

REPORT ON WORKSHOP ON 'HERITAGE TOURISM AS A PROFESSIONAL CAREER'

Organised by:
Department of Archaeology
Cotton University, Guwahati

Date: 23rd May 2023 at 11.00 am
Venue: Conference Hall, MCB Building



**Workshop on
Heritage Tourism as a Professional Career**

Organised by:
Department of Archaeology
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Resource person:
Sri Jiban Kalita
Independent Researcher and Entrepreneur
Tourism and Cultural Heritage
Mornai, Goalpara



अप्रमत्तेन वेद्विष्यम्

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries. It is an important source of generating income and employment. As per the records of Directorate of Tourism, Govt. of Assam, in the year 2023, Assam records 575 per cent increase in tourist arrivals, which is a major boost to the tourism industry. Precisely to understand this developing trend and enlighten the students about the problems and prospects that the industry can offer, and its relationship with the discipline of archaeology, the department organized a workshop on 'Heritage Tourism as a Professional Career' on 23rd May 2023 at the Conference Hall, MCB building from 11 am onwards. The invited resource person was Shri Jiban Kalita, an independent researcher and entrepreneur in the tourism and cultural heritage sector from Mornoi in Goalpara, Assam.



Dr. Manjil Hazarika, HoD (i/c), Department of Archaeology welcoming the gathering

Ms. Jougathi Basumatary, Assistant Professor in the department conducted the proceedings of the workshop and introduced the speaker to the audience. Dr. Manjil Hazarika, HoD (i/c) formally welcomed everyone and gave the inaugural lecture. He pointed out how the importance of the knowledge of the discipline like history, archaeology and anthropology can help someone to develop a career in tourism and become an entrepreneur. This was followed by felicitation of the guest by Dr. Manjil Hazarika and Dr. Ritika Sahu.

Shri Jiban Kalita started off giving an introduction on the tourism as an industry, by discussing about the various aspects as well as different kinds of tourism. Briefly discussing tourism, he moved on to talk about the tourism in the context of Assam. He informed the audience how earlier only certain places like Sivasagar, Guwahati, Kaziranga and Majuli were presented as tourist destination. He talked about how the tourism sector was not able to capture and expand the market beyond these places. But from around 2000's the scenario has somewhat changed. The speaker pointed out that there has been a 500 percentage increase in tourist coming to Assam in 2023.



Ms. Jougathi Basumatary introducing the speaker Shri Jiban Kalita



Felicitation of Shri Jiban Kalita by Dr. Manjil Hazarika and Dr. Ritika Sahu



Jiban Kalita addressing an engrossed audience during his talk

With this brief introduction, he went on down the memory lane and talked about how he started his personal journey 20 years back. New concepts like heritage tourism and most importantly archaeo-tourism came to be developed in Assam. But, why only certain sites? How can it be expanded? Why only religious tourism? Why not archaeo-tourism? How can old traditions be preserved? All these questions were discussed in the sector and slowly a new perspective came within the tourism industry. These are to be addressed by providing economic support. The speaker then went on to discuss about heritage tourism and the importance of the understanding of the subject of archaeology in developing

a career. One may register for a course for 45 days offered by the Directorate of Tourism, Govt. of Assam and get a license. Further, he pointed out that as the government jobs are limited one can think of venturing as an entrepreneur and can also create jobs for others in that process. The speaker then spoke on the importance of field-work and good research work before venturing out. Another important factor is to go to the places and have a good relationship with the local people.

After touching upon these issues within tourism, the speaker went on to discuss about heritage tourism in details. He discussed about the broadness in defining the term and how it does not have a fixed definition. In the state of Rajasthan, both archaeology and culture comes in the ambit of heritage tourism, while in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh it only includes archaeology and archaeological sites. By giving this overview, he went on to talk about his own methodology in defining and practicing heritage tourism. He emphasized on the importance of marketing and packaging the profession. In making itinerary for different tourist packages he includes: 1) Mythology, History and Local kingdom, 2) Religious Tourism, 3) Traditional culture and dance, 4) Village tour and ethnic tour, 5) Social system, 6) Cottage industry, 7) Local beliefs, 8) Traditional local drinks, 9) Food, and 10) Agriculture. He tried to explain all these by giving examples from the field. The itinerary is to be prepared by taking the preference of the tourist. Also, it differs for domestic and foreign tourists. He advised the students to use social media for their advantage in venturing in this field.

After a detailed discussion on the prospects and problems of heritage tourism he talked about the awareness program the tour operators undertake. He pointed out as someone who is into heritage tourism; one also has the responsibility to preserve the heritage for the future. Only then the heritage tourism will prosper. As a responsible tourist guide, he informed how they visit the departments of history and anthropology in colleges and also offer free guide to school.

“Sustainable and responsible tourism is the need of the hour, in order to prosper”, this message was loud and clear throughout his lecture.

This was followed by a question-answer session in which the students took immense interest and also posed important questions to the speaker. They were immensely benefited by the lecture, and got a new dimension to think of a career beyond academics, and yet using their knowledge to the best of their ability.

The workshop concluded on a very positive note. The speaker assured of his assistance and guidance to the students in case anyone wants to venture in the field. This was a very welcoming gesture and a boost to the morale of the students. The vote of thanks was offered by Dr. Ritika Sahu.



Dr. Ritika Sahu, offering the vote of thanks



Group photo after the workshop

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