

EcoSikh to plant 450 mini forests in Amritsar

26 June 2022

To tackle environmental degradation in Amritsar, US-based environmental organisation EcoSikh will plant 450 Guru Nanak Sacred forests comprising 550 trees each in the next five years in the city.

The charitable organisation fighting climate crisis will launch the five-year campaign on Monday, the 445th foundation day of Amritsar. The campaign- Eco Amritsar 450- will culminate on the 450th anniversary of its founding in 2027.

Amritsar is Punjab's leading city with enormous religious, cultural and historical significance. In recent years, it has suffered from degrading air quality and depleting groundwater resources. There is also a severe lack of systematic waste management and infrastructure in the city.

"Amritsar has over 100,000 visitors and pilgrims coming to the city on a daily basis and the impact can be seen in the surrounding environment, from the strain on water and food resources to the extra energy used and the additional waste and litter created. It is critical that we take measures to conserve natural resources and also plant trees which can help stop the environmental degradation," Rajwant Singh, global president EcoSikh, said.

"We are confident that everyone will join this cause. It is important that we save this city's glory for future generations," he said.

Through the campaign, the organisation aims to engage civil society, educational institutions, diaspora, religious and the governmental bodies to achieve the goal, according to a statement issued by the organisation.

Supreet Kaur, president of EcoSikh India, said, "the green cover of Amritsar city has shrunk in recent years and many trees have been cut in recent times without being replaced. Planting forests will help the city to fight the devastating impact of climate change."

Charan Singh, forest convener of EcoSikh, said, "Amritsar is revered by so many people across the world and we want to appeal everyone that as they come to pay respect to this holy land, they must also care for its sustainability."

"We urge the civil authorities and residents to join us in this effort," Charan said.

In the past over three years, EcoSikh has planted over 400 forests across India as part of its target to plant 1 million trees celebrating the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak. It has also planted a few forests in Amritsar. Trees planted via Miyawaki methodology in these forests are of native species and they attract biodiversity and shown to improve the ecology of the area, including lifting the water table.

From 2012 - 2017, EcoSikh led a campaign Eco Amritsar to create awareness about the environmental challenges facing the city. It had lobbied SGPC to make the Darbar Sahib langar go organic.

EcoSikh was founded in 2009 in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme.

Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/chandigarh-news/ecosikh-to-plant-450-mini-forests-in-amritsar-101656188312025.html>