



Media Release - Naga Homestay

Monday 1 July 2019

Nagaland's first homestay website launches today, www.nagahomestay.com

- Homestay website gives local Nagas access to livelihood through tourism opportunities
- Naga owned and operated website solves local issues international companies cannot
- Naga Homestay engages community through training and workshops

On Monday 1 July, Naga Homestay (www.nagahomestay.com), Nagaland's first homestay website is launching. It's vision of creating a means for every Naga to generate a livelihood through sharing their cultural and natural heritage is ambitious in the light of recent reports that Nagaland has the highest unemployment rate in India, as published in The Indian Express last week.

Tourism is a great opportunity to help solve Nagaland's unemployment issue and homestay hosting provides an easy and simple way to earn extra cash from a spare room and meet people from all over the world.

"Naga Homestay is a return to our traditional concept of Usomia. Centuries ago we developed a unique system of where every Naga family would have a host family in another village. We called this homestay host family Usomia. In today's world this same concept of Usomia homestay host family can create employment and help villagers use their homes to generate income." says **Visier Sanyü, President, Overseas Naga Association and Initiator of Healing Garden.**

"Naga Homestay, created by young Nagas who care for the proper growth of their people, will connect our villages to the wider world. Both sides will benefit from it." said **Niketü Iralu, Naga Elder and a prominent Peace Activist**, endorsing the new venture.

"Despite a growing tourism industry we found that many locals are locked out of this homestay opportunity due inaccessibility to customers and technical difficulties, so we came together to solve these issues." says **Kevisato Sanyü, founder of Naga Homestay**. For him the frustration of everyday Nagas being locked out the growing tourism industry and share economy was personally highlighted when he visited his cousin early this year.

"She told me that she was setting up her house as a homestay for Hornbill Festival tourists." Kevisato explains. "I thought this was a fantastic opportunity until I found out that some of the



operators where she was getting her customers from were taking up to 50% of her nightly income”.

In a bid to support his cousin, Kevisato attempted to set her up on international vacation rental websites that would connect her directly to travellers and skip the middleman.

“I could not believe how difficult the process was.” he recalls. “First of all, the website had issues with her ID card, then they would not accept her bank account and requested a third party payout system such as Payoneer. Finally, the SMS one-time-password they issued her only lasted one hour but due to the bad network reception in her locality, it had already expired by the time it reached her two hours later. After four days of trying and trying again, it became clear that it was not technically possible for her to register.”

Frustrated but not defeated Kevisato set out to build a website that solved the barrier local Nagas face that big international companies do not understand. The Naga Homestay website accepts local forms of ID, local bank accounts and does not issue one-time-passwords. Furthermore, their website will also list homestays across multiple platforms such as Airbnb and Booking.com, connecting hosts to a global network of travellers looking for a place to stay while visiting Nagaland.

In partnership with Entrepreneurs Associates, they have set up a support network to enable every Naga to list their homestay. They offer host trainings, toolkits and will even list and manage homestays for hosts who do not have access to a computer. Listing is completely free and Naga Homestay is currently offering ₹1,000 registration bonus for new hosts.

“Just because some people do not have access to a computer doesn’t mean they have to miss out.” says **Shiroi Lily Shaiza, Corporate Manager at Entrepreneurs Associates**. “We want to help facilitate this is a great opportunity for our community.” she continues.

“Many Nagas have only been looking at opportunities on the outside for too long. Naga Homestay brings opportunities to earn right to our doorstep. We must make the best use of it.” says **Neichüte Doulo, CEO, Entrepreneurs Associates**

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For further information on Naga Homestay visit:

- <https://www.nagahomestay.com/about/>
- <https://www.nagahomestay.com/responsible-travel/>

Bio:

Kevisato Sanyū began his career in sustainability with The Wilderness Society in 2010. He initially worked on nature conservation campaigning for areas such as the Kimberley in Western Australian and the Tarkine in Tasmania, Australia. He later found interest electoral campaigning and took a role as an Organiser during the 2014 Victorian state election and the 2016 Australian Federal election.

His forward thinking nature led him to return to studies to undertake a Master of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Swinburne University.

An avid problem solver and innovative thinker he now works with at RMIT University, Australia's largest university, developing degrees for the next generation of students.