

Forest dept gears up to plant 35 cr saplings in annual drive

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Lucknow: With a target of planting 35 crore saplings this year, the forest department has begun preparations for its annual plantation drive.

The department plans to plant 12.6 crore trees on 80 hectares of land this year, which is lower than last year's target of 14.6 crore. However, officials believe they may surpass this year's target as well. "This year too, the effort will be to exceed the target," said sources in the forest department.

The collective plantation target for over 20 departments participating in the drive remains 35 crore. In 2024, UP planted 36.8 crore trees, exceeding the target of 36.5 crore, marking the

state's biggest-ever plantation feat.

The Yogi govt has set a goal of planting 175 crore trees in five years (from 2022-23 to 2026-27) to increase the state's green cover to 15% by 2030. Accordingly, the annual plantation target was set at 35 crore trees. However, last year, the govt decided to increase the target beyond the number planted in 2023. In 2023-24, more than 36 crore trees were planted against a 35-crore target, prompting the govt to revise the 2024 goal to 36.5 crore.

Given this trend, the target for this year may also be revised. Meanwhile, forest department sources confirmed that preparations have already begun, including soil work, raising, and nurturing saplings.