



Interpretation centre: Gujarat woods to arrive at the capital's doorstep

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AHMEDABAD: “Macbeth shall never vanquished be until Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill Shall come against him” — a prophecy from three witches warns King Macbeth in Shakespeare’s tragic masterpiece. It means Macbeth will not lose until the trees from Birnam Wood approach his castle on Dunsinane Hill. However, for Gujarat’s capital Gandhinagar, the arrival of woods at its doorstep signals the opportunity of a soiree in the lap of nature, forests and wildlife —a certain win for visitors.

The Gujarat forest department is setting up a stand-alone forest and wildlife interpretation centre spread across a 1km-long stretch between Forestry Research Foundation and Van Chetna Kendra on J Road opposite Akshardham temple . It will offer 4D experience of Gujarat’s forests and wildlife. The upcoming interpretation centre will be one of the largest such facilities in the country.

The centre will provide an educative experience into different forest types, eco-systems, wildlife, flora and fauna diversity and landscape diversity of Gujarat forests.

It will feature two tunnels with 3D and 4D experience. Visitors will be able to actually feel winter, summer and monsoon in the two tunnels of 15-20 meters diameter with LCD walls. This will be a continuous journey of about one hour. Visitors will also be able to experience how Gujarat’s forests such as Barda in Gir, Jassore in Ambaji, or Ratanmahal and Jambughoda forests feel in the mornings, afternoons and at nights. The centre will have walkways and cycle tracks.

“The proposed centre will be a virtual and real life experience. It will present Gujarat’s natural forest and wildlife heritage at one place.

There are as many as 30 forest interpretation centres in the state but all are located in either sanctuaries or in wildlife parks. This interpretation centre will bring the state’s forest and wildlife to people’s doorstep,” a forest department official said.

“The centre aims to introduce and educate starting from school kids to researchers pursuing their PhD. It will attract local people and also foreign visitors who don't have time to visit the actual jungles. Once introduced at the interpretation centre, they would definitely visit the real jungles in the state,” the official added.

The official said that the centre will be developed at an approximate cost of Rs 50 crore and the project will be completed within the next three years. “It will be an attraction of international standards,” the official said.

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