

JULY 2022



ADVANCING
NORTH EAST

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ENTREPRENEUR OF THE MONTH

HIMANGSHU BARUAH

Founder, Finderbridge

An exclusive interview with **Mr. Himangshu Baruah**, Founder of Finderbridge Tourism Pvt. Ltd.

FINDERBRIDGE is a destination management organization based in the North East India, carrying a vision towards the development of the eight states of the North East and connecting them with the rest of the country and across the borders with a motive to unleash the highest tourism potential of this region and to make it an international travel destination for the global audience. Finderbridge was launched on 18th April 2017 and it became the first travel organization from the North East to be officially recognized as a "Ashoka Youth Venture" for the first year. Finderbridge was selected to be presented at the 3rd Youth-To-Youth International Summit 2017 held in Dubai. It was one among the three startups from India to get selected and to represent at the Ashoka ChangemakerXChange summit 2017 held in the Philippines. Finderbridge received the nomination of "Best Travel Start-up of the Year" at Entrepreneur Awards 2019 By Entrepreneur India, a part of Entrepreneur Media USA and Winner of "Best Travel Startup of North-East India" at Global Icon Awards 2022.

NORTH EAST INDIA

★ checklist ★

- ♥ Arunachal: Mechuka, Dong Valley, Anini
- ♥ Assam: Namphake, Mt. Tumjang
- ♥ Manipur: Ukhrul
- ♥ Meghalaya: Kudengrim, West Khasi Hills
- ♥ Mizoram: Champhai
- ♥ Nagaland: Longwa, Mt. Kapamodzu
- ♥ Sikkim: Lashar Valley
- ♥ Tripura: Unakoti, Jampui Hills

What

CHALLENGES & EFFECT OF COVID-19

When I first started FinderBridge, the task of rebuilding the team and finding the right people to add importance to the team was stressful. Besides that, the future of travel web services revolves around data and building tools, so coordinating this information and displaying appropriate versions of it to people traveling was potentially fascinating. After the pandemic, I had to start over with new normal perspectives, which was also a different adventure for me to initiate the process.

Negative Effects: There was a complete zero activity once the pandemic was declared. There was no revenue or any source of monetary flow in the organization. After three months, Finderbridge had to evacuate commercial space it once had. One of our core members also lost her life during the pandemic. 2020 was a devastating year from all ends.

Positive Effects: The world turned online or virtual during the pandemic, and Finderbridge grabbed this opportunity to launch the First-ever North- East's Online Tourism Academy, which aims to become the hub of tourism studies and research in India. The Academy offers various online courses, workshops, internships, reskilling development efforts, and apprenticeship sessions for the youths, students, homestay owners, and tourism enthusiasts. Later, during the pandemic, I realized that starting over to create far better product would be profitable, so I modified and restructured the organization's business models to expand its horizons.

Why

WHY NE INDIA ? WHY NE TOURISM ?

I always wanted to bring a change or make an impact for our North- East India so that the world recognizes us than it was before and I can give the help North- East India to give the recognition it deserves in the field of tourism.

While studying for my bachelor of computer science in Pondicherry, I noticed how little people on the mainland knew about the North-East. What shocked me was the ignorance most citizens highlighted when asked about the North-East. This ignorance harmed my confidence as a person belonging from North-East and also called into question my identity. I came from the same land and country as them, however, these people knew very little about the place I come from. The idea of turning this ignorance into curiosity and making mainlanders think "what is North- East?" is what prompted me to enter the tourism industry. As a consequence, we chose the name "Finder-bridge": FINDERBRIDGE evolved from two words: "finder," which implies "one who finds," and "bridge," indicating "one who connects." This name expresses our deep desire to explore and explore the authentic colors and flavours of the North East, and also to facilitate others doing so. We want to become the link between the North East and the rest of the world, so that people all around the world can see the true and rare beauty of this region through our eyes.

I believe that tourism is the only field in which I can have an impact or create a change in my homeland because it is directly connected to the community, nature, the living ecosystem, and so forth.

contd.

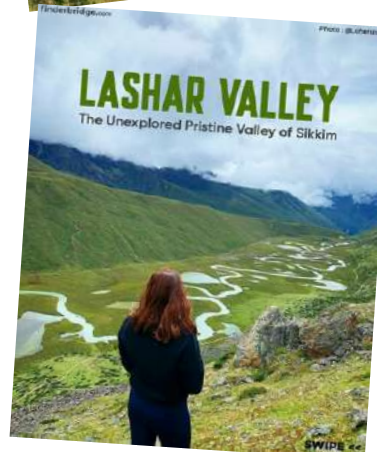
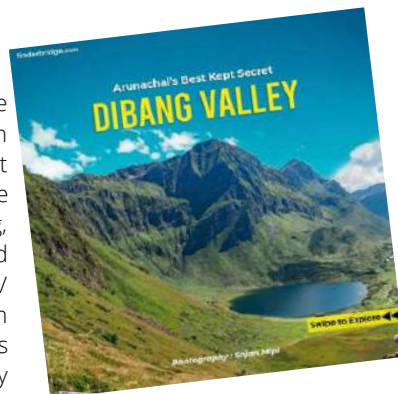
How

