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Prospects of Tourism Industry and its Impacts on Bodoland Territorial Council: with special Reference to the District of Udalguri, Assam (India)

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Abstract-- Udalguri district was formally inaugurated on June 14, 2004 and Udalguri town is the headquarters of the district. This district is bounded by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh in the north, Sonitpur district in the east, Darrang district in the south and Baksa district in the west. Now Bodoland Territorial Council is extended to Bodoland Territorial Region. Total geographical area of the district is about 1,852.16 Sq.Kms. while the population of the district is roughly about 7,56, 671 meaning that the population density is 381 persons per sq. km. Distance of the District Headquarters from the state capital of Guwahati is about 140 km. The district is divided into 2 Sub Divisions, 9 Revenue Circles, 802 Revenue Villages and 11 Development Blocks which have covered some part of district Darrang also. About 54 percent people of the total population (8, 32,769 Lakh) are living below the poverty line and the literacy rate is 66.70 percent. It has two sub-division, they are: Bhergaon and Udalguri covering 06 community development blocks covering 05 revenue circles and (114) Village Council Development Committees (VCDC). The district has two major towns, namely, Udalguri and Tangla with 10 TCLCC. Accesses to these two towns are mainly by roads and railways. The district of Udalguri has lots of prospects in Eco-tourism which are still unexplored. Therefore, through this paper is trying to highlight the prospects of said field which will be the new way of development of the respective area.

Keywords-- Eco-Tourism, Prospects, Blocks, BTC, Occupation, Militant, Temples etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Udalguri district is one of the twenty-seven (27) districts of Assam and Udalguri town is the head quarter of the district. This district is bounded by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh in the North, Sonitpur district in the East, Darrang district in the South and Baksa district in the West. Udalguri was a sub-divisional head quarter in Darrang district but after signing of the Bodo Accord as Autonomous district called the Bodoland Territorial Autonomous Area District (BTAD) was created, Udalguri became one of the 4th districts under the BTAD. The new district was formally inaugurated on June 14, 2004.

The major community groups those who are living in Udalguri district are: Boro, Rabha, Nepali, Santali, Garo, Assamese, and Bengali etc. Bodo is the main tribal group in this district. More than 70 percent of populations are Boros. But unfortunately, they are economically and politically very backward in spite of having well natural resources. Because of this economic backwardness-different insurgency groups were formed. In this context it is necessary to identify the causes of backwardness of the district along with the neighbor's districts of the state.

II. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

In the modern age the Tourism industry becomes a new and more expectable idea regarding development of a nation. It can provide more employment facilities to the unemployed young and energetic as well as local people of the respected industry which can boost up the economy both national and international perspectives. In Assam, the running govt., now trying to focus the importance and prospects of tourism industries with the help of central government. Like that the district administration of Udalguri district also trying to introduce or focus the said industry by taking help of survey through different departmental people as well as by discussing local people of the different localities. The main motto of the present study is to focus different places of the Udalguri district which have more prospects to introduce as a tourist place and to make a tourism industry which will able to change the mindset and boost up the local economy along with the national economy.

III. DATA AND METHOD

The present study is based on secondary data as well as some parts of primary data by personnel visit himself of researcher to the respective some tourist places. Along with primary and secondary data the present study has applied description and observation (by visiting few potential tourist places) method to give final shape of the study.

IV. PROSPECTS OF ECO-TOURISM INDUSTRY IN UDALGURI DISTRICT

[a] Bhairabkunda

It is a popular picnic spot and pilgrimage site in the **Udalguri district of Assam, India**, located at the tri-junction of Assam, Bhutan, and Arunachal Pradesh. It is known for its scenic beauty, river confluence, and religious significance, being a sacred place for Shiva devotees. The name is derived from the belief that Lord Shiva created a sacred lake, or "kunda," here. It is place as if it is set in a canvas perfectly painted with all the colours of nature. A popular picnic spot and owing to its calmness and serenity, the place is visited by couples and families alike. Bhairabkunda is located in Udalguri district in Assam at an elevation of 703 metres, and is close to the Bhutanese town Daifam. It is on the border of Arunachal Pradesh and Bhutan and a must-visit for all. The Bhairabi River and the Jampani River, which originate in Bhutan merges here to form River Dhanshiri and forms a lovely view to behold. This is one of most important tributaries of River Brahmaputra and also has a dam. It is in the shape of a kunda, which means worshipping place of Shiva and that is where the name Bhairabkunda came from. Bhairabkunda is situated with the wonderful sites of nature in the tri-junction of Bhutan, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, is considered to be a God's gift for the human being. It is located at the northern range and 22 km from the district headquarter of Udalguri town. Also prominently known as important tourist place of Shiva' for the pilgrims. during his 'AGYATAVASA' the proverbs quoted. Down the ages the three Bodo socialist heroes Laothai, Bambur and Adangwras were reigned the area.

[b] Orang National Park

Orang National Park is the oldest game reserve of the State just on the northern bank of river Brahmaputra with an area of 78.80 sq. kms and it is an important breeding ground for varieties of Fishes.

