

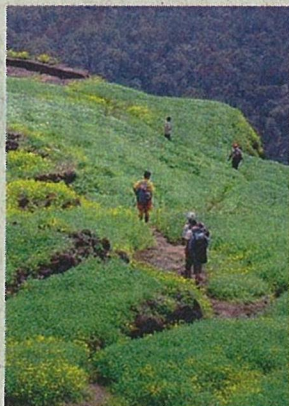
# Regularise adventure sports: Clubs

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Following the death of a young man trekking inside the Sakaleshpur jungles a few days ago, adventure tour organisers are demanding that the government put in place regulations for tour operators in the city so that safety norms can be enforced.

The clubs in Bengaluru want adventure activities in the State to be regularised as is done in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand where the Tourism Department acts as an umbrella organisation for adventure activities.

“We need to bring the clubs under one department, or affiliate them, so that adventure seekers are not at the mercy of poor instructors. The government must start licensing the clubs so that the right kind of people organise safe adventure activities,” said



Kavita Reddy of Basecamp Adventures Pvt. Ltd. Most importantly, Ms Reddy says, the government must stop considering adventure activities such as trekking as a sport. “Trekking is more of a holiday and travel experience and the Tourism Department must take the initiative to insist on safe adventure practices for tourists.”

According to her, there are 260 adventure clubs

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operating in Bengaluru and if the basic guidelines set by the Union Ministry of Tourism for adventure tour operators are applied to these 260 adventure clubs, 95 per cent of them will shut shop.

“At an individual level one should ensure that to save a few hundred rupees there is no compromise on the quality of the personnel. Adventure comes with

its own thrill and risk, but adventure does not necessarily mean putting oneself in danger. Hence, choosing the right adventure travel operator or service provider is very important to have a good adventure outing in a safe way. When one is planning an adventure activity, getting information on the operator should be a priority,” Ms Reddy advises.

Uma Shankar, chief adventure instructor at the General Thimmaiah National Academy of Adventures (GETHNAA), says that the government will soon call a meeting of adventure tour operators.

“At GETHNAA we have made it clear that no private camping can be regularised. But the people who go with clubs must demand certificates and emergency response plans so that safety is given the topmost priority while organising an adventure camp,” Mr Shankar said.