

Agar trade centre coming up in North district

Agar is an important forest resource of the state. In order to increase agar trade in the state, the Forest Department has planned to set up an agar trade centre at Kadamtala in North Tripura district. Chief Conservator of Forests K.S Shetty said this in a press conference organized at the secretariat's conference hall on 20th August, 2022. In the press conference, he also said that the forest department is implementing various programmes for the protection of forests and wildlife in the state. These include renovation of Sepahijala zoo, establishment of bison conservation reserve in Patichari, establishment of 3 animal rescue centres at Bagafa, Pecharthal and Sepahijala, establishment of elephant camp at Mungiakami, establishment of nature interpretation centres at Rowa Mungiakami and Khowai, establishment of art orchidarium at Oxygen Park in Hatipara. He said that the Forest Department is implementing the Urban Forestry Programme to protect the greenery of the urban areas and biodiversity. In this project tree saplings have been planted in Agartala Municipal area and Salbagan. In addition, this project has inaugurated 4 urban forests in Dharmanagar, Kumarghat, Teliamura and Udaipur in the financial year 2022-23. 4 lakh has been spent on each urban forest.

Highlighting the success of the forest department in the press conference, he said that there is a huge potential for revenue generation based on the forest resources of the state. The forest department is working to develop the economic system of the state by exploiting that potential. He said that the total forest area in the state is 7721.52 sq. km which is 73.64 percent of the total geographical area of the state. The state currently has 8 forest districts, 17 forest sub divisions, 4 sanctuaries, 59 forest ranges and 283 forest beats. The Chief Conservator of Forests said that every year the forest department undertakes afforestation programme with the funding of different schemes of the state and central government such as CAMPA, NAP, REGA etc. He informed that 8889.71 hectares were afforested in the state in the financial year 2021-22. 9563.5 hectares have been afforested till July of FY 2022-23.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests said that in the nursery programme, the department had produced over 53 lakh saplings in the financial year 2021-22 and 6.5 lakh saplings have been produced till July of the financial year 2022-23. Apart from this, the Department is implementing a programme of sapling production by setting up nurseries through the willing beneficiaries. During the financial year 2021-22, the Department has produced a total of 6 lakh 34 thousand saplings through 225 beneficiaries. Also 2 lakh saplings have been produced till July 2022.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests said that to meet the water needs of the people of the state, check dams have been constructed in different parts of the state to support irrigation, groundwater recovery, prevention of soil erosion and fish farming. 421 check dams have been constructed in the state in the financial year 2021-22. The department has set a target of constructing 627 more check dams in the financial year 2022-23. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests said that each school has been given 10,000 rupees for planting 1,000 saplings in each school selected under the School Nursery Scheme in order to encourage tree plantation among the students of the state.

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests said that 9 lakh 28 thousand saplings have been distributed among the eligible beneficiaries in the financial year 2021-22 under the Mukhyamantri Swanirbhar Yojana (MSY). Also, 4 lakh 34 thousand saplings have been distributed among the beneficiaries till July of FY 2022-23. He said that 48 thousand 576 saplings were planted in just 2 minutes as part of the mass tree plantation campaign in the financial year 2021-22 by involving forest department staff, general public, staff of other departments, members of the Joint Forest Management Committee, students of schools and colleges and public representatives. 1 lakh 2 thousand 230 saplings were planted in 5 minutes through mass tree plantation drive on June 28, 2022 for financial year 2022-23. He said that the forest department has organized rallies, photo exhibitions and various wildlife festivals as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. CCF Dr. K. Sasikumar was also present at the press conference.