It is located on the north bank of the Brahmaputra River in the Darrang and Sonitpur districts of Assam, India. It was established as a sanctuary in 1985 and declared a National Park on 13 April 1999. It is also known as the mini Kaziranga National Park (IUCN site) since the two parks have a similar landscape made up of marshes, streams and grasslands and are inhabited by the Great Indian One-Horned Rhinoceros. The park has a rich flora and fauna, including Great Indian One-Horned Rhinoceros, pigmy hog, elephants, wild buffalo and tigers. It is the only stronghold of rhinoceros on the north bank of the Brahmaputra River.

Orang National Park is known as Rajiv Gandhi National Park, which is between Darrang and Sonitpur districts of Assam. Now the Orang national park is under the jurisdiction of Udalguri district Assam.

[c] Wildlife Sanctuary of Sonai- Rupai

Sonai Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary is a protected area in Assam, established in 1998 and spanning 175 square kilometers, located at the foothills of the Himalayas. It is known for its diverse wildlife, including the Hispid Hare and Pigmy Hog, and is a haven for mammals like elephants, gaur, and tigers, as well as birds like the hornbill. The sanctuary is situated 52 km from Tezpur and is bisected by four rivers: the Gabharu, Gelgeli, Sonai, and Rupai.

[d] Wildlife Sanctuary of River Barnadi

The Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary, named after the river that borders it to the west, is a sanctuary in the Udalguri and Baksa districts of Assam, bordering Bhutan. It was established in 1980 to protect the rare hispid hare and pigmy hog, and is also home to species like the clouded leopard, golden langur, and Asian elephant. The Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) is an integral part of Manas Tiger Reserve (MTR). The sanctuary is located in the north western part of the district of Udalguri under Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD). This Wildlife Sanctuary is quite rich in case of the availability of biodiversity. Tiger, Leopard, Capped Langur, Parcupine, Pigmy Hog, Bison, Asiatic Elephant, Hispid Hare, Pangolin, etc., are the important species, which are available in the wildlife sanctuary. Besides these various migratory and local birds such as Peacocks, Bengal Florican, Hornbills, King Fisher, Woodpecker, etc are available in this wildlife sanctuary. So the importance of Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary is very high in respect of conservation of biodiversity. From the tour of Barnadi WLS, tourist can enjoy to see the beautiful green reserve forest, boundaries of different districts, foothills of Bhutan, small and medium rivers, different tribal and other communities, their living styles, ethnic culture, language etc.

[e] River Suklai

The area of Suklai river is a beautiful potential picnic place as well as tourist place under the district of Udalguri district, Assam. It is one of the rivers which sudden increase their water flows if rains of north side of Bhutan foothills and sometimes car and people are blocked by water at middle of the river.



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Now the Assam Govt, through the transport department (PWD) trying to construct RCC bridge to link the area as well as to increase the business and trade between the two countries (Indo-Bhutan). If the bridge will complete in due course of time the economy between the two countries will boost up in near future and it will become a tourist place in the locality.

[f] Rhino Eco-Park and Tenzing Bodosas' Tree house in the north of Dimakuchi

Dimakuchi is a village in Bhergaon Tehsil in Udalguri District of Assam State, India. It is located 30 KM towards west from the head quarter of Udalguri district. 60 Kms. from Bhergaon Sub-division and 80 kms from Guwahati. We can reach to Dimakuchi by bus from Guwahati to Mangaldoi and Mangaldoi via Tangla. Besides these we can reach to respective tourist place by road from Sipajhar to via Khoirabari and by train from Rangia to Khoirabari or Tangla railway station. Dimakuchi is a place who is surrounded by tea gardens and different cast and communities. From the place of Dimakuchi we can see the WLS of Barnadi and foothills of Bhutan. The place of Dimakuchi is growing faster and faster than earlier in case of education, business and other occupations right now. In the north of Dimakuchi a Rhino Eco Park and Tenzing Bodosas' tree house is there in the northern part of Dimakuchi which very beautiful scenery for the tourist.

[g] Hirimba Bathow Temple

It is located near the village a sleepy village near Khairabari under Bhergaon Sub division in udalguri district, Assam, India. is going to have the rare distinction of having the largest and well spacious and well designed 'Bathou Mandir' not only in the four districts of the BTAD, but also perhaps in the State. The construction works of the 'Bathou Mandir' named as 'Hirimba Bathou Thansali', constructed at the total cost of approximate Rs. 300 lakhs, was initiated in 2012 under the leadership of Executive Member of BTC for Archaeology & Museum, PHE Lwmshrw Daimary as the President of the construction Committee. The BTC authority, meanwhile, has allotted a plot of 14 bighas of government land for the purpose. Mention may be made here that 'Bathou' is the ethnic religion of the Bodo or Kachari tribes and the followers of this religion offer their prayers in 'Bathou Mandir.' The name Ba means five and 'thou' means deep in Bodo language which reflects the five principles ie bar (air), orr (fire), ha (earth), dwi (water) and okhrang (ether) and these five principles were created by the chief deity 'Bathoubwrai' who is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent.

