



### DIRECTOR'S DESK

*Dear Travel Partners,*

August marks the beginning of one of the most important planning periods for the travel industry. While the monsoon continues across parts of East and Northeast India, enquiries for Durga Puja, winter holidays, MICE and experiential travel are steadily increasing, making this the right time to secure inventory for the upcoming season.

This edition's Demand Radar highlights a growing preference for authentic, nature-based and heritage experiences. Our featured destination, \*Sittong\*, reflects this shift, offering travellers an immersive Himalayan escape beyond the usual tourist circuit.

On the inbound front, enquiries remain subdued due to geopolitical uncertainty in the Middle East. However, as the situation stabilises, we remain optimistic about a gradual recovery in international travel.

Through Rising Stories of the East, we continue to share market insights that help you stay ahead of emerging travel trends and make informed business decisions. We hope this edition proves valuable as you prepare for the festive and winter travel season.

With Best Regards,  
Amit Periwal  
Director

### DEMAND RADAR

*(East & Northeast India & Andaman)*

#### ● Forward Booking Trend:

Advance enquiries for the October–December travel season are gaining momentum across Darjeeling, Sikkim, Bhutan, Northeast India, Kolkata, Sundarbans, Shantiniketan, Andaman and emerging destinations such as Sittong. Durga Puja, winter holidays, group departures, MICE and corporate travel are driving early bookings.

#### ● Demand Trend:

While the peak monsoon season continues to impact travel across parts of the Northeast, enquiries for the festive and winter season are gathering momentum. Travellers are showing growing interest in heritage experiences, tea tourism, river cruises, offbeat Himalayan destinations, Andaman island holidays and experiential travel, while MICE and corporate travel continue to support demand across the hills.

#### ● Price & Supply Dynamics:

Current shoulder-season availability remains comfortable across most destinations, offering attrac-

tive pricing and greater flexibility. However, premium inventory for Durga Puja, Christmas and New Year is already tightening across Darjeeling, Sikkim, Bhutan, Andaman and select boutique properties. Early booking is recommended.

#### ● Booking Behaviour:

Weekend getaways continue to generate steady movement from nearby markets, while booking windows are lengthening as travellers increasingly plan ahead for the festive and winter season.

#### ● Trade Insight:

August is a planning month rather than a peak travel month. Agents who secure inventory now will benefit from better availability, stronger commercial terms and greater flexibility before festive demand accelerates.

#### ● Market Outlook:

With festive travel, winter holidays, MICE, group travel, experiential tourism and the seasonal revival of Andaman expected to strengthen over the coming months, East & Northeast India and Andaman remain well positioned for a robust second half of the year.

# Destination Decode



## Sittong (Nature's Hidden Paradise in the Eastern Himalayas) The Experiential Learning Capital of the Eastern Himalayas



### Why Sell This Now?

Tap into the growing demand for experiential travel, nature-based escapes, wellness retreats, and meaningful outdoor experiences. Sittong offers a rare combination of mist-covered hills, tea gardens, forests, viewpoints, adventure activities, cultural interactions, and immersive camp experiences—making it an ideal alternative to crowded hill stations. With travelers increasingly seeking authentic, slow, and experience-driven holidays, Sittong is perfectly positioned as a refreshing Himalayan escape.



### Client Matching:

Ideal for school and college groups, families, nature lovers, photographers, trekking enthusiasts, corporate teams, wellness travelers, weekend explorers, and experience-driven travelers looking to reconnect with nature through meaningful outdoor activities.



### The Anti-Persona:

Not suited for travelers seeking luxury nightlife, shopping hubs, amusement parks, fast-paced itineraries, or polished urban infrastructure. Sittong is peaceful, nature-focused, and experience-driven—best enjoyed by travelers who appreciate outdoor activities, slow travel, fresh mountain air, and immersive surroundings.



### OPTIMIZED ROUTING ARCHITECTURES Sittong Nature & Experiential Escape

(2N/3D)

#### DAY 1



#### NJP to Sittong (75 kms / 3–3.5 hrs)

Scenic drive through the hills. Check-in and orientation. Evening camp activities, bonfire, music, and reflection session.

#### DAY 2



#### Full-Day Sittong Exploration

Morning hike and scrambling session – Jogihat Bridge – Mahal Diram Tea Garden – Shittong II View Point – Ahal-dara View Point – Evening musical session.

