

Proposed iconic Bhaleydungga Skywalk to cost Rs. 1200 cr: Pre-feasibility study

KLERDAPSON

GANGTOK, August 4: An international consultancy firm has in its pre-feasibility report pegged the estimated cost for the proposed iconic Skywalk at Bhaleydungga peak in North Sikkim as an integrated tourism destination at around Rs. 1200 crores.

The lump sum cost involves construction of three finger shaped glass skywalks connected through a tunnel in the rocky spur of Bhaleydungga cliff standing at elevation of 10,102 feet.

With Chief Minister Pawar Channing since 2007 giving a keen interest in the realization of this iconic tourism project of a skywalk on top a mountain cliff on the lines of the Grand Canyon Skywalk, the Sikkim Government had engaged the services of Grant Thornton, an international consultancy firm to draw out a feasibility study on the project.

The company representa-



tives in India today made a presentation on the pre-feasibility on the Bhaleydungga Skywalk project here at Chintan Bhevan in presence of the

Chief Minister, Cabinet ministers, MLAs and departmental heads.

During its presentation, the consultancy in its preliminary estimates, put the

total cost of the full scale integrated tourism centre of Bhaleydungga Skywalk to Rs. 1200 crores. The tentative cost of the skywalk is Rs. 500 crore with

the rest of the amount to be spent on created allied supporting infrastructures like cable car, tourist complex, accommodation centre, nature and spiritual complex

and other tourism amenities in the cliff, Yangang and Dhapar areas.

"Creation of skywalk in isolation may not be sufficient

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Proposed iconic Bhaleydung...

for long term sustainability. There is a need to develop the skywalk as an integrated tourist destination", the company representative said adding that the world class technology will be infused in the proposed skywalk so that the Bhaleydung Skywalk cannot be replicated elsewhere in the world thereby maintaining its singularity.

The firm had already visited Sikkim seven times in the past one and half years and have already submitted the interim and draft report after detailed conversations with the government officials.

"This will be an iconic project and will develop Sikkim as a unique tourism destination", the presenters said.

As per the project structure, the design of the glassy skywalk at Bhaleydung has been proposed like a three fingered fork at ninety degrees each protruding out from inside the top of the cliff. The proposed skywalk will stand at an elevation of 10,102 feet and the cliff would be connected by a ropeway from the nearby hamlet of Yangang.

With the Bhaleydung hill falling with a forest protected area, the firm stressed

on the need to ensure minimum damage to the natural habitat. This environmental consciousness reflects in the pre-feasibility study, the firm said.

During its studies, the firm has engaged in active deliberations with Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation, Tourism department, Travel Agents Association of Sikkim, environment specialists and conducted a market survey by consulting Federation of Hotels & Restaurants Association of India, Sikkim Hotels & Restaurants Association and international travel agencies to analyze the tourist circuit within the Bhaleydung range.

The Unique Selling Proposition of the Bhaleydung project is that novelty is essential to accord iconic status and infusing of cutting edge technology to make the structure difficult to be replicated.

It may be added here that the Chief Minister has been pressing ahead with the project and had only recently briefed the Central ministers on the project seeking their support for the early commencement of the project.

"Construction of Skywalk at Baleydhunga shall commence from the earliest with budget provision of Rs. 1 crore for this financial year", Mr. Chamling had said while presenting the Annual Budget for the year 2009-10 recently in the State Assembly.

The project seeks to propel Sikkim into the international tourism map besides becoming a landmark of its own in the Himalayan State.

Detailed feasibility study report will be submitted in the next phase.

Pre-feasibility report for Bhaley Dhunga Skywalk gives the Rs. 1,200 crore project two thumbs up

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK, 04 Aug: After an ambitious development project for the New Delhi Railway Station and a project for the Saldajong Hospital in the national capital, Grand Thornton India Private Limited has now completed the Pre-Feasibility Report for the ambitious Bhaley-Dhunga Skywalk on Maenam Hill in South Sikkim (7000 meters), which shall be the highest in the world.

