

Manipur

TOURIST MAP
Not to Scale





Manipur



Manipur

Little Paradise

The erstwhile princely state of Manipur is a jewel of India. It is the power house of sports in India. A land with its bounteous vistas of untrammeled natural beauty and ancient traditions. An oval valley surrounded by seven blue hills, it is the home of colorful communities. The serenity of these pristine and isolated environs has permeated the lifestyle of these people with a lavish hand, allowing them to live for centuries in harmony.

The wondrous balance of the flora and fauna abound in its environs. Almost 70 per cent of the land is under forest cover. The stunning combination of wet forests,



Young leaves of cycas

temperate forests and pine forests sustain a host of rare and endemic flora and fauna. Manipur is home to about 500 varieties of orchids of which 472 have been identified. Some of the world's rarest orchids spring from the fertile soil and hang on the trees. Denizens of the forest include the rare hoolock gibbon, spotted linshang (python) and slow lorises amongst other rare fauna. Indigenous to Manipur's rich natural heritage is the Sangai – (State Animal) the dancing deer, a rare animal that is facing extinction, can be found on the unique vegetal floating biomass on the side of Loktak Lake. Manipur's avifaunal wealth includes the Burmese peafowl, Blyth's Tragopan, Mrs Hume's barbacked pheasant and four different species of hornbills. Nongyeen is the state bird of Manipur. Manipur is reputed for its tradition of the arts and crafts. Manipur's handloom industry is also geared for the export market. It is also the largest cottage industry in the state. Each home has a loom. There's a saying that every woman of Manipur is a born weaver. The traditional skill of weaving is not only a status symbol for its womenfolk but also an indispensable aspect of the socio-economic parameters of the state. Weaving is a time-honoured occupation, fine-tuned to an art form with its intricate designs in the dazzling range of sarees, sarongs, shawls and bedspreads. Other excellent buys are the lifan, phak, phiruk, traditional Manipuri dolls and artefacts carved from soft exotic timbers.

Manipur is known as the land of Radha and Krishna, Manipur, in the best of traditions, has gifted to India's classical dance repertoire her lyrical RasLeela dance that re-enacts the love story of Radha and Krishna. The Lai Haraoba (Spring festival) is also celebrated with the Manipuri's graceful movements in all dance forms. The vibrant expressive tribal folk dances performed with traditionally aesthetic movements, are unique in their respective styles.



*A dancer of
Manipuri Ras Leela*



*Traditional Food
Spread*



Khangkhui Caves

Recommended Tourist Circuits

1. Imphal – Maibam Lokpa Ching (India Peace Memorial)- Moirang – INA Memorial Complex – Sendra Tourist Complex - Loktak Lake - Keibul Lamjao National Park - Adventure Tourism Complex, Lamdan - SaduChiru Waterfall - Imphal
2. Imphal-Ukhrul- Khangkhui Cave - Shiroi Hills - Imphal
3. Imphal –Khongjom (Khongjom War Memorial Complex) - Tengnoupal- Moreh-Imphal
4. Imphal – Kangla - Andro Cultural Complex - Kaina - Imphal
5. Imphal - Shree Shree Govindajee Temple - Paona International Market - State Museum – Zoological Garden - Imphal War Cemeteries - Khongampat Orchiderium - Imphal.

ACCESS

Imphal the capital is connected by air with Delhi, Guwahati and Kolkata. The nearest railhead is Dimapur. Imphal is connected by road with Kohima, Guwahati, Silchar and Shillong.

TEMPERATURE

Summer: 13°C to 29°C and Winter 4°C to 25°C

BEST TIME TO VISIT

October to March.

ENTRY FORMALITIES

All domestic tourists intending to visit Manipur by road via Dimapur-Kohima require an Inner Line Permit to pass through Nagaland. These are issued by the Liaison Officers of the Government of Nagaland at New Delhi, Kolkata, Shillong and the Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil), Dimapur and the Deputy Commissioner, Imphal can also issue permits to tourists travelling from Imphal to Kohima and Dimapur in Nagaland.



