



Northeast Top Tourist Destination in 2022

For Prelims: National Parks, Temples, Monastery, lakes etc. of Northeast and their Location.

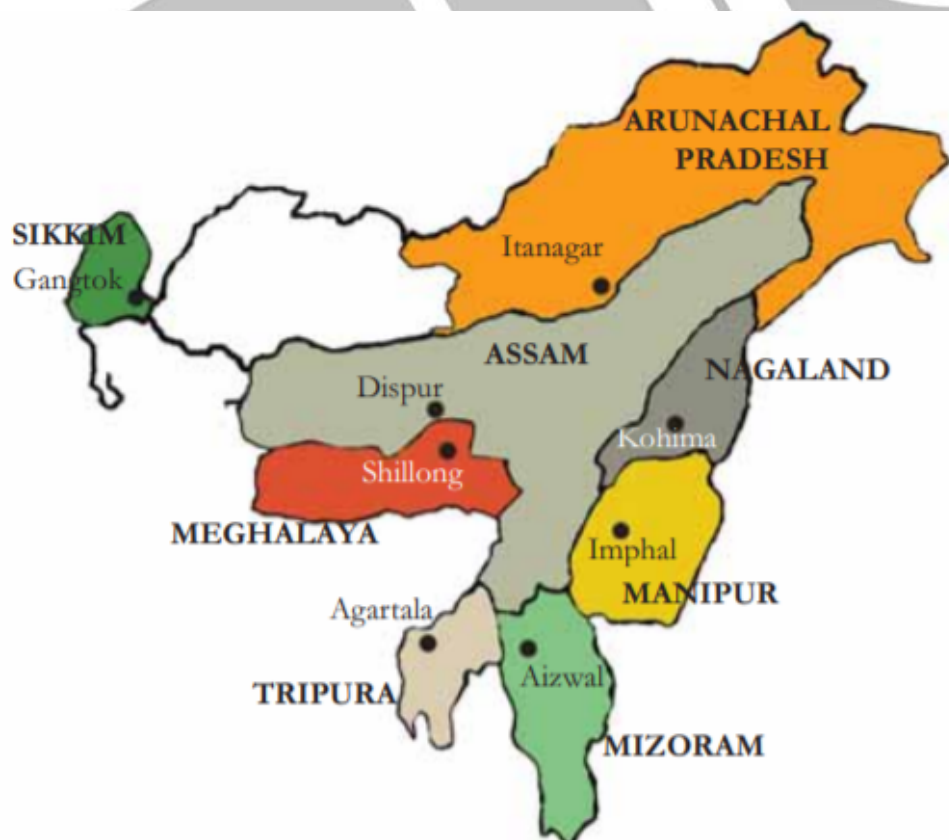
For Mains: Conservation efforts, Destination Northeast, Significance of Northeast

Why in News?

The year 2022 witnessed record-breaking tourism in the [Northeast Region](#) having **over 11.8 million domestic visitors** and over 100,000 international travelers.

Why Record-Breaking Tourism in the Northeast?

- The Northeast region of India has a **rich cultural heritage and is home to diverse landscapes, including hills, mountains, and valleys.**
- The region has been relatively unexplored, but with the recent surge in tourism, more people are discovering the beauty and charm of the Northeast.
- It is the result of Government of India's [Destination Northeast India](#) initiative massive infrastructural push.



What are the Top Destinations?