#### DAY 3



#### Sittong to NJP

Morning wellness session, breakfast, and departure for NJP.

*Sittong isn't just a destination—it is a gateway to immersive Himalayan experiences, where tea gardens, forests, viewpoints, adventure activities, cultural interactions, wellness sessions, and camp experiences come together to create meaningful and memorable travel. It is a high-value niche product for experiential, educational, corporate, wellness, and nature-based travel in North Bengal.*



### Critical Operational Alert:

Sittong is an experience-first nature destination where the itinerary revolves around outdoor activities, scenic exploration, moderate walking, hill weather, and experiential programs. Changing weather conditions can affect outdoor activities and travel flow. Proper expectation setting regarding comfortable clothing, suitable footwear, physical activity, and outdoor conditions is essential for a smooth guest experience.

### • The Inventory Snapshot:

#### Premium Nature Retreats:

Boutique Mountain Resorts | Eco Retreats

#### Mid-Range Stays:

Local Nature Resorts | Tea Garden Homestays | Hill View Cottages

### • The Rookie Booking Mistake:

Positioning Sittong as just another hill station or sightseeing destination instead of presenting it as an immersive experience combining nature, adventure, wellness, culture, outdoor learning, and meaningful human connections.

### • Managing Reality:

Highlight Sittong as an experience rather than a commercial hill station. Clearly communicate:

- Outdoor and nature-based activities.
- Moderate walking and hiking.
- Changing hill weather.
- Limited urban entertainment.
- The importance of comfortable clothing and suitable footwear.
- A slow and immersive travel experience.

### • Yield Maximizer:

Promote travel between October to April for pleasant weather, clearer Himalayan views, comfortable temperatures, and ideal conditions for outdoor activities, hiking, nature exploration, and experiential programs.

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

Secure inventory well in advance during winter holidays, festive seasons, school vacations, long weekends, and spring months when demand for hill destinations increases. Weekday departures generally offer better pricing, greater availability, and a quieter experience.

# Ground Intelligence



## Nathula Pass Trade to Resume After Six-Year Pause:

Cross-border trade through Sikkim's historic Nathula Pass is set to resume from 1 August 2026, bringing fresh momentum to the region's border economy and local trade opportunities.



## All IndiGo Flights Move to Guwahati's T2:

All IndiGo flights (6E) will operate from the New Terminal (T2) at Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport, Guwahati.



## Durga Puja 2026 Travel Demand Surges:

With strong enquiries for October departures, advance booking is highly recommended for hotels, transport, guides and Hooghly River cruises as festive-period availability remains limited.



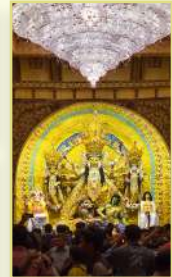
## Singtom Tea Resort Temporarily Closed for Renovation:

Singtom Tea Resort is currently closed for renovations and is expected to remain closed for the next couple of months before reopening.



## Experience the Season: Festivals & Events Ahead

- Ziro Music Festival 24th-27th Sep.
- Durga Puja 17th-21st Oct.
- Guns N' Roses will perform in Guwahati on 17th November 2026.
- Cherry Blossom dates 20th & 21st Nov.
- Sangai Festival 21st Nov 2026 - 30th Nov.
- Hornbill festival 1st-10th Dec 2026.



## HONORED BY MINISTRY OF TOURISM GOVT. OF INDIA



Best Domestic Tour Operator in the North East Region including Sikkim 2013 - 2014



Best Domestic Tour Operator in the North East Region including Sikkim 2014 - 2015



Best Adventure Tour Operator (Domestic) 2015 - 2016



Best Domestic Tour Operator Best of India Category II 2015 - 2016



Best Adventure Tour Operator Domestic 2017 - 2018



Best Tourist Transport Operator 2018 - 2019



Best Adventure Tour Operator 2018-2019



Best Domestic Tour Operator Promoting & Selling Tourism Product Category III 2018 - 2019



Best Domestic Tour Operator Domestic of North East Region 2018 - 2019

Offices at  
Kolkata | Siliguri | Darjeeling | Guwahati | Port Blair | Thimphu

+91 94340 49123

www.clubside.in

enquiry@clubside.in



## WE ARE PROUD TO BE ASSOCIATE WITH