At a presentation held here at Chinan Bhawan to-

day for Chief Minister Pawan Chamling and senior State Government representatives, the consultants provided an overview of the entire project estimated to cost Rs. 1,200 crores, with Rs. 500 crores costing just for the overhanging glass skywalk.

The consultants also assured that the entire project would be developed with minimal impact on the local environment and maintaining strict balance in the fragile ecology of the Maenam Wildlife Sanctuary, where the project shall be developed.

The estimated cost of the project has been timed to around Rs. 1200 crores and will be completed by 2025 because the consultancy has shown that the project cannot be developed in isolation and the project's long-term sustainability depended on developing the entire circuit rather than just the sky-walk to Bhaley Dhunga.

The project includes development of a Rs. 16 crore infrastructure at Bhaley Dhunga itself to support the rush of tourists once it is opened, a Rs. 138-50 crore

residential complex, another Rs. 300 crores for the Bhaley Dhunga nature and spiritual centre; Rs. 11 crores for a cable-car from Dhappa village, which is on the other side of the hill etc.

The project is proposed to be built on a total area of 15 acres, which shall also cover approximately 5 acres in the

Dhappa area.

What is even more fascinating here is that the consultants have decided that the actual skywalk, be built around 50-60 meters below the peak of the hill, since the hill is considered sacred and also because of the fragile ecology of the area.

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Pre-feasibility report for...

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The skywalk shall be built on the sheer face of the cliff and the design would have a tunnel around 15 meters deep inside the hill to get access to the skywalk. There shall be food courts, a museum, and a 360 degree observatory point from where the entire Himalayan range can be seen, the project shall also be developed keeping in mind the sensitive earthquake prone zone the area lies in.

Studies for the project had begun in December last year with the interim and draft reports already submitted to the Department of Tourism, Government of Sikkim, it is learnt. The project with a height of over 3000 meters also intends to bring in funds from DONER agencies making it one of the highest skywalks in the world against other iconic destinations like the Grand Canyon in USA, which is 1200 meters.

The consultancy, while assuring that all angles related to the development of the project had been looked into, endorsed that the skywalk was feasible and the experience of walking on glass and the thrill of watching the surrounding mountains from all angles will make it an unforgettable experience.

While mentioning that cutting-edge technology was essential to make the design environment-friendly, it was also said that the observatory glass structure would be huge, with almost 120 people being able to experience the thrill as one go for up to an hour. The skywalk shall be in the shape of three fingers pointing out from the face of the cliff.

The project also includes connectivity of the area by helicopter and by road up to Yangang village, which is at the foot of the hill. The project also involves devel-

opment of Dhapar village, where a tourist complex with a 300 bedded residential facility is recommended for development. The consultants have also suggested that other attractions developed around the skywalk could be bungee jumping, light shows and a zero gravity zone.

While informing that essential support infrastructure like development of mechanical engineering and plumbing services, water supply and sewerage treatment plants and effluent treating plants, uninterrupted power supply and waste management was very important for the development of the project the consultancy explained that the USP of the project was novelty which would be accorded to the iconic structure which would propel Sikkim on the tourism map along with the infusion of cutting edge technology to make the structure difficult to replicate, thereby ensuring sustainability of novelty factor.

It was also informed today that important factors such as the need to develop the destination as an integrated tourist offering catering to different pockets and markets and the need to develop marketing strategies as the premier tourist destination and faster connectivity should always be kept as top priority during the construction process. It was also said that the existing strengths of the area like the peace and good socio-economic indicators should also be utilised as the USP of the destination along with the need to forge partnerships with the private sector eg. Homestays etc.

Lastly, the consultants also stated that the revenue viability of the project was through areas like ticket sales, residential facilities, and allowing commercial development within a certain framework of the area //

Chamling keen to present Sikkim with skywalk

GANGTOK, 4 AUG: The Sikkim chief minister Mr Pawan Chamling today said that his government was keen to present the state with a skywalk at Bhaleydhunga. The project is expected to propel Sikkim into the international tourism map besides becoming a landmark of its own in the Himalayan state. An international consultancy firm has in its pre-feasibility report pegged the estimated cost for the proposed skywalk at Rs 1200 crore approximately.

