

Priority to protecting forest cover, says Minister

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Tells teachers to encourage students to plant saplings

Minister for Industries N. Amaranatha Reddy on Saturday said that the TDP government had always accorded top priority not only to protecting the existing forest cover, but also to reaching the target of 50% by 2029 by covering vast stretches of hills and avenue plantations. The Minister launched the Vanam Manam programme at the Deer Park at Chittoor Forest here, along with District Collector P.S. Pradyumna, Additional Chief Conservator of Forests D.K. Singh and, Divisional Forest Officers T. Chakrapani and G. Srinivasulu. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Amarnatha Reddy said that it was late N.T. Rama Rao as the Chief Minister in 1980s who had initiated a massive afforestation scheme on Tirumala hill ranges, which were then bereft of greenery in a vast area. He said that the State government was compensating the trees felled for the purpose of road-widening



by planting double the number. He said that intellectuals and teachers should make the young minds to develop the habit of planting saplings on a regular basis. Mr. Pradyumna said that the district administration has targeted to plant as many as 1.57 crore saplings this year, by involving public groups, voluntary organisations, women's self-help groups, government officials and students in a big way. He said that the recently launched Nava Chaitanya Ratham, the propaganda vehicle of the social forestry wing, was touring the rural

areas, creating awareness on the importance of greenery and seeking the involvement of people. He said that there was an overwhelming response from almost all sections of the people to the social forestry schemes. 'Vriksha Prasadam' Divisional Forest Officer G. Srinivasulu said that the department had embarked on a novel concept of 'Vriksha Prasadam', distributing saplings to devotees at not only popular temples, but at the small temples at the village level, in coordination with the people's representatives. Chittoor Mayor Katari Hemalatha expressed happiness that the Chittoor municipal corporation has undertaken planting of 35,000 saplings this year.

Source:- <https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-andhrapradesh/priority-to-protecting-forest-cover-says-minister/article24423821.ece>