TOURIST SPOTS

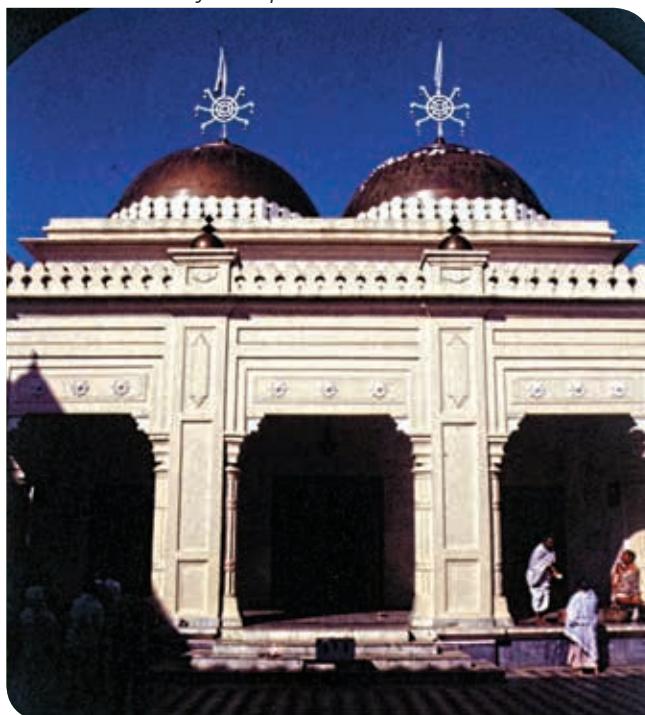
Imphal

Manipur's capital, Imphal, a bustling mini-metropolis has harmonised itself seamlessly into its beautiful natural environment. The pretty township located at a height of 790m is the very heart of the official, commercial and cultural activity of the state. Visitors can enjoy some of its special attractions before moving out of town into its great outdoors to savour Manipuri culture in all its richness and variety.

Shree Shree Govindajee Temple

Imphal's historic Vaishnavite centre, **Shree Shree Govindajee Temple** is located close to the Kangla Royal Palace, home to Manipur's royals since the reign of King Pakhangba (33 AD). This interesting structure with its twin domes has a paved courtyard and a great assembly

Shree Shree Govindajee Temple



Manipur



Rath Yatra

hall where devotees congregate to participate in various devotional activities. On either side of the presiding deity are the shrines of Krishna and Balaram and Jagannath. The RasLeela held here are exceptional. The Holi and Rath Yatra festivals here draw huge gatherings of devotees. Other temples within a radius of 5km are the Mahabalee Temple, Narasimha Temple, Mani Mandir (ISKON) and Sanamahee Temple..

Kangla

Kangla Palace reflects the centre of Manipur's power base till 1891. This historic palace is a reminder of its rulers and the importance they signified for the people of Manipur.

Khwairamband Bazaar: IMA Market

Imphal's **Khwairamband Bazaar or IMA Market** is quite an unusual market -almost 3000 Imas or mothers, man the stalls in this unique bazaar. Now developed with modern amenities, but preserving the sanctuaries old traditions, this market is a must visit of any tourists.

IMA Market



State Museum

Located near the Polo Ground, the **State Museum** has on display a fine collection of articles related to Manipur's tribal culture along with portraits of its former rulers. The cache of arms and ammunitions, relics, costumes and historical documents here is of particular interest.

War Cemeteries

Managed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, are the beautifully kept two **War Cemeteries** which commemorate the British and Indian soldiers who died during the Second World War. Each little stone markers and bronze plaques record the sacrifice of these martyrs.



Commonwealth War Cemetery

Khonghampat Orchidarium

Just 10 km from Imphal, offers visitors an excellent opportunity to see many species of orchids in its natural habitat. The best time to see these blooms is March-April when they are at their very best.

Zoological Gardens

Go to see the rare but incredibly graceful Sangai (brow antlered deer) at the **Zoological Gardens**. The zoo (6 km) lies on the verdant base of the pine growing hillocks at Iroisemba on the Imphal-Kangchup Road. Entry fee: ₹ 10/-.



Dendrobium chrysotoxum

Singda Tourist Home

A beautiful picnic spot with basic amenities, 16 km from Imphal, offers lovely view of the Manipur valley from its lofty perch at a height of 921m. Singda Dam attracts large tourists.

Sadu Chiru Waterfalls

A popular picnic destination **Sadu Chiru Waterfalls** is the site of a torrential waterfalls. It is located in the Koubra Range, 22km from Imphal. Basic amenities are available for tourists.

