

Rs1.5 cr eco-tourism project proposed in Bangana range

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A proposal for an eco-tourism project estimated at Rs 1.5 crore under the Bangana forest range has been forwarded to the Union Ministry of Environment and Forest for approval and financial sanction. Under the project, adventure sports, nature tourism and religious tourism would be amalgamated. The project is expected to boost the economy of the locals.

According to Bangana Forest Range Officer Sandeep Kumar, this is one of the nine eco-tourism projects approved by the state government for Central funding. The project includes providing tourist access to historical monuments like Solasinghi forts atop the higher reaches of the Solasinghi mountain range and bringing them close to natural dense forests besides providing a variety of adventure sports activities like paragliding from the Solasinghi range, water sports in the Gobind Sagar reservoir and trekking on the nature tracks.

The Forest Department has proposed to set up bamboo huts and erect pre-fabricated civil structures near the Solasinghi forts, near the Asri Cave and at an island in the Gobind Sagar reservoir near Kodhra village where tourists can stay for the night. The temporary habitations will also have restaurant facility. While the Asri cave is not fully explored, according to a local tale, a shepherd once ventured into the cave along with his herd and after walking for some days, he happened to reach Haridwar on the other side.

A three-km trekking route from Beri to Dolu up to Solasinghi forts giving a view of natural forest overlooking Gobind Sagar reservoir has been proposed as is a selfie spot near the fort

for selfie lovers. Besides, three cycling tracks have also been identified. These are Bangana to Beri, Dolu to Kodhra via Kot and Kodhra to Sinhana.

As per the proposal, fishing families will be linked with the Tourism Development Society which will be set up under the project. They will be provided power boats and water scooters on subsidized rates for use by tourists. The serene Sinhana village along the banks of the Gobind Sagar reservoir has been proposed to be developed as a rural tourism hub with home stay facilities for tourists. Here, the tourists can get hands on experience of traditional agricultural practices and eat home cooked authentic cuisine while staying with the locals.

During a visit of Kutlehar segment last week, Forest Minister Rakesh Pathania had announced that nine eco-tourism projects have been proposed in the first phase by the state government for which funding was expected shortly. Local MLA and Rural Development Minister Virender Kanwar said a similar project under the Ramgarh Forest Range in Kutlehar would be sent for approval in the second phase.

Access to historical monuments

The project includes providing tourist access to historical monuments like Solasinghi forts atop the higher reaches of the Solasinghi mountain range amid dense forests

The project proposes to provide a variety of adventure sports activities like paragliding from the Solasinghi range, water sports in the Gobind Sagar reservoir and trekking.

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