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Impact of Inner Line Permit on Arunachal Pradesh Tourism

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Abstract: Arunachal Pradesh is a tribal state with vulnerable, rich culture and tradition which need preservation and protection. However at the same time the state also needs to develop in the economic front. One of the main sources of income for the state is tourism, so deeper understanding is needed in the area of opportunities and threat in terms of tourism. One such area of concern is the ILP, because many non-residents feel it as a burden. The paper will discuss the impact of ILP for the growth of tourism in Arunachal Pradesh. This paper further question whether ILP is a barrier in tourism or not.

Keywords: Domestic tourism, e –ILP, inbound tourist, Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR), Heritage tourism

1.INTRODUCTION

Inner Line Permit is an official travel documents required by Indian citizens to enter Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram & Nagaland issued by the respective state government under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation (BEFR), 1873. A Regulation created for the peace and good government of certain districts on the Eastern Frontier of Bengal during the time of British Raj. The system was also introduced by the British to protect their commercial interest, particularly in oil, tea, elephant and timber. In spite of free India, It is still in practice in independent India to protect the tribal culture of North East.

Movement of an Indian Citizens or domestic traveller who are non Arunachalee without proper ILP is restricted to enter the state of Arunachal Pradesh. It is mandatory for non APST (Arunachal Pradesh Schedule Tribe) to obtain this permit. Foreigners are required to have Protected Area Permit (PAP) to enter the state of Arunachal Pradesh.

2.REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Is ILP a barrier in tourism? On the contrary many people from other states of India, feel ILP is a form of quasi visa system and an unnecessary burden to visit this pristine and magnificent destination. They feel it is a violation of the fundamental rights of people; Article 19 (d) of the constitution provides freedom of movement anywhere in India and Article 19 (e) right to reside & settle in any part of territory of India. Hence for them ILP, a quasi-visa

may seem to contradict this right. They believe in today's fast growing world where interconnectivity is the essence, ILP is a hindrance preventing integration, growth & development.

However Article 19 (5) and The Constitution (Eighty Third Amendment) Act 2000 allow and supports such permit system for the protection of the interest of the schedule tribe of Arunachal Pradesh.

ILP does not prohibit outsiders from entering into the state. It merely requires them to register for their easy identification. Plus it's for their own safety & security. It will have a record of their entry and exit, places visited, number of days stayed, routes undertaken etc. In case of emergency it will be easier to track them down. Arunachal state is ecologically & environmentally sensitive place, ILP as a travel regulatory also checks the carrying capacity and protects endangering tribal people, flora & fauna. Reasons for implementing Inner Line Permit system are many. The basic reason of implementing is to have control over influx of illegal migrants or prevent flow of illegal migrants especially from the neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh, Myanmar or Nepal. The North East India shares international borders with five countries. Arunachal Pradesh is the largest state in North East India with area of 83,743 sq. km. It has a total population of 13, 83,727 and a density of 17 persons per sq.km as per census 2011 (census 2011). These international borders are significantly considered porous without proper inspection, patrolling & control. Another reason for need of ILP is that the people of this protected area are very simple and backward. ILP prevent encroachment and exploitation of resources by outsiders. Also the main reason behind implication of this system is to protect the culture, tradition & social values of the inhabitants. Arunachal Pradesh has 26 major tribes & more than 100 sub tribes. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

In the era of fast transformation & globalisation, the ILP appears to have succeeded, at least partially, in allowing the tribes to retain their cultural & traditional traits, which otherwise could have been very challenging.

With merger of people come many drawbacks, such as lure of profit making business, crowding, corruption, refugee issue, anti-social activities, immigrant issue, straying of youths in wrong path, drugs, over population, smuggling, insurgency, over

exploitation of natural resources, adopting easy money making methods etc which are continuously growing day by day in our society. ILP to an extent have acted as a barrier to these anti-social elements. Because of this cause the local population of the state has been demanding strict implementation of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation 1873. Unlike the state of Nagaland [Article 371(A)] and Mizoram [Article 371 (G)], which ensures that no act of parliament can ordinarily interfere with the religious, social & customary practices of the states, the state of Arunachal Pradesh does not have any such special constitutional provisions to protect their religious or social practices, their customary laws & procedure, administration of civil & criminal justice involving decisions according to their customary law, ownership and transfer of land & its resources. Hopefully govt. of Arunachal Pradesh pursues the genuine demand of special constitutional provision to safeguard the tribal interest.