The 'Hirimba Bathou Thansali' will have a guest house, a museum, a library and a community dining hall. 'Joraphagla Thenthomali Kheraisali', a well decorated open stage has been dedicated in the name of 'Joraphagla' and 'Thenthomali' who are the exponent of the Bathou culture. Talking to The Sentinel on Friday, 2018 at 'Hirimba Bathou Thansali' Executive Member of BTC Lwmshrw Daimary informed that the main prayer hall of the mandir will accommodate 1000 devotees at a time for taking part in the community prayer while in the 'Bibah Bhavan' all followers of 'Bathou' religion will be able to solemnize their weddings. The entire complex has the facility of running water, synchronized sound system and uninterrupted power. "We have made provisions for illumination so that this mandir can be of the point of attraction for all section of the society," he added. The Archaeology and Museum department of BTC has already sanctioned an amount of Rs. 60 lakhs while Rajya Sabha Member Biswajit Daimary sanctioned an amount of Rs. 20 lakh. The Fishery department of the BTC has sanctioned an amount of Rs. 10 lakhs and Kalaigaon legislator Maheswar Boro has sanctioned Rs. 10 lakh. Significantly the remaining amount of Rs. 200 lakhs has generously been donated by the well-wishers and the community members from different places.

[h] Tambreswar Devalaya (Shiv Temple)

It is situated in Deoriyapara village under Khairabari Revenue Circle in Udalguri district, Assam. The Archaeological Department states that the Shri Shri Tamreshwar Temple dates back to the 8th - 10th century. The internal area of Shri Shri Tamreshwar Temple spans 36 bighas. It also includes a large pond covering 10 bighas of land. The temple sees thousands of devotees during the Shivratri Puja and Bol Bom festival. Devotees are increasing day by day as their wishes are believed to be fulfilled here. The Tambreshwar Shiva Temple is better known as the archaeological site of **Tamreswar Devalaya**, located in Khoirabari, Udalguri district. Its specialty is its historical significance as a 10th-11th century archaeological site with intricately carved stone relics of a destroyed Shiva temple complex. The site, which includes stone relics and a pond, is a protected archaeological monument and is believed to have been destroyed around 1897. The site attracts thousands of devotees, especially during festivals like Shivratri and Bol Bom, with a belief that wishes are fulfilled here.

[i] Bogamati

It is situated on the eastern side of Bornadi River, in Udalguri-Baksa district border. It is under Bornadi WLS of Dhansiri Forest Division, Udalguri district. It is now one of the latest hot spot of picnic in Assam. The crystal clean shallow water of Bornadi River with water recreation facilities like rafting, rock climbing etc is of great attraction to visitors. We can reach Bogamati by road from Guwahati via Baihata Chariali-Goreswar-Soagpur and from Udalguri – via Paneri-Dimakuchi-Suklai. The place of Bogamati is more than 70 kms from Guwahati city.

[j] Konglang Park:

It is one of the newly well equip developed Eco-Park near Dimakuchi under the district of Udalguri, Assam. The place of Kongland park is very beautiful where natural greenery with surroundings of hills view is available. It is 110 kms distance from the City of Guwahati. The tourist can come with Bus as well as by Train also. From the Tangla railway station, it will take 23kms by bus. There are many sports facilities such as swimming pools, Horse riding etc. It is a place of where a family can enjoy with their childrens basically in summer session. Kongland's state-of-the-art facilities are designed with comfort and enjoyment in mind. Splash into the water to beat the scorching summer heat

V. ECONOMIC IMPACTS ON LOCAL PEOPLE BY ECO-TOURISM INDUSTRY

Tourism industry can change the economic condition of any areas or people. Through the introducing tourist place the local people have been benefitted directly or indirectly. Local people of the potential tourist place get earn with the help of small and medium business. By opening hotels, providing games and other enjoyable items to the tourists. Besides these, local self or central and state governments bounds to develop the roads, waterways and airways if the tourist place has recommended and demanded by the national and foreign countries tourist. The local people of the respective tourist place can sell their locally product of commodities to the tourist which will increase the productive methods of the farmers as well as life style of them by employing young and energetic both men and women in different activities related to the tourism industries.

From the above study we have observed that the local people of the Udalguri district have earned income by opening the said business from the tourism industry.

VI. CONCLUSION

From the above discussions we have come to know that in BTC area lots of existing and potential tourist places have been identified. But one thing is that due to lack of proper campaign and initiatives by the government and semi-government the respective places are still not popularised. Before creation of BTC, in the said tourist places the outsiders were fear to come and visit due to insurgency and political clashes between the government and the militants' groups. Many tourist places were the shelter of the different insurgency groups. But after the creation of BTC and extension of it to Bodoland Territorial Region, the potential and existing tourist places is now become open to all as well as increasing the tourist both national and international than earlier. From the different prospects of tourist places in the BTR region many local people have been engaged in their small business by doing such as Tea shop, fruits shop, cloths shop etc. which impacts in their day-to-day livelihood. In this regard, we can say that the creation of peaceful environment is very essential to boost up the tourism industries of the above-mentioned study area which will increase employment and revenue generation.

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