

Domestic tourist arrivals on the rise in Sikkim

Domestic tourist inflow into Sikkim is on the rise so far this year, but there has been a drop in foreign tourists visiting the state.

According to tourism department's records, as many as 27,138 domestic tourists arrived in Sikkim in January 2009. This is 5,623 more than the number of tourists who visited the state last year in January. Similarly, in February, 32,038 domestic tourists visited the northeastern state, 7,883 more than the corresponding period in 2008.

The numbers are good and what is encouraging for the tourism sector is that even 2008 was a good year. As many as 44,275, 38,415 and 32,090 domestic tourist arrivals respectively were recorded in the last three months of 2008. In 2007, 38,695, 34,143 and 29,676 domestic tourists visited the state in October, November and December respectively.

According to available records, the arrival of international tourists has, however, seen a drop so far this year. In January and February 2009, only 696 and 1,053 international tourist arrivals were recorded. Last year the numbers for these two months were 910 and 1,106 respectively.

Sikkim, however, witnessed an increase in international tourists inflow in the overall winter tourist season running from October 2008 to February 2009. During this period, 9,173 foreign travellers came to Sikkim. In the same period in the previous season the figure was marginally lower at 8,811.

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