



# Rising Stories<sup>TM</sup>

## In The East

WEST BENGAL | SIKKIM | NORTH EAST | ANDAMAN | BHUTAN



### DIRECTOR'S DESK



Dear Travel Partners,

May clearly reflects a decisive shift toward hill destinations like Darjeeling, Sikkim, and Meghalaya, where demand is strong, inventory is closing early, and pricing remains firm. The market is firmly leaning toward cooler regions.

At the same time, plains destinations such as Assam and Dooars are seeing softer traction, with leisure demand in Kolkata remaining subdued. This highlights a clear drop in preference for warmer regions.

Travel behavior has also shifted, with a strong preference for short, flexible trips of 2–5 nights, often booked last minute. Coastal destinations still see movement, but largely as weekend-driven getaways rather than planned holidays.

At the same time, emerging destinations like Kohima are gaining attention for more immersive and authentic experiences. With supply gradually evolving through better stays and offerings, the focus for the trade remains on agility, precision, and aligning with what the market is actively demanding.

With Best Regards,  
Amit Periwal  
Director

### DEMAND RADAR

#### → **Forward Booking Trend:**

- Very strong for hills & high-altitude circuits: *Darjeeling, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Bhutan.*
- Peak summer holidays driving early closures in premium inventory.

#### → **Short-Lead Movement:**

- Strong weekend demand from South Bengal: *Digha, Mandarmani, Sundarbans.*
- Quick 2N–3N getaways dominating decisions.

#### → **Steady Demand:**

- Cultural & niche circuits holding ground: *Bishnupur, Shantiniketan, Kohima.*

#### → **Underperforming:**

- Kolkata (leisure) remains soft.
- Andaman and Nicobar Islands seeing slower pickup vs hills.
- Transit stays in Siliguri and rural circuits continue to lag.

#### → **Cooling Segments:**

- Plains & low-altitude regions: *Assam, Dooars, South Bengal interiors.*
- Budget & non-AC inventory facing resistance.

#### → **Price & Supply:**

- Sharp rate escalation across hills (*Darjeeling, Gangtok, Meghalaya belt, Arunachal, Bhutan.*)
- Inventory tight in North Sikkim and premium categories.
- Coastal belt seeing weekend price spikes.

#### → **Last-Minute Trend:**

- Strong across segments.
- Preference firmly towards short, flexible itineraries (2N–5N).

#### → **Seasonal Insight:**

- Clear migration to cooler, high-altitude destinations
- Hills dominating; coast stable; plains decisively weaker.

# Destination Decode



## K o h i m a

Where Culture Breathes

### Why Sell This Now?

Capitalize on the rising demand for authentic, offbeat North-east experiences. Kohima offers a rare mix of tribal heritage, World War II history, and untouched natural landscapes making it highly appealing to travelers looking beyond mainstream hill stations. With growing interest in experiential travel, Kohima stands out as a culturally immersive destination.

### Optimized Routing Architectures

To protect your clients from transit exhaustion, here are three tested operational flows:

#### Flow 1 (4 Days – Kohima Focused)

<b>DAY 1</b>	Dimapur to Kohima. (70 kms / approx. 2 hrs)
<b>DAY 2</b>	Kohima Local Exploration. (War Cemetery, local markets, village visit)
<b>DAY 3</b>	Excursion to Dzukou Valley / Khonoma.
<b>DAY 4</b>	Kohima to Dimapur.



#### Flow 2 (6 Days – Kohima/Wildlife Extension)

<b>DAY 1</b>	Dimapur to Kohima.
<b>DAY 2/3</b>	Kohima Exploration.
<b>DAY 4</b>	Kohima to Kaziranga National Park. (220 kms / 5 hrs)
<b>DAY 5</b>	Kaziranga Safari.
<b>DAY 6</b>	Kaziranga to Guwahati.



#### Flow 3 (6 Days – Kohima/Cultural Extension)

<b>DAY 1</b>	Dimapur to Kohima.
<b>DAY 2/3</b>	Kohima Exploration.
<b>DAY 4</b>	Kohima to Jorhat.
<b>DAY 5</b>	Day trip to Majuli.
<b>DAY 6</b>	Jorhat Departure.