Tribal communities are very vulnerable and sensitive. Without any proper shield, they can be easily influenced, diffused and assimilated in the mainland India losing its rich culture & tradition. In the absence of which could lead to becoming minority in their own state, as in the case of the Red Indian of America or the tribal of Tripura. Even today in spite of existence of ILP, numbers of shops & businesses are run by non APST in Arunachal Pradesh. If you visit any local vegetable market, leaving few local ladies vegetable seller maximum of the vegetable stall, grocery store, vendors, small business etc are mostly run by non-residents of the state. In fact pricing & operation of marketing system in the state is dictated & regulated by the neighbouring state of Assam. Initially outsiders looking for jobs were willing to work at lower wages leading to passing of all kinds of odd jobs to them from the localities. Eventually all the works done were as per their terms & conditions and they created a niche for themselves in the field. As compared to their home state they get better job opportunities here with higher income. Hence people from far flung state of India are willing to leave their home town and come in search for job here, even as a manual labour creating congestion and disparity. Today we are handicapped without them. Looking at the scenario ILP need to be properly implemented and revived to check the menace before it gets out of hand.

3.OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- (a) To study the overview of e-ILP of Arunachal Pradesh.
- (b) To analyse the impact of e-ILP on the tourism of Arunachal Pradesh

4.RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 e- ILP & Domestic Tourism

To ease the travel formality of the visitors visiting our state, online system of procuring ILP is introduced as e- ILP by the government. It is introduced to help the tourist make a

hassle free journey to the state. It is an easy & comfortable method of procuring the permit. One can access it any time and from anywhere. It saves our precious time; one need not apply it going from pillar to post running after officials, filling up forms which at times can be frustrating. You no longer have to be physically present in offices.

Inner Line Permit is issued to domestic tourist, to the citizen of the country. It is concerned with travelling within the country by its own citizen. E-ILP is one such initiative taken up by the government of Arunachal Pradesh for promotion and hassle free travel of domestic tourist in the state. It is a step towards digital permit system. The issued ILP will have bar code and QR codes for verification, to detect any fake entry at the entry check point. Visitors will also be provided with unique identity number and codes in their emails, which can also be displayed on their mobile handsets or tabs at the entry gates. However there is still more up gradation of this online ILP system required.

Unlike outbound or inbound tourism domestic tourism does not require documentation like passport and visa, compulsory vaccination, travel insurance and currency conversion. Even it spares tourist from facing cultural shock that one may face visiting countries of contrast culture. Domestic tourism has greater scope in countries of large dimensions such as India as compared to smaller countries. A country or a region cannot always depend on the foreign tourist arrival for its tourism survival. There could be much threat to tourism globally such as terrorism, economic meltdown, scarcity, safety & security issues, poor bilateral relation etc. This void in tourism business can be filled up by domestic tourism. Since long this sector has been neglected, but now tourism service providers and policy makers have realised the potential of domestic market. There are many specialized tour products & packages created and government projects sanctioned for catering to the requirements and need of domestic tourism, thereby encouraging and promoting domestic tourism. In general domestic tourist are more price conscious towards accommodation, transport, food services, tourism activities, shopping, etc. The development of transport system can be the first step in promoting domestic tourism.

Low-cost flight, train, good road and highway network, budget accommodation with clean and basic facilities is what required by the guest.

4.2 Rise of Tourism in spite of ILP

With exciting and innovative tourism services (such as cultural, heritage, rural, adventure and holistic tourism) along with the support of government, the state is well poised for growth (This argument is supported by the case study under taken below for the year of 2005-10: statistical data for domestic and international tourist arrival).

Arunachal Pradesh have registered doubles growth rate in the last five years in the tourist traffic, (Voyager's world monthly travel magazines, 27th march, 2017). "Despite physical, social as well as psychological distance, there has been a steady growth of

tourists in the state. In the year 2015-16, the state has received 3.45 lakh tourists, domestic as well as foreign, of this, 3.4 lakh were from the country itself,” as stated by Arunachal Pradesh Tourism Secretary Joram Beda. “Looking at the current trend and marketing efforts the state is expected to a 20 per cent rise in this financial year,” he added (Indian Express, 26 Aug, 2016).

