

Officials Grapple to Execute Plans as Delhi Govt Promises Saplings and Safety Masks

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Officials of environment and forest departments are reportedly in a fix due to the promises made by Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal last week.

On Friday, September 13, the chief minister announced a seven-point programme to fight air pollution, which includes the introduction of odd-even vehicle rationing scheme and the distribution of safety masks and saplings.

However, this decision has created problems for the environment and forest departments, who claim they were not consulted before the announcement. Now that the promises are public knowledge, both the departments are not certain on how to execute the plans, reports The Hindu.

CM Kejriwal said he would be distributing “50-60 lakh” N95 anti-pollution masks in the month of October. Moreover, the government will also be encouraging the plantation of 40 lakh saplings in the next six months, as part of the “Delhi Tree Challenge”.

The environment department is yet to find a feasible way to distribute the masks and saplings across Delhi. On the other hand, the forest department remains concerned regarding the survival rate of the saplings, which will be low now, as the monsoon is almost over.

Meetings on the issue were only conducted after the announcement, and Delhi’s Transport Minister, Kailash Gahlot, has reportedly scheduled another sit-down with the CM to further discuss this issue on Tuesday, September 24.

Meanwhile, Dialogue and Development Commission Vice-Chairperson Jasmine Shah has confirmed that work is already in progress. But when quizzed as to why the plans were not discussed with the concerned departments before the public announcement, the official refused to comment to the media.

Delhi’s overall air quality remains ‘satisfactory’ at present, but like every year, pollution levels are expected to rise dramatically following the end of the monsoon season.

Source: <https://weather.com/en-IN/india/news/news/2019-09-19-officials-execute-plans-delhi-govt-promises-saplings-safety-masks>