The lump sum cost involves construction of three finger-shaped glass skywalks connected through a tunnel in the rocky spur of Bhaleydhunga cliff at an elevation of 10,102 feet.

Mr Chamling has been interested in the realization of the tourism project atop a mountain cliff on the lines of the Grand Canyon Skywalk. In this regard, the state government had engaged the services of Grant Thornton, an international consultancy firm to draft a feasibility study on the project.

The company's representatives in India today presented the pre-feasibility on the Bhaleydhunga Skywalk project at Chintan Bhavan in Gangtok in presence of the chief minister and other ministers.

According to the firm representatives, the skywalk would cost around Rs 500 crore while the rest amount would be spent on allied supporting infrastructures like cable car, tourist complex, accommodation centre, nature and spiritual complex and other tourism amenities. The firm has already submitted the interim and draft report of the project to the state government.

The proposed glassy skywalk at Bhaleydhunga would be a three-fingered fork at an elevation of 10,102 feet and a ropeway from the nearby hamlet of Yangang would connect to it. ■ SNS

प्रस्तावित भालेढुंगा स्काइवाकको निम्ति १२०० करोड आवश्यक

मानिक, ४ अगस्त: दक्षिण विहिङको भालेढुंगामा राज्य सरकारले निर्माण गर्न लागेको आदर्श पर्यटनस्थलको प्रारम्भिक लागत अंकलन १२०० करोड रहेको छ। यसको प्रारम्भिक अध्ययनमा संलग्न एक अन्तरराष्ट्रिय कन्सल्टेन्टो फर्मले आफ्नो पूर्व-सम्भाव्यता रिपोर्टमा यन्त्रकारको अंकलन गरेको हो। भालेढुंगामा स्काइवाक प्रोजेक्टलाई राज्य सरकारले एक एकीकृत पर्यटन गन्तव्यको रूपमा विकास गर्ने योजना बनाएको छ। भालेढुंगाको चट्टानी पहाडमा टमेलमाफत १०,१०२ फीट उँचाइमा स्काइवाक निर्माण गरिनेछ। २००७ देखि नै मुख्यमन्त्री पवन चामलिकले यो ठाउँ पहाडमा स्काइवाक निर्माण गर्न विशेष रुचि लिएका छन्। यो प्रोजेक्टको सम्भाव्यतामाथि प्रारम्भिक रिपोर्ट तयार गर्न एक अन्तरराष्ट्रिय कन्सल्टेन्टो फर्म 'ग्रान्ट ट्रोमटन' लाई सिक्किम सरकारले जिम्मा दिएको थियो। मुख्यमन्त्री पवन चामलिक, राज्यका अन्य मन्त्री, विधायक तथा