Notably, the Arunachal Pradesh tourism department was felicitated by President Pranab Mukherjee during the National Tourism Awards 2011-12 on March 18 for taking the 'Incredible India' initiative to new heights. In 2012, Arunachal was adjudged the 4th best region by Lonely Planet, BBC's globally circulated magazine. The state was also voted the 'Favourite Upcoming Destination' by Outlook Traveller readers.

Arunachal Pradesh has been put on global tourism radar after being adjudged one of the winners of the Lonely Planet magazine India Travel Awards for 2013. The state, known as the 'Last Shangri La on earth', was declared the second runner-up in the 'Emerging Destinations in India' category in the prestigious award ceremony (Times of India, 8th May 2013). Arunachal Pradesh bagged an award in the Best State: Campaign Clean India category apart from winning a special prize for Most Innovative use of Information Technology at the National Tourism Awards function(The Shillong times 2013). Arunachal Pradesh received 'Today's Traveller Award 2016 (Business standard, 2nd Aug 2016)

Another initiative by the Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh under the caption “The Arunachal odyssey”, where team bloggers, online travel writers, youTuber’s will promote Arunachal Tourism.

4.3 Case study for the year 2005 to 2010

Data were collected to analyse the arrival of domestic tourist and foreign tourist to compare the growth percentage of tourist arrival in ILP introduced state and non ILP state (state of Arunachal Pradesh vs. state of Meghalaya & Sikkim. The result of the analysis showed remarkable growth rate of Arunachal Pradesh in terms of tourist arrival). Figure 1 & 2 clearly show the increasing trend of tourist arrival. There is a 984.66% growth for international arrival and 352% growth rate for domestic arrival as shown in Table I & II.

TABLE V
GROWTH OF INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVAL

International Tourist	Arunachal Pradesh	Meghalaya	Sikkim
2005	313	5099	16827
2006	706	4259	18026
2007	2212	5267	17837
2008	3020	4919	19154
2009	3945	4522	17730
2010	3395	4177	20757
Growth %	984.66%	-18.08%	23.35%

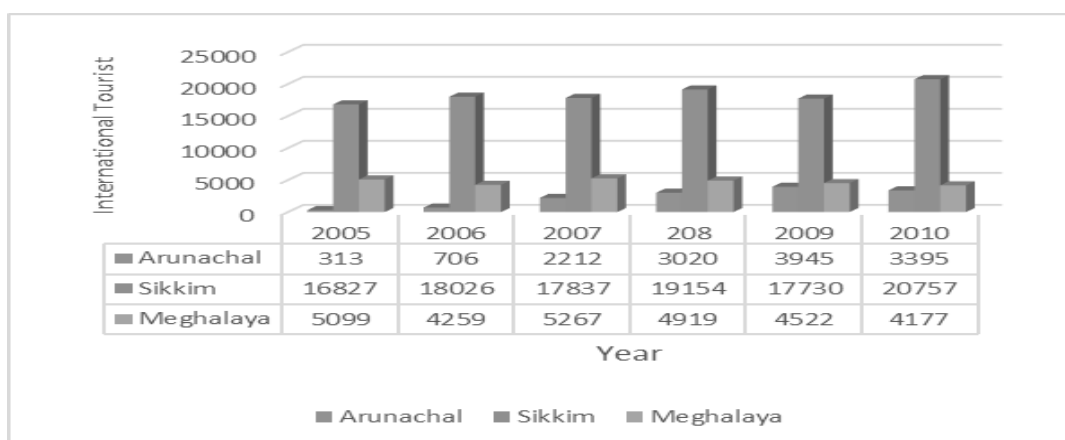


Fig. 1 International Arrival

TABLE VII
GROWTH OF DOMESTIC TOURIST ARRIVAL

Domestic Arrival	Arunachal Pradesh	Meghalaya	Sikkim
2005	50560	375911	241697
2006	80137	400287	292486
2007	91100	457685	331263
2008	14929	549954	460564
2009	195147	591398	547810
2010	227857	652756	700011
Growth %	352%	74%	189.62%

