

Real snow or artificial, white carpet to greet tourists in Auli

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DEHRADUN: Tourists who are planning to visit Auli during the holiday season this year will not have to return disappointed as they will be able to witness snow, either real or artificial.

On Tuesday, officials of the Garhwal Mandal Vikas Nigam (GMVN) started the production of artificial snow for the first time this season. This is the third year the government is producing artificial snow since the installation of the artificial snow gun plant in Auli in 2011. The skiing destination also received a fresh snowfall of 1.5 feet till Wednesday.

Talking to TOI, GMVN general manager BL Rana said, “Considering the favourable weather conditions in the area, we will use the snow gun to create artificial snow for tourists who flock the skiing

destination during the last week of December. This will ensure that the tourists who come to Auli to witness snow don’t return empty-handed.”

Ghambhir Singh, deputy general manager of GMVN, said, “We need temperature below freezing point and humidity upto 60% for the snow gun to work. Since Auli had remained hot and dry like never before for the last two years, even the creation of artificial snow was not possible. The weather is absolutely favourable this year.”

Meanwhile, the tourism department is also not leaving any stone unturned to reap the benefits of snowfall in Auli. Ahead of the holiday season, almost all government and public accommodations are already booked and hotel reservations are almost closed for Joshimath too. Kamal Kishore Joshi, public relations officer of tourism department, said, “The department is planning to organise skiing courses and competitions in Auli in January. A notification in this regard has been issued already.”

An artificial snow gun, the only machine of its kind in south Asia, was imported for the south Asian winter games in 2011. It is placed around the Auli artificial lake developed by the Uttarakhand government for creating artificial snow. Water from the lake is fed into the machine placed along the ski slopes. However, it was used only twice since its installation – in 2011 and 2014.