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Karnataka to grow bamboo on 57,000 hectares: Minister

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MANGALURU: Karnataka will grow bamboo on 57,000 hectares in the state in the next two years, said forest minister Umesh V Katti. He was speaking after launching a project of planting 10 lakh saplings of various fruit-bearing trees, through the Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project and forest department in Venur region of Kundapur division at Ermodi forest area, in Belthangady taluk on Thursday.

He said bamboo saplings are being planted in Belagavi, Bagalkot and Bijapur districts. "We have been importing bamboo for commercial purposes at present. Growing bamboo will reduce its import in the state," he added.

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He said that programmes to increase forest cover, and planting saplings of fruit-bearing trees, will help in reducing instances of man-animal conflict.

"We also have the responsibility of protecting animals and birds, by providing a better environment, and food for them. The government had distributed compensation of Rs 20 crore to farmers, who suffered losses due to man-animal conflict in 2021. The very existence of human life is dependent on trees, especially for oxygen to breathe. It is essential that we give emphasis

to planting saplings in our surroundings. Hence, it is the duty of everyone, to give our next generation a better environment. Compared to all other states in India, Karnataka has been giving more prominence to afforestation in the state,” the minister said.



Under the denotification programme, which was undecided for the past several years, the forest department has handed over 6.6 lakh hectares of deemed forest to the revenue department.

Farmers in those taluks may cultivate the land, based on the directions of bagair hukum committees. Meanwhile, 3.3 lakh

hectares of land has been handed over to the forest department, and thereby the forest cover has been increased from 42 lakh hectares to 45 lakh hectares in the state, he said.

In his presidential address, Dharmadhikari D Veerendra Heggade quoted the Jain philosophy of “Live and let live,” and said lack of food in forest leads to human-animal conflict. “We need to follow the principle of ‘live and let live’. Hence, more fruit-bearing trees should be grown in forest areas,” he said.