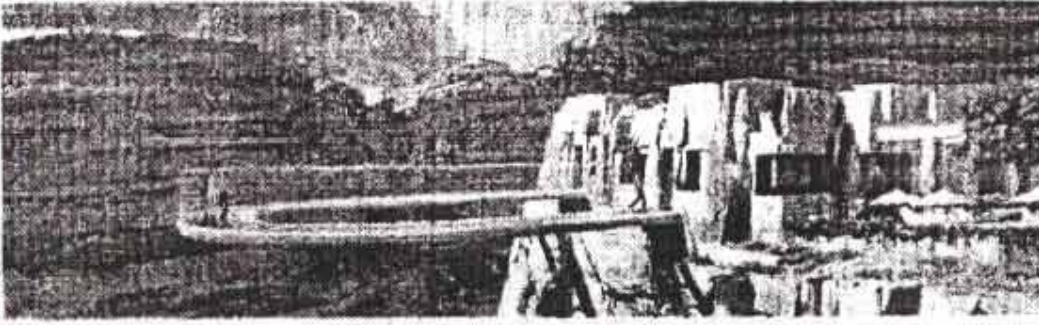
विभागका वरिष्ठ अधिकारीहरूको उपस्थितिमा कम्पनीका प्रतिनिधिहरूले राजधानीस्थित चिन्तन भवनमा भालेढुंगामा स्काइवाक प्रोजेक्टमाथि पूर्व-सम्भाव्यता रिपोर्टमाथि आज एक प्रस्तुती दिए। आफ्नो प्रस्तुतीमा कम्पनीका प्रतिनिधिले 'भालेढुंगामा पूर्ण स्काइवाक सेन्टर निर्माणको प्रारम्भिक लागत अंकलन १२०० करोड रुपियाँ रहेको बताए। स्काइवाक निर्माणको अनुमानिक लागत १०० करोड रहेको भने यादगाडको चट्टानी क्षेत्रमा केवल सार, पर्यटन कम्प्लेक्स, आवास केन्द्र, प्राकृतिक तथा धार्मिक केन्द्र र अन्य पर्यटन सुविधाजस्ता सम्बन्धित पूर्वाधार निर्माणका लागी ७०० करोड रुपियाँ अंकलन गरिएको छ। "पूवक रूपमा केवल स्काइवाकमात्र निर्माण गर्नु दीर्घकालीन रूपमा यापनीय हुँदैन। स्काइवाकलाई एक एकीकृत पर्यटन गन्तव्यको रूपमा लिन आवश्यक छ। प्रस्तावित स्काइवाकलाई 'विश्वस्तरीय तन्मिन्वर्तन जोड्नुपर्छ' - आफ्नो प्रस्तुतीमा कम्पनीका प्रतिनिधिले जोड

दिए। वित्तको हेतु वर्षमा उक्त कम्पनीले सातपल्ट सिक्किमको भ्रमण गरिसकेको छ अनि यसको पूर्ण संरक्षणको भरोसासहित आफ्नो अन्तरिम रिपोर्ट सरकारी अधिकारीहरूलाई बुझाइसकेको छ। "यो एक आदर्श योजना हुनेछ अनि यसले सिक्किमलाई एक अनुपम पर्यटन गन्तव्यको रूपमा विकास गर्नेछ" - कम्पनीका प्रस्तोताले भने। प्रस्तावित योजनामा 'भालेढुंगामा क्लामथुक्त स्काइवाक नव्वे छिडीको कोणमा निर्माण हुनेछ अनि घमलाई रोपवेबाट यादगाडको पहाडमा जोडिनेछ। प्रस्तावित योजना १०,१०२ फीट उँचाइमा रहेको छ। भालेढुंगा पहाड वन संरक्षित क्षेत्रमा पर्ने हुनाले फार्मले पर्यावरण तथा वन्य जीव जन्तुको निवासमा निम्नतम क्षति हुनुपर्ने जोड दिएको छ। "पूर्व-सम्भाव्यता रिपोर्टमा पर्यावरणीय सचेतना प्रतिकिम्बित छ" - फर्मले भनेको छ। आफ्नो अध्ययनमा अन्तरराष्ट्रिय फर्मले सिक्किम पर्यटन विकास निगम, पर्यटन विभाग,

ट्रान्स एनेन्ट एसोसिएशन अन्तर्गत सिक्किम, पर्यावरण विज्ञानसँग गम्भीर सल्लाह-परामर्श गरेको छ भने फेडेरेशन अन्तर्गत एन्ड रेस्टुरेन्ट एसोसिएशन अन्तर्गत सिक्किम होटल एन्ड रेस्टुरेन्ट एसोसिएशन र अन्तरराष्ट्रिय ट्राभल एजेन्सीसँग भालेढुंगा छण्डाभाकको पर्यटन परिचयको विश्लेषण गर्न यत्रम सर्वेक्षण पनि सम्पन्न गरेको छ। प्रस्तावित 'भालेढुंगा प्रोजेक्ट' विषयमा मुख्यमन्त्री पवन चामलिकले हालै केन्द्र सरकारसमक्ष ध्यानाकर्षण गराएका थिए भने केन्द्र सरकारबाट सहयोग पनि मागेका थिए। राज्य विधानसभामा हालै बजेट भाषण प्रस्तुत गर्दै मुख्यमन्त्री पवन चामलिकले यो प्रोजेक्टलाई चाँडै मुन गर्न २००८-१० को बजेटमा एक करोड रुपियाँ आवक्यत गरिनुको अतिरिक्त थियो यो प्रोजेक्टले सिक्किमलाई अन्तरराष्ट्रिय पर्यटन मानचित्रमा उभोउ भन्ने आफ्नै हिसाबी यस्तो विश्लेषणमा यो एक यादगाडको साबित हुने अपेक्षा रहेको छ।

