

Tourists slipping into sites despite curbs: Forest dept

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Pune: Tourists are taking detours to reach “prohibited” picnic spots in deep forests in Tamhini ghat and exposing themselves to risks, bypassing the forest department’s banners put up to restrict entry.

Swapnil Dhawade, a 38-year-old former Army man from the Bhosari area of Pimpri Chinchwad, had jumped into a small waterfall on the ‘Plus Valley Trek’ route on Saturday. He was swept away by the strong currents of water.

The forest department last week issued a circular banning the entry of tourists to ‘Plus Valley Trek’ till September 30. “We have noticed that some tourists are taking alternative routes to reach

tourist points located inside the Tamhini forest. We have already put up a circular prohibiting entry to several points. It was also mentioned that those who violate the order will face action under relevant acts,” deputy conservator of forests Tushar Chavan told TOI.

Earlier in June, two other people had died in incidents at ‘Milky Bar’ waterfall on the ‘Plus Valley Trek’ route.

Chavan said the forest department was using social media to make appeals to tourists to avoid going to prohibited areas inside the forest. He said the Plus Valley Trek, Kundalika Valley and Devkund Waterfall Trek areas were risky during monsoon.

The forest department has banned entry of tourists to seven points (Kondhawal, Chondicha, Nhanicha, Subedar, Ghongal Ghat Nala and Shidi Ghat falls) in Bhimashankar sanctuary between July 1 and Sept 30. Officials also appealed to devotees going to Bhimashankar temple to not enter the prohibited areas in the forest.

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Wildfire breaks out in forest near Athens Firefighters combat Mount Parnitha blaze amid windy conditions. No homes threatened. Greece adapts to escalating fire danger. 2007 fire devastated Mount Parnitha's tree-rich reserve.111367154

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