CONTRIBUTION TO TOURISM & IMPACT ON COMMUNITY

We believe that by creating various tourism initiative and programmes such as International Conference on North- East India Tourism (ICNIT) and North- East Photography Awards, Finderbridge had created a wide awareness of the region by promoting, marketing, advertising North East India's destination. We had introduced many national and international tourists/ travelers to the beauty of this land and delivering an ethnic and authentic experience to which overall adds up to contributing in North- East India Tourism Industry directly and indirectly. We believe, to some extent we had contributed to bridging the existing gaps between the North- East and the rest of the country.

The Community Based Tourism Impact: Finderbridge working with homestays only for a fair amount of over 90% of the tourists so far. It is a viable means of generating income i.e. employment recreation methodologies for the home stay owners while giving a very delightful experience in the lap of greenery in rural India and the comforting sounds of nature to the traveler. It also opens door to the growth of small-scale business owners of the smaller region highlighting the beautiful work of craft by the locals and cuisines that linger in the taste buds which is an essential and significant impact to the community.

The Education Impact: By founding the First-ever North-East's Online Tourism Academy that aims at becoming the hub of tourism studies and research in India. North East Tourism Academy had provide exclusive online courses, workshops, internships, reskilling development programs, training programs to several youths, students, home stay owners, tourism enthusiasts from all over the world. The education sessions mainly focuses on concepts, theories and practices, principles, areas of interest, innovations, business models related to the tourism sector and taking appropriate steps towards reinventing and reviving tourism industry post-pandemic related to the tourism sector.



Who

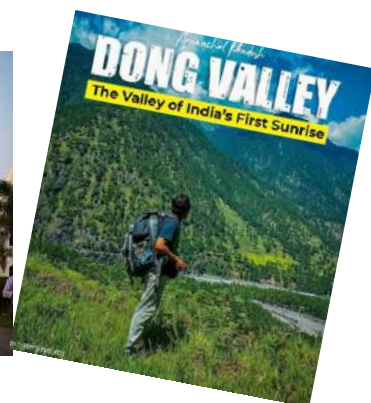
POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS & SERVICES OFFERED

Finderbridge caters to travelers, youth, and everyone who loves to travel and explore. We offer a wide range of services to suit the desires of the various customers such as engaging tours and immersive experiences including soft to challenging trekking and adventurous tours, leisure, and luxury to experiential culture, tribal tours, wildlife safaris, and nature tours across well known and offbeat destinations. We are also involved with tourism events and festivals happening in North- East India. In short words, we offer anything and everything related to North- East India Tourism.

Where

ENVISIONING FUTURE OF THE INDUSTRY

We at Finderbridge envision a future of travel that is safe, secure, and seamless. Something that supports millions of people's livelihoods and contributes to long-term economic growth. As tourism transitions to a new normal, our collaborative effort with the global firm seeks to create a one-of-a-kind opportunity for travelers to recognize destinations around the world that have adopted tourist industry restarting and rebuilding initiatives. The long-term ambition for Finderbridge is to work on the development of North- East India Tourism to increase the area's tourist revenue potential and make it a global destination for a worldwide reach. We also aspire to expand internationally and arrange cultural exchanges between India and the ASEAN countries in the future to help highlight the North- East.



Follow Finderbridge on:



LEARN FROM THE EXPERT PITCH PERFECT

By Srihant Sastri, Chairman, IIMCIP (Indian Institute of Management- Calcutta Innovation Park)

PITCH is basically delivering a business plan verbally. A pitch typically takes the form of an entrepreneur or group of entrepreneurs presenting or describing their ideas to prospective investors.

GET THE BASICS RIGHT

You're running a business and not a project !!

Why are you in business ?

What kind of a business do you wish to develop ?

Why is the funder/investor giving you money ?

ASK YOURSELF

What problem are you trying to solve ?

How is your startup solving this problem ?

Have you demonstrated that you can successfully deliver value to relevant stakeholder ?

How large is this opportunity ?

What kind of growth engine have you built to scale this solution ?

How do you make money on each individual order ? What do margins look like ?

Who else competes in this space ?

How are you different + better than them ?

Have you built barriers that will give you clear path be in the market ?

What is next phase of growth ? Your milestones ?

What hypotheses will get proven in this phase ?

How much money will it take to get there ?

What is the team that'll make this happen ?

