

Six museums on tribal freedom fighters to be set up

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THE CENTRE will set up six museums dedicated to tribal freedom fighters in Gujarat, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Kerala with an estimated cost of Rs 250 crore.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs will contribute Rs 130 crore, while an equal amount will be spent by the respective states for the museums.

Tribal Affairs minister Jual Oram said, "Besides these six museums, we have also sent a proposal to NITI Aayog to set up a national-level Tribal Research Centre and a museum in Delhi. Additional funds will be earmarked for the Delhi museum, which is in the planning stage at the moment."

The minister added that 10 per cent of India's population is tribal and "they need to be given adequate representation at the national level".

A source from the Ministry told *The Indian Express*, "This will be the first phase. If it gets a good response, we shall embark upon the next phase, most likely to set up similar museums in the Northeastern states."

The biggest among these six museums in the first phase are the ones coming up in Gujarat's Garudeshwar, at a cost of Rs 102 crore, and the one dedicated to Birsa Munda in Ranchi, at Rs 37 crore.

The 70-acre museum in Gujarat will be completed by 2020, and will be dedicated to various tribal movements in the country. Three-dimensional and seven-dimensional technology-

enabled display will be divided in three phases: Pre-1857, 1857 to the end of 19th century, and 20th century up to Independence. The state and the Centre are contributing Rs 50 crore each for the project, while the land has been the state's additional contribution.

The official from the Ministry added, "The museum dedicated to Birsa Munda will be focussed on his personality and life. It will come up in the Central Jail where Munda was imprisoned by the British, and the cell where he died."

Besides, the Raipur museum (at Rs 26 crore) will showcase the movement led by Veer Narayan Singh; the Lambasingini museum (Rs 35 crore) in Andhra Pradesh will commemorate Alluri Sita Rama Raju; the museum in Chhindwara (Rs 39 crore) is dedicated to various tribal leaders from Madhya Pradesh; while the one in Kozhikode (Rs 16 crore) will pay tribute to tribal freedom fighters under the leadership of Thalakkal Chandu.

In his Independence Day speech in 2016, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had expressed a "desire to have permanent museums in the states where the tribal freedom fighters lived".

Subsequently, the Tribal Affairs Ministry held a series of consultations with 27 states, out of which, 12 reported no mass tribal uprisings, added a source from the ministry. He said, "During the latest round of consultations held in May, final approvals have been given to the six states to go ahead with the tendering process."