Manipur





Khongjom War Memorial

Khongjom

36 km from Imphal, is famed for the martyrdom of Manipur's Major General Paona Brajabashi in 1891. Khongjom Day is celebrated on 23rd April every year. Modern amenities for tourists have been introduced at Khongjom recently.

Tengnoupal

One can also enjoy grandstand views of the Manipur valley from Tengnoupal (69 km), the highest point on the Imphal-Moreh circuit along National Highway -39.

Moirang

Located 45 km from Imphal, used to be the focal point of Manipur's early Meitei culture. The town has an ancient temple of the pre-Hindu deity Lord Thangjing. Every May, men and women, dressed in colourful traditional costumes sing and dance during the Lai Haraoba ritual dance festival to honour the deity. Moirang played an important role during India's freedom struggle. The



Loktak Lake

flag of the Indian National Army (INA) was first raised at Moirang on 14th April, 1944. At the INA Museum one can see a host of letters, photographs and badges of ranks and other memorabilia of the martyrs of the INA who fought under the dynamic leadership of Netajee Subhash Chandra Bose against the Allies.

Loktak Lake and Sendra Tourist Complex

One of the most enchanting and biggest freshwater lakes in the North East is Manipur's Loktak Lake, just 45 km from Imphal. The Sendra Tourist Complex offers dazzling views of the lake, its rich plant and avian life and the intriguing floating weed, shallow bowl-like biomass (Phumdis) and the fishermen who live on them harvesting water chestnuts. Situated in the middle of the lake, the tourist home has a café and alpine huts. On the southern part of the lake is the world's only floating National Park, the Keibul Lamjao National Park, the unique habitat of the rare Sangai, the brow antlered deer or the 'dancing deer'. The entire lake complex is a wildlife enthusiast's dream.



Vishnu temple, Bishnupur

Bishnupur

The showpiece of Bishnupur (25 km from Imphal) is its brick Vishnu Temple (15th century). The unusually small bricks of the temple show Chinese influence (possibly during the reign of King Kiyamba) according to some sources. Famous also for its stoneware.

Ukhrul

Manipur's popular and highest hill station is Ukhrul (83 km from Imphal). It is famous for those lovely Shiroy lilies, endemic to the state and which grow in abundance at a height of 8,500 ft in the Shiroy Hills. One can enjoy their blooms in the months of May and June. The nearby Lime Caves of Khangkhui are worth visiting.



Potter at work



Tribal woman and child

Moreh

A busy border town Moreh lies along the Indo-Myanmar border, 110km from Imphal. It's the perfect destination for the shopping enthusiast. Indo-Burmese (Myanmar) cross-cultural influences from ancient times are richly evident in the lovely environs of Tamu, located just 5km away.



Manipur Mt. Isii (Adventure Tourism Complex)

Senapati

Yangkhullen is said to be the 8th Wonders of the World till recently, Willong's Megaliths, naked wrestling of MaramKhulen, wonderful hot spot for Adventure Ecotourism Dzuko Valley and highest point of Manipur Mt. Isii are worth a taste for adventure tourists.

Tamenglong

The district headquarters of Tamenglong, this pretty township offers access to deep gorges, mysterious caves, playful waterfalls and gorgeous varieties of orchids. Star attractions Tharon Cave, Zeilad Lake, Barak waterfall, Kitccha hill and Buning Meadow: a circuit and destination worth for (10-day) Eco Adventure Tourist to taste the wilderness of the nature.

Cymbidium tigrinum orchid



Manipur

Fairs and Festivals



Pung Cholam dance

Manipur has a calendar—full of festivities marking important events in the social, spiritual and agricultural world of its many communities.

BASANTA PURNIMA AND KARTIKA PURNIMA

The Govindajee Temple is an important venue for the performances of Manipur's famous RasLeela, particularly on the night of **Basanta Purnima and Kartika Purnima**. This performance here spearheads other performances in the city. Manipur's famous, RasLeela, a classical dance form is based on the legendary love of Radha-Krishna and the devotion of the Gopis to Lord Krishna.

LUI-NGAI NI

This collective festival of the Nagas is an annual feature on their calendar. Observed on 15th February, **Lui-Ngai Ni** is the seed sowing festival and is marked by feasting, social gatherings and dance and song.

