

Forest Man of India Jadav Payeng adds another laurel for tree effort

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For nearly 40 years, Jadav Payeng kept planting trees on a barren sandbar along the Brahmaputra in eastern Assam. That stretch is now a lush 1,360-acre forest; a haven for vibrant wildlife.

Payeng, known as the Forest Man of India, has now received another award for his tireless efforts. He received the 128th Commonwealth Points of Light award, which includes a certificate signed by Queen Elizabeth II, for his exceptional voluntary service to environmental conservation.

The award was handed over to Payeng in Guwahati by Nick Low, British Deputy High Commissioner to Kolkata recently.

Concerned over rise in temperature in the sandbar, a part of which is in Majuli island, Payeng started planting trees 40 years ago and quietly transformed the sandbar into a forest.

The land is now a paradise for biodiversity, including endangered Bengal tigers and vultures. Jadav plans to plant 5,000 acres of more trees on Majuli to create a 500-mile stretch of flora on the banks of Brahmaputra, said a statement issued by the British Deputy High Commissioner's office.

Quoting Jan Thompson, acting British High Commissioner to India, the statement said, "Jadav's work is an inspiration to us all at the start of the United Kingdom's Year of Climate Action."

Nick Low said Payeng's efforts put Assam on the global map and would inspire millions others to do their bit for climate action.

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