

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER & AUDITOR GENERAL OF INDIA  
10, BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR MARG**

**NEW DELHI  
02 JULY, 2020**

### **SHRI JAVADEKAR UNVEILS CAG'S URBAN FOREST**

Having concern of the Air Quality Index of Delhi, particularly high air pollution levels at the ITO Crossing and keeping in view its community responsibilities, office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has taken steps to establish an Urban Forest in the Office Park at 10 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi. The urban forest was inaugurated by the Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Prakash Javadekar in presence of CAG of India, Shri Rajiv Mehrishi here today. The office of the CAG of India believes that initiatives like these will help us move towards a state of better ecological balance, especially in cities. It is a small yet significant contribution to Delhi's ecosystem, one that could inspire people to reclaim and restore their natural surroundings.

Unveiling the forest, Shri Prakash Javadekar hailed the CAG institution for creating such an oxygen bank in his park which will be very useful as it will soak the carbon and give out oxygen. Appreciating this new technique initiated by Shri Rajiv Mehrishi, Shri Javadekar said that he has created an example to be followed by other offices in Delhi and this Urban Forest will become a new attraction for people of Delhi. Shri Javadekar expressed happiness and said that this would be a dense urban forest with multiple tree layers including 12000 saplings of 59 indigenous species in another year or so.

Shri Mehrishi while welcoming the minister presented him a plant.

Local material was adopted to enable intensive afforestation. Soil preparation is a crucial part of this urban forest plantation. Using natural organic material for this preparation, the native saplings planted would grow very quickly. The Urban Forest would be dense with multiple tree layers including 12000 saplings of 59 indigenous species. The Urban forest has an ecosystem which has the capacity to restore habitat for birds, bees, butterflies and micro fauna. These are essential for pollination of crops and fruits and to help maintain a balanced ecosystem.

The forest is made up of trees which are native to the area and are three dimensional, multi-layered communities having 30 times the surface area of the greenery of single-layered lawns, and have more than 30 times the ability to protect against natural disasters and to conserve the environment. This dense forest ecosystem has been created in an area that is little over 1 acre in size. The multi-layered forest has shrubs, small to medium-size trees and tall trees carefully arranged as peripheral and core plant communities.

The species selected are part of Delhi's potential natural vegetation and are best suited to the region's terrain, climate and soil. With minimal maintenance, including watering and de-weeding, the urban forest will be self-sustainable in two years. Some of the rare native species planted here include *Anogeissus pendula* (Dhonk), *Diospyros cordifolia* (Bistendu), *Ehretia laevis* (chamrod), *Wrightia tinctoria* (Doodhi), *Mitragyna parvifolia* (Kaim), *Butea monosperma* (Palash), *Prosopis cineraria* (Khejri), *Clerodendrum phlomidis* (Arni), *Grewia asiatica* (Falsa), *Phoenix sylvestris* (Khajoor) and *Helicteres isora* (Marodphali).

The unique design of the urban forest consists of recreational, artistic and meditation zones. The winding pathways, watchtower, gazebo, and sitting spaces add to the character and experience of the urban forest. It sends out an action-oriented message of bringing back lost environmental protection forests. In-depth field surveys of potential natural vegetation, well planned native species' propagation and restoration projects like these are the need of the hour.





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