



Tourism Development in Tawang District of Arunachal Pradesh

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1. Introduction

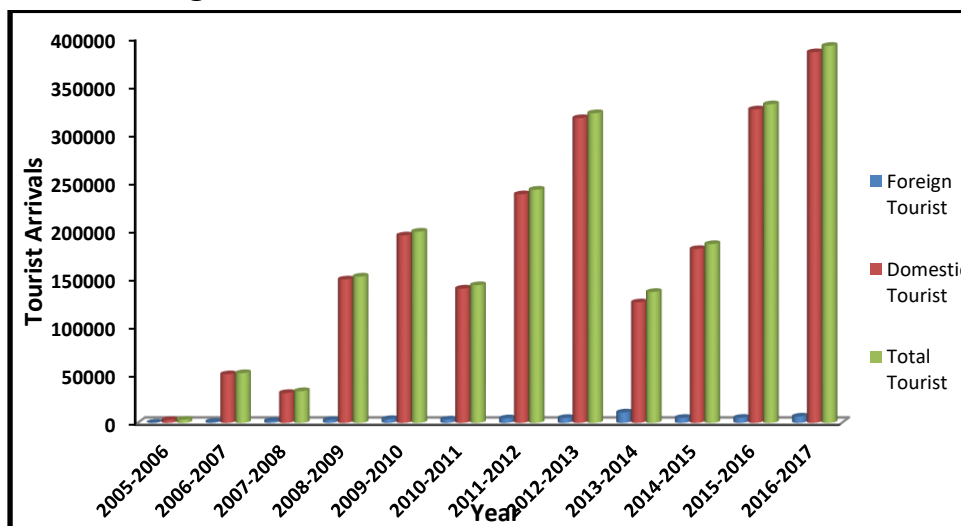
Arunachal Pradesh-The Land of the Rising Sun is the largest State in terms of area among the North Eastern States located at the eastern most corner of the North East Region of India. The State shares boundary with China in the north, Myanmar in the east, Bhutan in the west and the State of Assam and Nagaland in the south. Arunachal Pradesh is a mountainous State blessed with beautiful valleys, natural lakes, snow-capped mountains, dense forest, roaring rivers, rare and endangered flora and fauna. The State has an enormous potential for development of all types of tourism. The hilly terrains of the State with lush green evergreen forest and valleys offers scope for natural and adventure tourism like trekking, mountaineering, wild life tourism, river rafting etc. The rich ethnic and the diverse culture of the indigenous tribes of the State also offer scope for cultural tourism. The archaeological sites, historical monuments, art and craft, dances attract tourist from all over the world.

Tourism is today a potential economic activity of the State today. Tourism can be a major economic game changer for a revenue strapped state like Arunachal Pradesh and in the days ahead it is expected to be the largest source of revenue for the State (Gyana and Parida, 2020).

2. Tourist Arrivals in Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh is one of the most picturesque tourist destinations in India. Arunachal Pradesh has witnessed an increasing flow of tourist in all the districts. Arunachal Pradesh ranked fourth in the domestic tourist arrivals and fifth in foreign tourist arrival in the North East Region of India. The flow of tourist in Arunachal Pradesh accounted about 4.6% of the tourist arrivals in the North East States (India Tourism Statistics, 2018). The figure below shows the trend of the tourist arrivals in Arunachal Pradesh.

Figure-1: Tourist Arrivals in Arunachal Pradesh



Source: Statistical Abstract of Arunachal Pradesh from 2005 to 2017

The graph shows that the State has witnessed a rapidly increasing trend in the arrival of tourist in the State. In 2005-06 the number of tourist arrival in the State was 3317 which increased to 3,92,473 in 2016-17. The composition of tourist in the State showed that the domestic tourist accounted for more than 95 percent share of the total tourist arrival in the State in 2016-17. The State witnessed only 0.03 percent of the domestic tourist arrivals and 0.03 percent of foreign tourist arrivals in India in 2017 (India Tourism Statistics, 2018).

3. Tourism potential in tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh

Tawang district lies in the extreme western corner of the State. The district spreads over an area of approximately 2172 sq kms at an elevation of approximately 3500 mt above sea level. Tawang is known for its breath taking natural scenic beauty. It is one of the most frequently visited tourist destination of the State. Tawang is an ideal destination for ecotourism as it has immense natural and cultural attractions which attracts tourist from all over the world (Lama, 2021). The district is also blessed with historically significant Buddhist heritage sites and monasteries which promote religious tourism. Snow-capped mountains, glacier lakes, and mighty water falls makes Tawang a perfect destination for nature lovers. The serene hilly terrains of Tawang are also favourable for adventure tourism like trekking, hiking, mountain biking, wild life spotting. The rich culture of the Monpas is also one of the attractions for the tourist from all over the world. The monpas are known for their artistic genius in local art and craft like carpet weaving, making wooden vessels, thanka painting, mask painting, paper making etc.

