

Promotion of forest tourism a priority: Pathania

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Forest Minister Rakesh Pathania today said the protection of forests and promotion of forest tourism would be his priority as this would boost the economy and add to the revenue of the state exchequer.

He said this during his visit here today. He said forests in the state had a huge potential which needed to be tapped.

He said the protection of forests and wildlife would help in enhancing the flora and fauna in the state.

He said the state had a rich forest cover and the department was continuously working to increase it.

He said the department would make a coffee table book on the best forest destinations that would include forest huts, inspection huts, rest houses, nature parks and virgin destinations to explore western Himalayas.

The Forest Minister, who also held the charge of the Youth Sports and Services Department, said the new sports policy would be framed in two months. He said he would ask government to encourage sportspersons by giving them extra marks for participation in state and national-level tournaments. He said he would plan to organise a talent hunt programme to identify sports potential at the school level.

While interacting with forest authorities here, he said that the first duty of every forester was protection of forests. He said any encroachment on forest land should be dealt with strictly.

MLA Narender Thakur MLA; Pardeep Thakur, Director, Forest Corporation; Anil Joshi, Chief Conservatory; Arji Sen Thakur, Superintendent of Police; LC bandana, DFO; Rahul Rahane, DFO, Wildlife; RK Dogra, DFO, Dehra; CL Thakur, SDM; and Puran Chand, incharge, District Sports Office; were among those present.

Earlier, Pathania visited Sameerpur village to meet former Chief Minister Prem Kumar Dhumal. He said the visit was to seek blessings of senior leaders of the party. He said he met Shanta Kumar yesterday and would visit national capital to meet National President JP Nadda and other senior leaders. He said that he would also meet union minister for forest and environment to appraise him of the programmes planned for enhancing the forest cover in the state.

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