### The Inventory Snapshot:

#### Kohima (Boutique | Premium | Scenic Stays):

Niraamaya Retreats Aradura, Hotel Vivor, Hotel Polo Towers, Hotel De Oriental.

### Extensions:

- Kaziranga: Diphlu River Lodge, Borgos Resort, Infinity Resort.
- Jorhat: Thengal Manor, Banyan Grove.

### The Rookie Booking Mistake:

Selling Kohima only around the Hornbill Festival limits its true potential, as the destination offers rich cultural and trekking experiences throughout the year.

### Managing Reality:

Position Kohima War Cemetery as a key highlight rather than just a stop-over, promote immersive village experiences like Khonoma, and clearly communicate travel time, terrain, and permit requirements to set the right expectations.

### Yield Maximizer:

Plan travel between October to May for the best mix of pleasant weather, smooth accessibility, and overall experience quality.

### When to Lock Inventory (Pricing Insight):

Secure bookings at least 2 months in advance for the Hornbill Festival and peak season, while the post-festival window (Jan–Feb) offers better rates with fewer crowds.

### Client Matching:

Ideal for culture & heritage explorers, experience-driven travelers, trekkers, WWII-focused international tourists, and niche premium clients seeking offbeat, non-commercial destinations.

### The Anti-Persona:

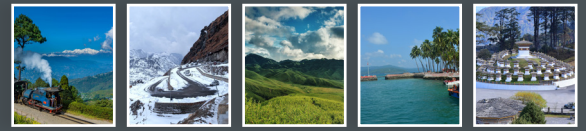
Not suited for travelers seeking luxury nightlife, shopping-heavy or fast-paced itineraries, polished tourist setups, or those uncomfortable with basic infrastructure—Kohima is raw, authentic, and slow.

### Critical Operational Alert:

Kohima is an experience-first destination with hilly travel, limited connectivity, and permit requirements (ILP), where experiences depend on culture, weather, and terrain—set clear expectations for a smooth journey.

*Kohima isn't just a destination—it's a story-driven journey into living culture and untouched landscapes, making it a strong high-value niche seller when positioned right.*

# Ground Intelligence



## Pelling Ropeway Now Open: Ride Above Sikkim's Scenic Paradise



The much-awaited Pelling Ropeway is now operational, offering a breathtaking 970-meter aerial journey from Pelling town to Sanghak Choeling. With 14 cabins accommodating up to 8 passengers each, this experience near the iconic Skywalk promises stunning Himalayan views—making it a must-add to your Sikkim itinerary.

## Singell Tea Bungalow: A Timeless Himalayan Retreat in the Heart of Tea Country



Perched at 4,500 ft in Kurseong, Singell Tea Bungalow is a 150-year-old heritage stay set within one of Darjeeling's oldest organic tea estates. Blending colonial charm with modern comfort, it offers immersive experiences—from tea tastings and plantation walks to serene nature trails—making it a perfect escape for travellers seeking tranquillity, history, and authentic Himalayan living.

## Tata Group to Launch Luxury Taj Resort in Meghalaya Near Umiam Lake



Indian Hotels Company Limited is investing ₹300–330 crore to build the Taj Umiam Resort & Spa near Shillong. Set to be the state's largest hospitality project, it will boost premium tourism and mark Meghalaya's first flagship Taj property.

## Taj Bengal's Elegant Transformation Continues Without Disrupting Guest Comfort



The Promenade Lounge in the lobby section at Taj Bengal is currently under renovation. All other areas of the hotel are fully operational, and there is no interruption to the regular guest movement or daily operations.

## Zone by The Park Debuts in Darjeeling with Smart, Stylish Stays



Zone by The Park Darjeeling marks its entry with a 70-room property, designed for modern comfort. Blending contemporary design with the charm of the hills, it offers a fresh hospitality option in Darjeeling.



### Travel Tips

- Explore destinations like Darjeeling, Sikkim, and Meghalaya during October to April for the best weather, clear views, and comfortable travel conditions.
- Plan permits and transport in advance, especially for places like Arunachal Pradesh and Bhutan, where entry rules and limited connectivity can affect your itinerary.

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+91 94340 49123  
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