राज्यका दुई महत्वाकांक्षी

आकाश यात्राको निम्ति १२ सय करोड खर्च आउने



समय संवाददाता
गान्तोक, ४ अगस्त ।

अन्तराष्ट्रिय परामर्श व्यावसायी संस्थानले दक्षिण सिक्किमको भाते डुङ्गा डांडामा निर्माण गरिने महत्वाकांक्षी आकाश यात्रा (स्काईवाक) परियोजनाको प्रारम्भिक सम्भाव्य नियन्त्रित मूल्यबारे जानकारी प्रस्तुत गर्‍यो । पर्यटनको विकासमा माइल चुट्टीको रूपमा स्थापित हुनसक्ने यस परियोजनाको निम्ति १२ सय करोड लागत खर्च आउने प्रारम्भिक जानकारीमा रहेको छ ।

काँचढाता निर्माण गरिने तीन कुने आकाश यात्रालाई जोड्न भालेडुङ्गाको चुचुरोको डुङ्गै टापुमा सुरुङ बनाएर १०,१०२ फिट अग्लो आकाश यात्रा निर्माण गरिनेछ । वर्ष २००७ देखि नै

राज्यका मुख्यमन्त्री पवन चामलिङले यस परियोजनाको निम्ति विशेष चासो देखाएका हुन् । जसलाई पुरा गरिएपछि सिक्किमले पनि ग्राण्ट कायोन स्काईवाक पाउने छ भने राज्य सरकारले यो महत् परियोजना निर्माणको निम्ति अन्तराष्ट्रिय परामर्श व्यावसायी ग्राण्ट थोटोनलाई परियोजनाको सम्भाव्यताको अध्ययन र खेसा तयार पार्ने जिम्मा दिइएको थियो । संस्थानको भारतीय प्रतिनिधिने भालेडुङ्गा आकाश यात्राको प्रारम्भिक सम्भाव्यताको खेसा मंगलबार चिन्तन भवनमा मुख्यमन्त्री पवन चामलिङ, मन्त्रीगण, विधावक तथा विभागीय प्रमुखहरूमाझ प्रस्तुत गरे । प्रस्तुतिकरणको बेसा परामर्शदाता संस्थानले प्रारम्भिक चरणको अनुमानहरू प्रस्तुत गरे ।

जसमा जम्मा लागत हुने खर्च १२ सय करोडमा ५ सय करोड नक्षित आकाश यात्रा निर्माणमा खर्च हुनेछ भने रहल रकम सहयोगी पूर्वाधार विकासको निम्ति खर्च गरिनेछ जसमा डिजिट, टुरिष्ट कम्प्लेक्स, आवास केन्द्र, प्राकृतिक तथा आध्यत्मिक केन्द्र अनि अन्य पर्यटन सम्बन्धित सुविधाहरू निर्माण हुनेछन् । परामर्शदाता संस्थानका प्रतिनिधिहरू आकाश यात्राको निर्माणको निम्ति गत डेढ वर्षमा सात पटक तिर्किम आइसकेका छन् भने प्रतिवेदनको खेसा र बान्तरिक प्रतिवेदन पनि विभागलाई सुम्पिसकेका छन् । परियोजनाको ढाँचा हेर्दा भालेडुङ्गामा काँचको आकाश यात्रा बनाइने छ जो ९० डिग्रीको अक्षानामा भालेडुङ्गाको टापुमा १०,१०२ फिटको उचाई लिएर रहल पृष्ठ-२ मा