

Majuli as a heritage site

Gitanjali Goswami

bhabisuta@gmail.com

Mousumi Sarma

mousumisarma7075@gmail.com

Majuli, renowned as one of the world's largest river islands is a conglomeration of Vaishnavite religion, natural beauty, art and craft, ethnic culture and traditions which need to be explored and showcased to the world. The Sattras (Vaishnava monasteries) and their rich heritage and cultures have given Majuli the status and pride of being the "Cultural Capital of Assam". Today people have shifted from traditional ways of touring in the form of going to hill stations, historical places, etc. to more adventurous and unexplored destinations. Adding to the other attractions of Northeast India, Majuli stands out as a jewel in the crown with its total package of natural beauty, religious monasteries, eco-tourism, etc. In this paper, an attempt has been made to present the uniqueness of Majuli's Sattras, its different congregational prayer services, a distinct dance form called Sattriya and an about to be an extinct art form- mask making as a potential tool to put Majuli in the tourist map of India and the world. Efforts have also been put to study the potential of the tourism industry in Majuli, which houses of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. But Majuli, as it is nestled deep in the lap of the mighty river the Brahmaputra is shrinking due to the annual flood havocs created by the river. Therefore, we must protect and preserve the natural and cultural heritage of this unique island. This lush green, pristine and pollution-free island is also in the tentative list of UNESCO'S World Heritage Site.

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