

Outlook

Rally for rivers to plant 11 million saplings in 2020

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Coimbatore, Jul 10 (PTI) Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Rally For Rivers (RFR) project is surging ahead and 11 million saplings will be planted during 2020 under the Cauvery Calling initiative, its organisers said. The project in its first phase of sapling production has been on track and the 2020 Cauvery Calling goal of planting 11 million trees will remain unchanged, RFR Board head Yri Jain said in a statement after a virtual board meeting held on Thursday night to review the project.

The Karnataka government will supply 70 lakh trees for the 2020 monsoon planting season through its Krushi Aranya Protsaha Yojane (KAPY) scheme and Cauvery Calling team is currently working in 54 Talukas of nine Cauvery river basin districts along with the Forest Department to promote it. In Tamil Nadu, Isha Outreach's nurseries have already produced 23 lakh saplings and are targeting an additional 17 lakh saplings this year through their network of 36 nurseries with an overall target of 40 lakh saplings. "Cauvery Calling is currently running at a project scale, we need to transform this into a movement," said founder of Isha Foundation Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, the architect of the nation-wide RFR project. "I feel the Karnataka government has been exemplary in their support.

There has been a phenomenal level of support which is translating into action on the ground," he said. The RFR Board also reviewed progress of the Waghadi River Revitalisation Project (Waghadi Nadi Punarujeevan Prakalp) launched in partnership with Maharashtra government last year. Among others, the board comprises World Wide Fund for Nature-India CEO and Secretary General Ravi Singh, retired Supreme Court judge Arijit Pasayat, former Indian Space Research Organisation Chairman Dr A S Kiran Kumar and Biocon Ltd Executive Chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw. Cauvery Calling launched in September last year is a 12- year project with an ambition to empower 50 lakh farmers to plant 242 crore trees on their own farmlands in one-third of the Cauvery river basin area, the statement said.

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