LAI HARAoba

The spring festival of Lai Haraoba (April/May), is a harmonious blend of stylised and ritualistic dances for peace and prosperity performed in honour of the local sylvan deities in the Manipur Valley. The one at Moirang attracts huge crowds.



Kang (Rath Yatra)

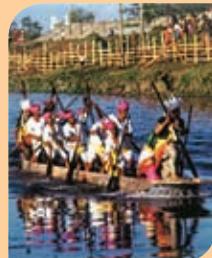
KANG (RATH YATRA)

The Ratha Yatra or Car Festival, organised by Shree Shree Govindajee Temple Board at Palace Compound, one of the greatest festivals for the Hindu community, is held in June/July in the Imphal Valley. Spread over 10 days, the festivities are dedicated to the Lord Jagannath, who leaves his temple in a Ratha pulled by many devotees who vie for the honour of doing this service for the lord. The Bijoy Govinda, ISKON and many other temples also organise the Rath Yatra spread over the Valley.

HEIKRU HIDONGBA

The high point of the annual celebrations of **Heikru Hidongba** (Hitongba), a colourful boat race held at Bijoy Govinda annually.

*Heikru Hidongba
(Boat Race)*



YAOSHANG

Manipur's biggest festival Yaoshang is celebrated for five days commencing from the full-moon day of the lunar month of Phalgun (Feb-March). The festivities ring with the music of Thabal Chongba, a folk dance linked with the festival.

KUT

Observed annually on the 1st of November. **Kut** is the autumn festival of the various tribes of the Kuki-Chin-Mizo groups residing in Manipur, a festival for thanks giving to the Lord for bountiful harvest.



Handloom shop

Shopping

Manipur's main shopping attractions are the traditional Manipuri handwoven textiles. The Manipuri dance doll with its graceful stances is a lovely memento to buy for family and friends. A visit to the famous IMA/ Khwairamband bazaar, where 3000 imas or mothers sell all varieties of goods, is also a great tourist attraction.

Popular Shopping Outlets

Manipur Handloom & Handicraft Development Corporation, Paona Bazaar, Imphal

Handloom House, Manipur State Handloom Weavers' Cooperative Society Ltd, Paona Bazaar, Imphal

Eastern Handlooms & Handicrafts, Paona Baazar, Imphal

Ima Market, Khwairamband Bazaar, Imphal

Ningthibee Collections, Nagamapal, Imphal

Crafts Centre, Sagolband New Cachar Road, Imphal

Emoinu Co-operative Emporium, Uripok, Imphal

Adventure Sports

Nodal agencies have been set up to promote different adventure sports as well as to impart training. The indigenous martial arts and games of Manipur have become world-renowned and are an important feature of the tourist experience in this lovely state. Adventure sports sites are located across the state: Loktak Lake for watersports; Barak river for rafting; Mount Isii and Dzüko Valley (famous for its endemic Dzüko lily — *lillium chirrangadæ*) and the Siroy Hills (famed for the rare Siroy Lily — *lillium mackliniae*) for trekking and mountaineering; Tharon and Khangkhui caves for caving adventures; Koirengi Old Airfield and Chingnungkok hillock at Lamlai for parasailing and paragliding. The Adventure Tourism Complex (250 hectares) managed by the Manipur Mountaineering Institute of MMTA, located at Lamdan, near Loktak Hydro-electric Power Project, 45 km from Imphal is the first of its kind in North East India.

River Rafting

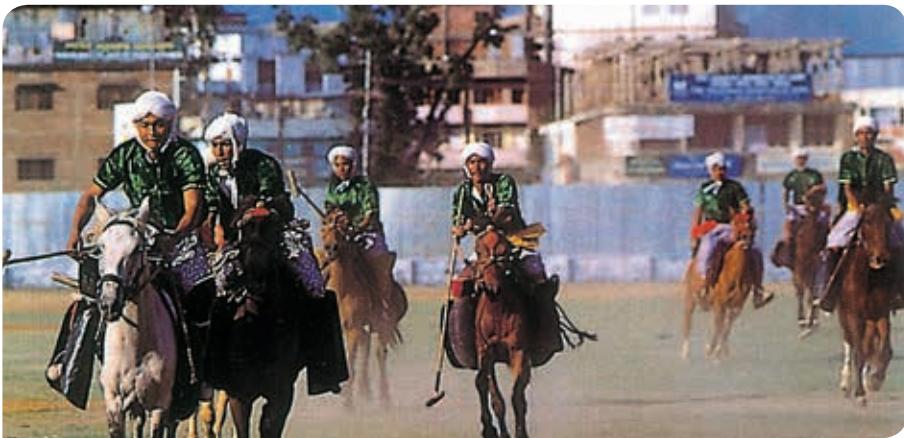


Rock Climbing



Spider net

Indigenous Games and Martial Arts



Sagol Kangjei (polo)