Shareholding + Capital Scenario ? How will that change ?

MUSHROOM INCUBATION CENTER

DBT- under Dept. of Biotechnology, Bodoland University,
Kokrajhar, Assam
Established on 4th October 2012

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

Technology Incubation Centre for entrepreneurship development on mushroom culture and farming. This initiative has happened in different projects since 2012:

- DBT-Gol Institutional Biotech Hub since 2012
- GoA sponsored Mushroom Spawn Unit (2015-2017)
- DBT-Govt. of India Technology Incubation Centre on Mushroom (2017-2020)
- DBT-Kisan Hub, Bodoland University (2022 onwards)

FUNDING AGENCY

- Govt. of India: Dept of Biotechnology, Technology Incubation Center for Entrepreneurship Development on Mushroom Culture & Farming, Biotech Kisan Hub
- Govt of Assam: Dept. of Agriculture (BTR) & District Industries and Commerce Center (DICC)

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Farmers
- Rural Entrepreneurs
- UG, PG and Research Scholars
- SHGs, NGOs, Society
- Any curious mind having desire to produce Vit. D and Folic Acid enrich low cost food product



RATIONALE

There was a need to grow Single Cell Protein as a practical for PG students of Biotechnology. This is how it started. Kokrajhar is near to Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, West Bengal and rest of North eastern states and is well-connected with train and bus service which can facilitate mushroom transportation from Kokrajhar to any distance in India within 24 hrs owing to its short shelf life.

Last 10 years effort has reached to the level that Mushroom was selected as One District One Product (ODOP) for Kokrajhar.

OBJECTIVES

- To train farmers on various mushrooms and transform them to entrepreneurs by series of hand holding and mentoring
- To train farmers on fortified mushroom value added products
- To train farmers on mushroom spawn preparation
- To train farmers on production of nutraceuticals
- To help farmers forming mushroom cooperative, FPOs etc and make a platform to bring producers, consumers and financial institution together along with buyer so that a better market is discovered
- To do translational research
- To help students UG, PG, Scholars from all discipline to appreciate earn while you learn concept
- To help farmers with eMarketing platform
- To integrate mushroom process with other allied branches to appreciate zero waste output technology
- Capacity development of rural farmers and entrepreneurs

contd.

ACTIVITIES TAKEN UP

- Trained 5112 trainees/ farmers on 20 species of Mushroom since 2012 on basic, advance and super mushroom
- Trained farmers on value added products
- Trained farmers on spawn preparation Produced mushroom spawn to the 1.8 tons annually
- Conducted various translational research leading to M.Phil and Ph.D on various aspects of R & D with mushrooms
- Helped an entrepreneur to make ePortal named AxomBazar.com where the other farmers shall find a place to sell their products
- Helped mushrooming in 23 districts of Assam.
- Made Mushroom growing pictorial manual in multilanguage for farmers (in regional languages)
- Made android App name TIC DBT for eMarketing
- Introduced Mushroom Helpline No. with WhatsApp facility
- Conducted the 1st Bodoland Mushroom Mela in collaboration with Dept. of Agriculture, BTR

FACILITIES & SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Training facilities of Basic Mushroom
- Semi Industrial set up for value added products of mushroom
- Integrated concept for integration with Vermicompost, Gobar Gas, Hydroponics, tissue culture
- Translational Research facility for Mushroom researchers
- Spawn lab facility, Tissue culture facility & Green House facility
- Cropping Hall for three classes of mushroom
- Communication cell for mushroom farmers in remote areas
- Dedicated room form growth of super mushroom
- eMarketing Portal AxomBazar.com
- Farmers fellowship of Rs.10,000 per month

FUTURE PLANS

- Making FPOs, farmers cooperative.
- Encouraging starts ups in mushrooming
- Introducing exotic mushroom
- Developing holistic marketing plan for revolutionising mushroom industry and transforming Kokrajhar as a mushroom hub. This mission is taken owing to its strategic location of Kokrajhar.
- Making 100,000 employment in next 10 years
- On the verge of launching Bodoland Mushroom Mission





6 STARTUPS THAT ENTERED INDIA'S UNICORN CLUB

PhysicsWallah EDUCATION

Founder Alakh Pandey is an engineering dropout with plans of democratizing education

Hasura WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Tanmai Gopal & Rajoshi Ghosh are cutting down the time & expertise to build web applications

ElasticRun ONLINE DELIVERY

S Deshmukh, S Bansal & S Nigam are uberising logistics to enable businesses reach kirana stores in the hinterland

Purp1le BEAUTY

Founders Manish Taneja, Rahul Dash & Suyash Katyayani are all IIT engineers and left their jobs to build a beauty brand

Meesho E-COMMERCE

IIT-D Grads Vidit Aatrey and Sanjeev Barnwal are building a single ecosystem to help small businesses succeed online