4. Tourist arrivals in Tawang District

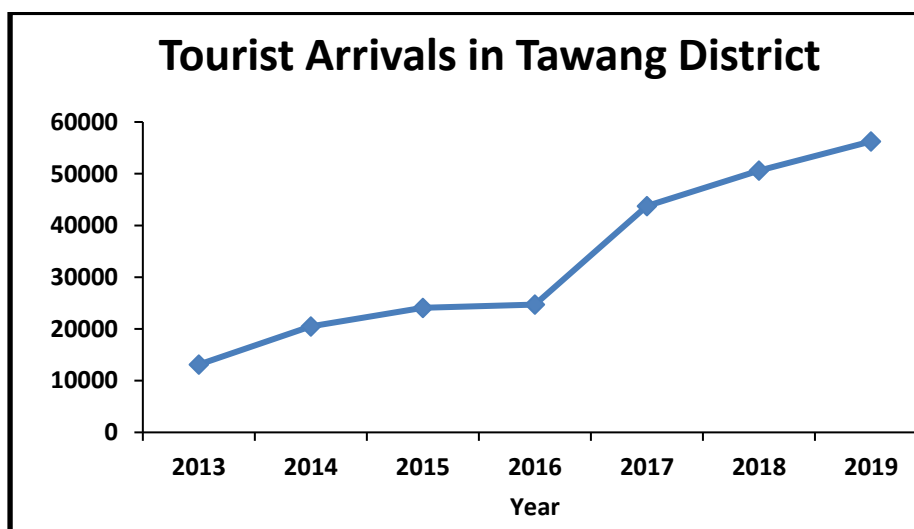
Tawang has now become a popular tourist destination. There is a huge inflow of tourist throughout the year. An attempt has been made to study the trend of the tourist arrivals in Tawang district from 2013 to 2019. The table shows that Tawang has witnessed an increasing trend in the tourist arrivals.

Table-1: Tourist Arrivals in Tawang District

Year	Domestic Tourist	Foreign Tourist	Total Tourist Inflow	Annual Growth Rate
2013	12874	235	13109	-
2014	20219	265	20484	56.25
2015	23776	305	24081	17.56
2016	24423	279	24702	2.57
2017	43059	235	43757	77.13
2018	50367	245	50612	15.66
2019	55823	421	56244	11.12

Source: District Statistical Handbook, Tawang District from 2013-14 to 2015-16 : District Tourism Office, Tawang.

Figure-2: Trend of tourist arrivals in tawang district



Source: District Statistical Handbook, Tawang District from 2013-14 to 2015-16: District Tourism Office, Tawang.

The table shows that there has been an increasing trend as well as fluctuations in the arrival of tourist during the period. In 2013, 13109 tourists visited Tawang which accounted for about 9.6 percent of the total arrival of tourist to the state. In 2019 the tourist arrivals in the district increased to 56244 which comprised of 55823 domestic tourists and 421 foreign tourists. The composition of tourist reveals that domestic tourist constitutes about 99 percent of the total flow of tourist in the district. The high growth rate of tourist arrivals in the district can be attributed to the promotional activities initiated by the Department of Tourism, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. The Tawang Festival organised by the Department of Tourism, Government of Arunachal Pradesh attracts tourist from all parts of the country during the month of October- November which are most favourable months for visiting Tawang.

5. Conclusion

Tawang is one of the most popular tourist destinations of the State as it offers all forms of tourism experiences such as nature tourism, cultural tourism, rural tourism, wild life tourism, adventure tourism throughout the year. Tourism has now become an important economic activity of the people of the district as it offers a vast scope for income generation as well as employment opportunities to the local inhabitants. However, many tourisms potential areas of Tawang district are yet to be explored. Despite the tough geographical location and infrastructural constraints, Tawang has witnessed an increasing flow of tourist over the past few years. Therefore, a Comprehensive Tourism Development Programme which includes development of infrastructural facilities, road connectivity, proper advertisement and marketing, training and workshops for the local community participation is needed for developing the tourism sector of Tawang.

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