Sagol Kangjei

The Manipuri **Sagol Kangjei** has been adopted by the international community as 'Polo' and played worldwide. Tracing its history back to the mythological age when the game was played by the gods, the lively game of Sagol Kangjei can be seen as the mother of modern Polo. The game is played with 7 players on each side mounted on unique small sturdy ponies. Players use a cane stick with an angled wooden striking head and the ball (14" circumference) is made of bamboo root. The British learned the game in the 19th century from Manipur and after refining it, played and introduced it as Polo to the world. Both the indigenous version (Pana-style) and the international styles of Polo are popular in Manipur.

Khong Kangjei

The Manipuri version of hockey **Khong Kangjei** is played with 7 players on each side. Each player is equipped with a 4ft long bamboo stick and the ball they fight over too is made of bamboo root. The game, vigorous and volatile, is an admixture of hockey, football, rugby and wrestling.

Mukna

The last day of the Lai Haraoba festival is punctuated with **Mukna**, the Manipuri version of wrestling. The opponents are matched by physical built and weight, but have no other rules in general, free for all. The game once enjoyed royal patronage.

Yubi-Lakpi

The lively game of **Yubi-Lakpi** (akin to modern-day rugby) is played with an oil-smeared coconut and has its roots in Hindu mythology. It is considered a re-enactment of the celestial snatching of the pot of nectar after the Samudra Manthan. It is played with 7 players on either side and to score a goal the player has to pass the goal line with his greased coconut.

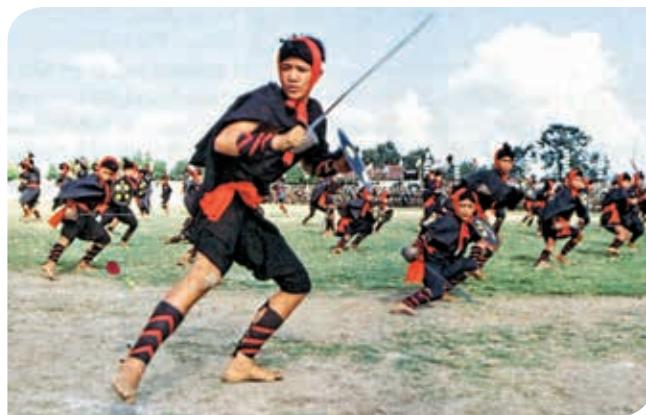
Kang (game)

During the period between the Manipuri New Year Day and the Rath Yatra festivities, contestants meet on the mud floor of a mandap to play Manipur's famous indoor game, the Kang. This game of skill played exclusively during this period has 7 players on each side and involves hitting fixed targets with a flat, oblong disc (Kang) made of ivory or lac. A game of mixed doubles allows women to participate as well. Popular belief is that if the game is played beyond its given limit, evil spirits enter the mind of both players and spectators.

Thang-Ta and Sarit-Sarak

Thang-Ta and Sarit-Sarak both centuries-old ritualistic martial arts of Manipur. A great deal of dexterity and practice are needed to perform the elaborate and precise rituals of this battlecraft, which involves spears, swords and shields. Rules have to be abided strictly. In ancient times every Manipuri would, like to be a warrior even in the times of peace and to own these skills to remain fit in the eventuality of war. Both women and children are proficient in these martial arts today.

Martial Art



Manipur

Imphal STD Code: 0385

Getting there

Manipur is well connected by air, rail and road. Within the state bus and taxis offer facilitation from the capital Imphal to all districts. To explore Imphal autos and rickshaws are also a good alternative.

BY AIR

Imphal Airport is connected to Kolkata and New Delhi and other airports Guwahati, Silchar, Aizawl, Dimapur and Agartala by Air India, Jetlite, Indigo, and Kingfisher with 65 flights per week. Imphal Airport has night landing facilities.

