



The Memorial Park Smiritivan: Earthquake Memorial and Museum

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Abstract

Gujarat is one of state of India which is famous for its rich cultural, art, history, wildlife and cuisine. It is also a popular destination because of its numerous world heritage sites and unparalleled cultural vibrancy. If you came to Gujarat, you must visit Kutch because ‘kutch nahi dekha to kuch nahi dekha’. Kutch is a district of Gujarat state which is the largest district of India. Kutch is famous for its amazing landscapes and also famous for its number of beautiful places. Bhuj is gateway of kutch and it is one of the most developed cities in kutch. Bhuj has many places to visit, with this add another is India’s largest memorial and museum now opened for tourists in bhuj. That place is Smiritivan earthquake memorial and museum. This research paper presents information about Smiritivan memorial. This Smiritivan memorial park is dedicated to the victim of 2001 Gujarat’s earthquake and celebrating resilience people of kutch. How this memorial park has been build and how its features are divided in seven different blocks and that all block have some specific message to give public. This earthquake has had a significant impact on all over Gujarat, but what is impressive is how they have resurfaced from it. With the courage of gujarat’s people and the determination of government, Gujarat has emerged as one of the best states in India.

Keywords: Memorial park, Smiritivan, Museum, Bhuj , kutch

Introduction

Gujarat is the sixth largest state located in western part of India. It is one of the best tourist destinations of India. It is visited by domestic as well as international tourists. Gujarat is famous for its rich cultural, art, history, wildlife and cuisine. It is also a popular travel destination because of its numerous world heritage sites and unparalleled cultural vibrancy.

About kutch

Gujarat is famous for the great run of kutch. Every year runn utsav is celebrated from November to February at kutch. With the famous tagline “kutch nahi dekha toh kuch nahi dekha” is given by Amitabh bachchan which glorifies kutch. Kutch is the largest district of India, which is a district of Gujarat state in western India. Kutch is famous for its amazing landscapes, breath – taking culture and a majestic history. There are number of beautiful places to visit in kutch like, The great run of kutch, Kalo dungar, Mandvi betch, kutch museum, siyot caves, dholavira (world best heritage village declared by UNESCO) and bhuj (which is gateway of kutch).

About Bhuj

Bhuj is one of the most developed cities in Kutch. Bhuj is one of the city which offers a unique blend of natural beauty and reach regional history and cultural. The city was founded in 1510 by Rao Hamir and was declared the capital of Kutch in 1549 by Rao Khengarji. Bhuj currently stands as one of the most prominent tourist destinations in Gujarat. It is home to numerous astonishing palaces, intricate architectural works, authentic handicrafts, religious landmarks, meandering streets, and much

more. With this different place add another is india's largest memorial and museum has recently opened its door to the public in bhuj, from kutch region. That place is Smiritivan earthquake memorial and museum.

The memorial park Smiritivan

This memorial park is dedicated to the victim of 2001 Gujarat earthquake and celebrating resilience of people of kutch along with a museum was proposed in 2004 by Gujarat state disaster management authority. Smiritivan adorned as the largest memorial and museum to ever be built in modern India, which covers a vast area over 470 acres. It is situated on the bhujio dungar in the outskirts of bhuj. It also share the area with bhujio fort, which is more than 300 years old. Smiritivan is a place of pilgrimage, a praise for the resilience and reverence of the people of Kutch, and a haven for those who find solace in nature. The memorial consists of a sun point that overlooks the city, the sunrise and sunsets from atop the bhujio dungar. It also consists of the world's largest Miyawaki forest with over 3 lakh plants, spread across the entire memorial to create a living, breathing monument that also serve as the lungs for the city Bhuj. There is a locally installed 1.1 megawatt solar power plant that powers the museum and memorial. The objective of this solar power plant is to have a self sustainable, renewable green energy that leads the way for all future establishments. This memorial park has 50 check dam reservoirs that house the name plates of almost 13, 000 victims of the 2001 earthquake. Along with this, the reservoirs are carefully planned to recharge the surrounding water level, giving life to the surrounding forests, and the rocks used in these reservoirs will serve as foundations for new life to grow from within their cracks. Each element of the museum focus on regeneration, sustainability and hope for a better future.

