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma in his address said that this mart offers the international students and global influencers an immersive opportunity to explore the region's natural beauty and cultural richness. This event will highlight the vast potential of tourism in NE not just as industry but as a transformative force for cultural exchange, ecological preservation and economic development, he added.

From November 26th to 29th, 2024, in Kaziranga, Assam, the ITM takes place in Northeast region renowned for its diverse topography, rich flora and fauna, vibrant ethnic communities, ancient traditions, festivals, and abundant arts and crafts. Kaziranga National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site and home to the majestic one-horned rhino, adds to the allure of this event.

A Coffee Table Book on Assam "Guwahati and Around" published by Assam Tourism Development Corporation Limited was also launched. The book takes a comprehensive look at the rich heritage, culture and diversity of Guwahati and its picturesque surroundings. The book is a visual tapestry in words capturing the true essence of the region.



This ITM celebrates multiple achievements of North-east India's tourism & cultural prowess. In July this year, 'Moidams of Charaideo' were declared as the 43rd UNESCO World Heritage Site from India. As cultural heritage from the times of the great Ahom dynasty, their declaration as World Heritage is a testament to the immense tourism & cultural significance of Assam and North-east India. Celebrations are also for being 50 years of Kaziranga being declared as a National Park.

This year's Mart featured a variety of activities, including presentations by State Governments, B2B meetings, panel discussions on Employment, Innovation, Digitalization, Youth entrepreneurship, Vocal for Local, Women Empowerment, Case studies on Advancing Adventure Tourism, Conservation and promotion of Wildlife, Homestay, Wine Tourism, curated food demonstrations, cultural evenings, live music, a Northeast Bazaar, and technical visits to Charaideo Moidams, Rangghar, Kaziranga National Park, Hathikuli Tea Estate, and the Orchid and Biodiversity Park. Post Event FAM tours of various destinations in North East.

ITM will exemplify a strong commitment to sustainability, aligning with the Travel for Life initiative of Ministry of Tourism. The event is being organized with a focus on minimizing environmental impact, employing energy-efficient practices.



This Mart also serves as a platform to further discuss the new tourism products of the region and provide an opportunity for the tourism stakeholders from this region to interact and engage in productive B2B and B2G sessions during dedicated sessions and otherwise, so that we may collectively work together in playing each of our roles in ensuring that tourism in Northeast India reaches greater heights.

This event also engages with international students who are studying in the North Eastern region and influencers all across the globe providing them with first hand insights into the area and rich culture.

Senior officials from Ministry of Tourism and North-eastern state Governments, Heads and representatives of tourism & hospitality industry associations, international and domestic tour operators, hoteliers and homestay owners, tourism service providers, influencers and opinion makers, students, young friends, press, media, Local Administration and many others gathered for collectively recognizing the immense potential of tourism in India's *Asthalakshmi* - Northeast.

The ITM 2024 has seen a maximum participation from 30 Countries, Which includes 15 International Influencers from 11 Countries(Spain, Myanmar, Thailand, Bhutan, Italy, Vietnam, Russia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Malaysia and France), 24 International Tour operators from 16 Countries(France, UK, Spain, Netherland, Russia, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei, Laos, Philippines, Malaysia, Nepal, Myanmar, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Denmark), 20 International Students from 17 Countries (Korea, Netherlands, Seychelles, Kenya, Zambia, Botswana, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Turkmenistan, Laos, Syria, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh)

46 Domestic Buyers, 7 Domestic Influencers and 101 Domestic sellers also attending the event.

The International Tourism Mart (ITM) is an annual event organized by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, designed to highlight the tourism potential of the North Eastern region for both domestic and international audiences. This event serves as a vital platform, bringing together tourism businesses and entrepreneurs from the eight North Eastern States—Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim—to foster collaboration and interactions among buyers, sellers, media, government agencies, and other stakeholders.

SKT/BM

(Release ID: 2077959)