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# 'Namo Vad Van' drive launched from G'nagar

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Gandhinagar: Days after PM Modi urged people to plant 75 trees in every village to mark 75 years of India's independence, the Gujarat government launched the 'Namo Vad Van' (Namo banyan forest) drive from Gandhinagar on Monday.

A total of 75 such mini forests, each comprising 75 banyan trees, will come up across the 33 districts of the state over the next few months as part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' programme of the central government. Besides, the state forest department will plant 75 banyan trees in every forest. Monday was also celebrated as International Day of Forests.

Speaking via videoconferencing, the CM said the 'Namo Vad Van' would be a source of environmental protection and clean air for future generations. He appreciated the steps adopted by the public for the conservation, protection and preservation of forest resources in Gujarat.

Quoting the Forest Survey of India 2021 report, a CMO statement said that the area under tree cover in the state has increased by 6,900 hectares in the last two years. The state had an estimated 25.10 crore trees outside the forest area in 2003, which has now increased to 39.75 crore trees as per the 2021 tree census, the release added.

Patel said that for the economic uplift of forest dwellers, the right of sale of secondary products has been given to the local tribes under the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act.

The state government has allocated Rs 20 crore in this year's budget under the Bamboo Mission scheme to encourage farmers to plant bamboo over 5,891 hectares, he added.

State forest and environment minister Kiritsinh Rana said that 10 crore trees will be planted in the 72nd 'Van Mahotsav' in Gujarat. On the occasion, the CM inaugurated the forest department's centralized control room and forest helpline-1926.