Features of seven theme block

The size of the Smiritivan earthquake museum is 11, 500 sq. mts which has seven different blocks. These blocks features seven theme, they are as under:

1. **Rebirth:** With this block we witness the history of Earth's evolution, the emergence of land forms over millions of years and genesis of the very land we inhabit. Here tourists get a glimpse of prosperous ancient human civilization in the kutch region, ancient trade routes of Gujarat and the tale of its advancement and resilience.
2. **Rediscover:** With this block tourist can experience resilient nature of Kutch, the innovative spirit of Gujarat's people and the reasons for the multiple natural occurrence in Gujarat. Discover the diverse natural features of Gujarat region and understand its relationship with inconsistent natural phenomena. Through interactive models and immersive films, see the vulnerabilities, remarkable adaptations and resilient response of the people of a region with erratic environments.
3. **Restore:** As people from all walks of life were affected by the earthquake in some or the other way. In this restore block recount the tragic events of the 2001 bhuj earthquake. It also presents the immediate rescue and relief activities that followed. Touch, listen and immerse into the diverse testimonies and recollections of earthquake survivors and the memories of the loved ones of victims from across Gujarat and India also.
4. **Rebuild:** With this block you will understand the collective process of rebuilding, reconstructing and reviving Gujarat for long term disaster mitigation. It also showcases the collective effort channelized towards rebuilding Gujarat in the aftermath of the 2001 earthquake. It also shows that how an apex body formed within weeks post earthquake ensured timely rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery.
5. **Rethink:** With this block you will impart the knowledge of global disaster response, and preparedness measures through games and interactive activities. In this block you can also learn about india's vulnerability to natural phenomena, the various natural hazards in different geographical areas and how we can prepare ourselves. The emotional and psychosocial ramification of post disaster management is documented here through interviews and first person experiences.
6. **Relive:** In this block you will experience how the tremors shook Gujarat, how building collapsed and how lives turned to fatalities. With the world's largest simulation experience in state of the art 360 degree surrounding simulation, you will feel the earth slip beneath our feet and experience the tremors that people felt in 2001 earthquake in a realistic manner. It also houses the tree of smiritivan, present inside an infinity room, where you can add paper made petals to the branches as messages.
7. **Renew:** This block is designed to pay their respects to the people who lost their lives in this tragedy and to remember the loved ones they might have lost and keep them in their memories with a light spirit. To commemorate them visitors will light up a digital flame through touch panels which will travel through digital LED walls up to the ceiling and form one united light. It is the highest number of optical fiber sensor based lighting that has ever been placed in a single location in India.

8.

Methodology

This research paper is based on secondary data. The secondary data is mainly collected from tourism related articles, journals, websites which are relevant to study.

Conclusion

Gujarat is famous for great run of kutch. Kutch is the largest district of India. There are so many beautiful places to visit in kutch and Smiritivan is one of them. Smiritivan is situated on the bhujio hill in the outskirts of bhuj. A massive earthquake hit Gujarat in the year 2001. This earthquake had a significant impact on Gujarat but it is impressive to resurface from it. Earthquakes and other natural calamities like drought and cyclones are not infrequent in this region, so a memorial to the victims of this catastrophe takes on an even wider significance. With courage of the people and the determination of the government, Gujarat has emerged as one of the best states in the India. Smiritivan memorial park is created for the bereaved families of the earthquake victims from 2001 and museum on Bhujjiyo hill. Smiritivan earthquake memorial and museum was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi on 28, august 2022. The footfall at smiritivan has increased after the beginning of the Rannotsava. Smiritivan earthquake museum crossed the mark of one lakh visitors within 97 days after its inauguration. Since December, 2022 onwards there has been substantial increased in footfall, which was average 2500 people visit smritivan. Around 1500 of them visit he earthquake museum inside smiritivan.

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