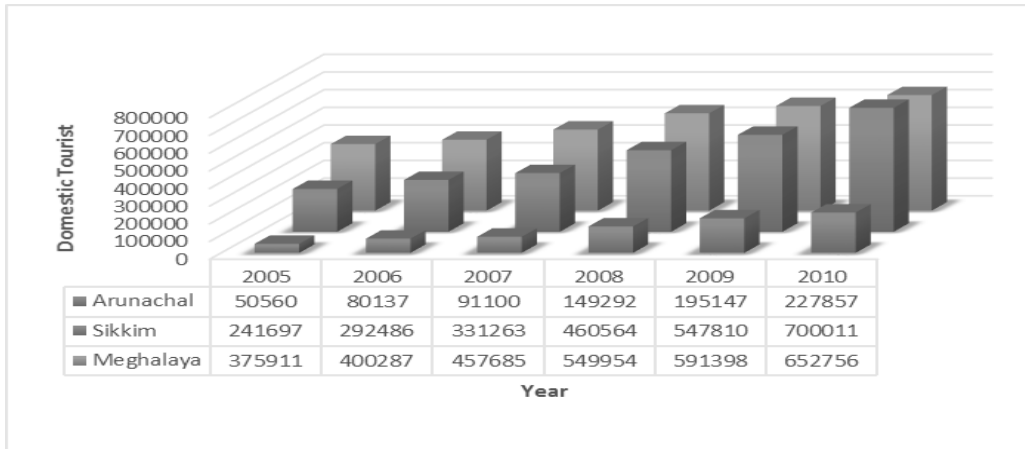


Fig. 2 Domestic Tourists Arrival

4.4 Future Scope

However, the work is not finished here. Instead there is still mammoth task to be carried out in the field of tourism. As compared to other successful tourist states of India, Arunachal still has lots to achieve. With good road networks, infrastructure development, accessible transport & accommodation, partnership, innovative ideas and the support of government, these hurdles can be overtaken. Introduction of e-ILP for the domestic tourist is a step towards involvement of technology for hurdle free movement. This paper also discussed the importance of domestic tourist in the growth of Arunachal tourism. ILP itself is a huge source of revenue generation. There is a need for separate and transparent mechanism to track this revenue, as well as prevention of leakage of it. In the year 2015-16, we received 3.4 lakhs domestic tourists, which resulted in vast revenue collection as permit fee.

In this regard, the concept of responsible tourist should be introduced where the tourist are made known about how their ILP entry fee is utilised for the development of tourist related projects. For example development of heritage village, road construction, home stays, up gradation of existing tourist facilities, construction of tourism infrastructure etc. With this awareness tourist would be proud and immensely satisfied of their contribution towards the development of the state. And they would be happy to pay for the permit. This would be a positive trend towards the growth of tourism. For the comfort and accessibility of the guest new future proposals can be implemented such as:

Different colour or logo for tourist ILP can be introduced for their easy identification so that services, hospitality & priority can be provided accordingly.

Adoption of replicate of “two channel system (green channel & red channel) of custom clearance at international airport” in regard to ILP checking in railway station & upcoming Airport of Arunachal Pradesh. Green channel for the APST and red for non APST. A separate channel could also be introduced for the tourist.

Introduction of portable electronic cash register at the areas where on the spot ILP is procured such as entry check gate, surprise patrolling by the authority (Naka; termed used by the police dept.), railway stations, upcoming airport, as well as government offices. This will regulate revenue leakage and concept of illegal overcharging. It will provide accuracy, reliability, speed and trust among the visitors. And because of the availability of electronic data & report generation one will not be able to manipulate it. A step towards bright & digital Arunachal Pradesh.

5.CONCLUSIONS

ILP as a travel regulatory checks the carrying capacity and protects endangering tribal people, flora & fauna. It argues that in spite of its existence, tourism is flourishing in the state with the initiatives & the help of the Govt. & likeminded people. The case study undertaken also shows the positive growth of Arunachal Pradesh tourism leading to awarding of National award & global recognition status.

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