- **Arunachal Pradesh:**
 - **Tawang Monastery:** One of the oldest and largest Buddhist monasteries in India.
 - **Namdapha National Park:** Home to diverse flora and fauna, including tigers, flying squirrel and leopards.
- **Assam:**
 - **Kamakhya Temple:** A revered Hindu temple dedicated to the goddess Kamakhya.
 - **Kaziranga National Park:** A **UNESCO World Heritage site** and home to the one-horned rhinoceros.
 - **Majuli Island:** Located in the Brahmaputra River, is the largest river island in the world and a cultural hub in Northeast India.
- **Manipur:**
 - **Loktak Lake:** The largest freshwater lake in Northeast India and home to the floating **Keibul Lamjao National Park.**
 - Imphal War Cemetery: A significant religious site for those who lost their lives in the **Second World War.**
- **Meghalaya:**
 - Nohkalikai Falls: The tallest plunge waterfall in India.
 - **Living Root Bridges:** A unique natural wonder created by the Khasi and Jaintia tribes.
- **Mizoram:**
 - **Phawngpui National Park:** Home to the highest peak in Mizoram and diverse flora and fauna.
 - Solomon's Temple: A unique religious site built by a local pastor, resembling the biblical Temple of Solomon.
- **Nagaland:**
 - **Hornbill Festival:** The festival is named after the hornbill bird, which is revered by the Naga tribes as a symbol of their folklore and tradition.
 - **Dzukou Valley:** A picturesque valley known for its stunning landscapes and diverse flora and fauna. Treeless but unbelievably green and floral.
- **Sikkim:**
 - **Tsomgo Lake:** A sacred lake considered by local people, it is believed that the water of the lake has medicinal properties. Lake is surrounded by snow-capped mountains and is fed by the melting snow from the mountains
 - **Rumtek Monastery:** A prominent Buddhist monastery and the largest in Sikkim.
- **Tripura:**
 - **Neermahal Palace:** A unique palace located in the middle of Rudrasagar Lake, a unique example of a fusion of Hindu and Islamic architectural styles. The palace is designed in the shape of a half-moon and is surrounded by water on three sides.
 - **Unakoti:** A significant religious site featuring **rock-cut sculptures** and **carvings**. The largest sculpture at Unakoti is a **30-foot-high image of Lord Shiva**, known as **Unakotiswara Kal Bhairava**. The site also features several waterfalls and natural rock formations.

What are the Prospects of Tourism in North East India?

- **Adventure Tourism:** The Northeast region offers numerous adventure tourism opportunities, including trekking, mountaineering, river rafting, and paragliding.
 - Adventurous sites such as Gangtok, Shillong etc. can attract adventure enthusiasts from all over the world.
- **Tribal Communities:** The Northeast is home to several indigenous tribal communities such as **Mismi, Garo, Khasi, Jaintia** etc., each with their **unique culture, language, and traditions**.
 - Tourism can provide an opportunity for these communities to showcase their heritage and generate income.
- **Winter Tourism:** The Northeast region **experiences heavy snowfall** during the winter months, making it an **ideal destination** for winter tourism.
 - However, this season remains relatively unexplored and has the potential for further development.
- **Sustainable Tourism:** To minimize the negative impact of tourism, sustainable tourism practices

should be promoted. This includes responsible waste management, promoting eco-friendly accommodations, and respecting the cultural practices of local communities

What are the Benefits and Concern of Tourism in North East India?

▪ Benefits

- Tourism has the potential to **create jobs, generate income**, and boost the **local economy**.
- As more tourists visit the region, there will be a higher demand for goods and services, leading to the growth of various sectors.

▪ Challenges:

- **Environmental Impact:** Increased tourism can lead to **increased pollution, littering, and damage to natural habitats**, which can have long-term negative impacts on the environment and wildlife.
- **Cultural Impact:** Tourism **can lead to changes in traditional cultural practices and beliefs**, as well as the commodification of cultural artifacts and practices, which can erode the cultural heritage of local communities.
- **Connectivity:** Despite recent infrastructural development, the Northeast still faces connectivity challenges. Better road and air connectivity can help attract more tourists to the region.

Way Forward

- To boost tourism in North East India, **effective marketing campaigns** should be developed to promote the region's attractions, culture, and heritage.
- **Infrastructure development** and **diversifying tourism** offerings can attract more tourists, while sustainable tourism practices should be promoted to protect the environment and local culture.
- **Encouraging community-based tourism** and **public-private partnerships** can also help generate income and improve services.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. Consider the following pairs: (2013)

1. Nokrek Biosphere Reserve: Garo Hills
2. Logtak (Loktak) Lake: Barail Range
3. Namdapha National Park: Daffla Hills

Which of the above pairs is/are correctly matched?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) None

Ans: (a)

Exp:

- Nokrek Biosphere Reserve is located near Tura Peak in West Garo Hills district of Meghalaya, India. Nokrek has a remnant population of the Red Panda and is also an important habitat of the Asian Elephants. **Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.**
- Loktak Lake is the largest freshwater (sweet) lake in North-East India, also called the only floating lake in the world due to the floating phumdis (heterogeneous mass of vegetation, soil, and organic matter at various stages of decomposition) on it, is located near Moirang in Manipur State, India. **Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.**
- Barail is the highest hill range in Assam and it separates the State of Manipur from the State of

Nagaland.Namdapha National Park is the largest protected area in the Eastern Himalaya biodiversity hotspot and is located in Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India. It is also the third largest national park in India in terms of area. It is located between the Dapha Bum range of the Mishmi Hills and the Patkai range. **Hence, pair 3 is not correctly matched.**

- **Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer**

Source: PIB

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