Livspace INTERIOR DESIGNING

Anuj Srivastava & Ramakant Sharma are building an omnichannel home interior and renovation platform



EIGHT NORTHEASTERN CULTIVATORS WIN AWARDS FOR 'LARGE CARDAMOM PRODUCTIVITY'

30th June 2022

During the 'International Buyer Seller Meet & Spices Conclave for Northeastern Region', organized today by the Spices Board of India in Guwahati, agripreneurs from all across the NER joined the conclave. In recognition of the endeavour, eight cultivators from the northeastern regions today attained 'Large Cardamom Productivity Award' for the years 2019-20 and 2020-21, which was presented by the Assam Chief Minister – Himanta Biswa Sarma and Arunachal Pradesh Minister – Er. Tage Taki.

ALEMOON NESSA HAS WON 3 AWARDS IN THE NATIONAL MSME AWARDS 2022

24th June 2022

A proud moment for Bongaigaon, Miss Alemoon Nessa won 3 awards (1st Prize: Manufacturing Micro Enterprise in Women Category, 1st Prize: Micro Manufacturing in NER Category, 2nd Prize: Manufacturing Entrepreneurship) in the National MSME Awards 2022 for her outstanding contribution to the growth and development of MSME sector in Assam.

MEGHALAYA BAGS 'BEST PERFORMER' AWARD IN NATIONAL STARTUP RANKINGS

4th July 2022

As many as 24 states and seven union territories took part in the exercise which consisted of seven reform areas and 26 action points. Meghalaya was among three states that won the 'Best Performer' award in the National Startup Rankings-2021, alongside Gujarat and Karnataka.

The Union commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal declared the results of the third edition of the ranking system of states based on their support to start-up ecosystem in a ceremony held in Delhi.

BOOK THAT BOOK

Level Up: Rise Above the Hidden Forces Holding Your Business Back :

An inspiring and revelatory guide to starting and scaling a small business, from powerhouse duo Stacey Abrams and Lara Hodgson
Publisher: Portfolio
Pages: 240
Price: ₹2,065

See, Solve, Scale - How anyone can turn an Unsolved Problem into a Breakthrough Success :

In See, Solve, Scale, Danny Warshaw, the creator of the Entrepreneurial Process course and founding Executive Director of Brown's Center for Entrepreneurship, shares the same set of tools with aspiring entrepreneurs around the world.
Publisher: St. Martin's Press
Pages: 320
Price: ₹2,303

The Founders - The story of Paypal and the entrepreneurs who shaped Silicon Valley :

The engrossing back stories of the PayPal Mafia - a bunch of ideal-crazed geeks who redefined the internet is a must read.
Publisher: Simon & Schuster
Pages: 496 pages
Price: ₹1,856

NEW AGE CAREER CONCLAVE

SEASON 1

From 22nd July to 24th July, 2022
3 Days - 9 Themes
Curated for the Students of North East

First of a kind
for the
students of North East

VIRTUAL CAREER CONCLAVE

Get opportunity to interact
with industry experts across
diverse new age sectors

3

DAYS

9

THEMES

22nd
JULY

Computer Science,
AI, Data Science,
Cybersecurity, Ethical
Hacking
Robotics, Automation,
Engineering, Medical
Sciences

23rd
JULY

Physical Science & Life
Science
Content Creator,
Youtuber, Influencer, UI/UX
Design, Product Design,
Fashion Design, Interior
Design

24th
JULY

Mass
Communication,
Journalism, Blogging
Sports & Fitness,
Wellness, Finance,
Trade &
Commerce

REGISTER NOW

<https://www.advancingnortheast.in/career-conclave/>

Scan the QR





ATMANIRBHAR HASTSHILPKAR SCHEME

LOAN FOR ARTISANS

NORTH EASTERN DEVELOPMENT
FINANCE CORPORATION

WWW.NEDFI.COM/LOAN-FOR-ARTISANS/



GET LOAN UPTO 1 LAKH

KEY AREAS



Cane



Water Hyacinth



Muga



Silk



Banana Leaf



Weaving



Handloom



Jewellery



Wooden
Art-ware

OVERVIEW

Development of artisans of the North Eastern Region by providing financial assistance in the form of term loan for income generating activities of handloom/handicraft sector for setting up/expansion/modernisation/working capital and other activities related to the sector

WHO CAN AVAIL ?

- Registered/unregistered artisan/Individual
- Having valid qualification or practicing any art of form
- No existing loan from any other Bank/Financial Institution

Rate of Interest

6 % P.A

Repayment

24 months

Nature of Assistance

Short Term Loan

Upfront Fee

0.5% of the loan

NO DETAILED PROJECT REPORT IS REQUIRED



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