

## Itanagar selected for Urban forest scheme

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Itanagar, Aug 17 (PTI) The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (EFCC) has selected Arunachal Pradesh Capital for implementation of the "Nagar Van" or Urban Forest scheme. The "Nagar Van" is a scheme being launched by the ministry that envisages creating forests in 200 urban cities across the country on public-private-partnership basis.

The ministry would offer an initial grant of Rs 2 crore for fencing, maintenance and administrative costs of the earmarked land to be developed.

Attending a meeting of the ministry chaired by EFCC Minister Prakash Javadekar through video conferencing on Monday, Khandu informed that as there are only two urban cities in the state Itanagar and Pasighat the state capital has been selected for implementation of the scheme this year.

He said the state Environment and Forest department has already earmarked the land measuring about 20 hectares for creation of an "Urban Forest, a communique from the CMO quoted Khandu as saying.

Khandu, who is also the minister in-charge of Environment and Forest, informed Javadekar that the ministrys Nagar Van scheme would be dovetailed with the Smart City project so that the objective of the scheme is achieved in toto.

Giving details of the action taken by the state government in implementation of various central government schemes regarding environment and forest, the chief minister said that 100 schools across the state are being identified for the scheme "School Nursery".

Under the scheme, students would grow their own trees in a chosen place within the school premises and care for it and at the end of the year, they would take the sapling and plant it in their own premises.

The Union ministry plans to cover 1000 schools this year with a target of covering 5,000 schools by the year 2024 -25.

Khandu said that plantation under the 20-point programme of the Union ministry, the state had planted 6 lakh trees surpassing its target of 1 lakh saplings.

He assured that by the end of this year, 12 lakh saplings would be planted across the state.

The chief minister underscored the importance of getting onboard the Centres National Transit Pass System in context of Arunachal Pradesh, where stretches of forest land are owned by communities as well as individuals.

As the system (through a portal) ensures a seamless movement of forest produce across the country giving farmers economic right over their forest land, Khandu observed that in such a situation farmers will get motivated to plant trees of their choice increasing the forest cover of the state.

He directed the state officials to get on board the portal as soon as possible and create awareness amongst the farmers, the communique said.

The meeting was also attended by Union Minister of State for EFCC Babul Supriyo and Forest ministers of 30 states and UTs, discussed in detail all the six schemes being launched by the Union ministry.

Besides the Nagar Van, School Nursery, Plantation and National Transit Pass System, the ministry is also implementing Water and Fodder Augmentation in Forest Land and Rejuvenation of 12 major rivers schemes in coordination with the states and union territories, the communique added. PTI  
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