

India launches Vistadome trains in Bengal, Assam

A Monitor Report

Date: 16 September, 2021



Jalpaiguri : The long-awaited tourist train with a Vistadome coach has commenced its journey on August 28 through the lush green forests and tea gardens of Dooars in north Bengal.

On August 26, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) said it would introduce Vistadome tourist special train services in two popular routes, Guwahati-New Haflong in Assam and New Jalpaiguri-Alipurduar Junction in West Bengal from August 28.

The train between New Jalpaiguri (NJP) and Alipurduar Junction through Dooars has already become a hit among tourists and curious locals with all seats booked for the following weekend.

The scenic route passes through the foot of the Darjeeling Himalayas at Sivok, crossing the Teesta river, the tea gardens of Bagrakot, Oodlabari and Dalgaon to name a few and the dense forests at Chalsa, Madarihat and Raja Bhat Khawa.

NFR general manager Anshul Gupta said the special trains will run on the two routes considering the immense tourism potential in the sector.

The New Jalpaiguri- Alipurduar Junction Vistadome train will initially run three days a week - Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The train will depart from New Jalpaiguri at 7:20 am and reach Alipurduar Junction at 1 pm covering a distance of 169 km through the Dooars Hill region of north Bengal.

During the return journey, the train will leave Alipurduar Junction at 2 pm and

reach New Jalpaiguri at 7 pm. The train will stop at Siliguri Junction, Sevok, New Mal Junction, Chalsa, Madarihat, Hasimara and Raja Bhat Khawa stations.

The special Vistadome train service between Guwahati and New Haflong will initially run two days a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, with stops at Manderdisa and Maibong stations.

The train will depart from Guwahati at 6:35 am and reach New Haflong at 11:55 am, covering a distance of 269 kms through the North Cachar Hill region. During the return journey, the train will leave New Haflong at 5 pm to reach Guwahati at 10:45 pm.

The tourist train has a Vistadome coach, two air-conditioned chair cars and two non-a/c chair cars, apart from a luggage car and a power coach.

The Vistadome coaches have large glass windows and glass roofs to provide a 360-degree view of the open sky, mountains, tunnels, bridges, hills and lush green forests to the tourists. It also has observation lounges for the purpose of site seeing, an NFR official said.

The rotational seats of the coach are designed to provide added comfort to the passengers, the official added.

The Vistadome coach in the New Jalpaiguri-Alipurduar train with a 44-seat capacity will have a fare of Rs 770, the a/c chair cars will cost between Rs 300 and 400 per seat and a non-a/c seat will cost only Rs 85.