

New forest range for tortoise sanctuary on banks of Ganga soon

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Prayagraj: The forest department will create a new range for the Tortoise sanctuary, which will come on the banks of Ganga in Kothari village of Uruva area of Meja. "A proposal for the same has been prepared and will be sent to the government soon following which a team of officials and other supporting staff would be deployed at the sanctuary for its development", said district forest officer (DFO), Mahavir Kaujalgi.

The new proposed forest range office will be built on the banks of Ganga in village Kothari of Uruva area of the Meja block of trans-Yamuna areas of the district. Apart from one ranger, eight forest inspectors, 16 constables, 12 other staff will also be deployed for the sanctuary.

Earlier, a Gazette notification was issued for the sanctuary covering 30 km of the catchment area of river Ganga and surrounding coastal areas spreading in 76 villages of Prayagraj, Mirzapur and Bhadohi. Earlier, the sanctuary was located in Varanasi and after being shifted to a new location, tortoises were released in this sanctuary. During last one year, about 6,000 turtles, big and small, have been released in the sanctuary. Besides, the area is also known for conserving Dolphins too.

A team of scientists from the Wildlife Institute of India (WWI) had visited this sanctuary earlier this week and they have suggested establishing six security posts and 15 watch towers on the banks of the tortoise sanctuary. They were also informed about making this sanctuary into a forest range by the forest department officials and that the proposal for the same will be sent to the state government.

One of the senior scientists of the WWI team, SK Gupta, had also suggested the protection of turtle eggs, for which a proposal will also be prepared. Actually, turtles lay eggs outside the water on the banks of the river. In such a situation, their protection is a serious matter. Those places have been identified and the forest department

is also preparing a security blueprint for special monitoring of these eggs, which is a vital component in increasing the population of turtles in the sanctuary and in river Ganga. Tortoises have been released in the sanctuary and their conservation too has started, he added.

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The forest department is considering issuing notices to residential colonies in the Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary. Three colonies were found in the Ravali Road and Barrage Road areas, violating regulations. The colonies were built on private land with the approval of the revenue department. The department is investigating the matter and stated that the nature of the land cannot be changed in the sanctuary area. The UP government plans to establish eco-sensitive zones for promoting tourism.[106169329](#)

A first for Haryana: Sanctuary for cows to be set up by 2024 end
The Haryana government plans to address the issue of stray cows by establishing the state's first cow sanctuary on panchayat land. Two potential locations for the sanctuary have been identified: a 100-acre area in Nuhs Hassanpur village and another parcel in Farrukhnagar. The sanctuary will feature separate enclosures for desi and cross-bred cows, a pasture zone, an interpretation centre, and a veterinary hospital. The project, a collaboration between the animal husbandry department, Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon, and Nuh district administration, is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.[106107235](#)

UP to have more wildlife, forest guards
The state cabinet in Lucknow approved an increase in the number of forest guards and wildlife guards. The posts of forest guards will be increased from 2,918 to 3,647, while the posts of wildlife guards will be increased from 259 to 266. In addition, the cabinet eliminated the need for grade four staff to meet physical standards in order to be promoted as forest guards and wildlife guards. Instead of grade pay, their salary will now be determined by the pay matrix.[106140489](#)