BY RAIL

Nearest Railhead: Dimapur in Nagaland linked by NH 39 to Imphal 215 km away. NH 53 links Imphal with railhead at Jiribam 225 km in the west. Imphal is likely to be connected by rail by 2014.

BY ROAD

Imphal is connected by road to all the important cities in the North East. Private deluxe coaches ply daily from Imphal to Guwahati and Dimapur thus facilitating linkages on three national highways — NH 39 via Nagaland, NH 53 via Silchar and NH 150 via Mizoram, crisscrossing the state and connecting all districts. The Sourashtra-Silchar Super Highway Project is being extended to Moreh, located on Manipur's border with Myanmar. With the proposed Moreh to Meh Sot (Thailand) highway Manipur is poised to become the **Gateway to South-East Asia.**

Accommodation

Conveniently located in the heart of Imphal, there are several private hotels offering conveniences and services suited for leisure and business travellers.

HOTEL IMPHAL

North AOC Imphal

Tel: 0385-2320339, 2320346

Mobile: 09862516776

E-mail: hotelimphal@yahoo.co.in

Facilities: Single/Double executive suites and special suites

Rooms Tariff: ₹1200- 4000

THE CLASSIC HOTEL (3 STAR)

North AOC Imphal

Tel: 2443967/3969

E-mail: sales@theclassichotel.in; reservations@theclassichotels.in

Facilities: Rooms: 59 Luxury Rooms (AC/Non-AC) **Tariff:** ₹900-5500

HOTEL NEW AIRLINES

Thangal Bazaar, MG Avenue, Imphal

Tel: 2440593 Mobile: 09862342968

Facilities: 13 luxury rooms (AC/Non- AC) **Tariff:** ₹480-2160

HOTEL NIRMALA

M.G Avenue, Imphal **Tel:** 2458904/9014

Facilities: 48 Luxury Rooms (AC/Non-AC) **Tariff:** ₹300-1700

HOTEL ANAND CONTINENTAL

Thangal Bazaar, Imphal

Tel: 2453422/433 **Facilities:** 23 Luxury Rooms (AC/Non-AC) **Tariff:** ₹350-750

HOTEL KRISHTINA

Polo Ground Road, Paona Bazaar

Imphal **Tel:** 2445255, 2242093

Facilities: 13 luxury Rooms
(AC/Non-AC) **Tariff:** ₹480-840

HOTEL WHITE PALACE

M G Avenue, Imphal **Tel:** 2452322

HOTEL PRINCE

Thangal Bazaar, Imphal **Tel:** 2453136

HOTEL PINTU

North AOC, Imphal **Tel:** 2454172

HOTEL TAMPHA

North AOC, Imphal **Tel:** 2451486

HOTEL AVENUE

M G Avenue, Imphal **Tel:** 2241173

Information Offices

Tourist Information Centre

Directorate of Tourism, Imphal

Tel: 0385-2454603, 2450802

Reception Counter

Directorate of Tourism and Imphal
Airport

Indiatourism Imphal

Jail Road, Imphal

Tel: 03852 - 221131

Manipur Information Centre

C-7 Baba Kharak Singh Marg

New Delhi-110001

Tel: 011-23746359

Fax: 23746361

Manipur Bhavan

2 Sardar Patel Marg, Chanakyapuri

New Delhi- 110021

Tel: 011- 26879846-50, 26873311

Fax: 26871803

Bir Tikendrajit House

Bir Tikendrajit Road, Chanakyapuri

New Delhi- 110021

Tel: 011- 26113150, 26870098

Manipur Bhavan

26, Rowland Road, Kolkata

Tel: 033-24747939, 24742453

Reception Tel: 24758075, 24758163

Manipur Bhavan

Rajgarh Road, Guwahati

Tel: 0361-2526707 **Fax:** 0361-2451968

For Bookings, Guide Services and Other Information

Contact: Tourist Officer, Directorate
of Tourism, Govt. of Manipur, Hotel
Imphal Complex, Imphal

Tel: 2321285, 2423344

E-mail: manipurtourism@gmail.com

ROAD DISTANCES FROM

IMPHAL

Kohima	-	145 km
Agartala	-	535 km
Guwahati	-	495 km (via Dimapur)
Aizawl	-	374 km
Kaziranga	-	346 km
Shillong	-	595 km (via Guwahati)
Itanagar	-	413 km