



Saplings at a nursery at Dalma wildlife sanctuary

The absence of showers over the last two weeks has dealt a heavy blow to saplings of mango and sagwan at Dalma wildlife sanctuary.

The saplings were sown in the sanctuary as a part of a plantation drive that began on June 30. Over 1.5 lakh saplings, including bamboo stems, were sown at 10 different locations across the 192 sq km sanctuary, 30km from Jamshedpur. There has been no rains at the sanctuary for the past 12 days.

Dalma range officer (West) Dinesh Chandra said about 25 per cent of the saplings, mostly mango and sagwan, have dried up due to lack of rains at the sanctuary. "These saplings will be replaced as we have some additional stock at the nursery. We are worried about rest of the saplings which will also dry up if showers continue to play truant," he added.

The range officer said that saplings of karam, black berry and guava, besides bamboo stems, will also meet the same fate if weather conditions continue to remain the same. "We are praying for rains," Chandra told The Telegraph Online.

According to Chandra, the plantation drive has already concluded at pockets coming under East and West forest ranges. The drive covered Lailam (50,000 saplings), Koira and Somadih (8,000), Bota and Dhobni (10,000) and Dangdum (10,000), while 50,000 saplings have been sown at Chaliyama and Hansada (10,000 at each), Saherbera (10,000) and Dangardih (6,000).

"Monsoon is the best season for undertaking a plantation drive. We had expected good spell of rains after the drive was completed on July 10. But things have proved otherwise. We are very worried," a forester said on condition of anonymity.

The sanctuary officials laid more stress on bamboo plantation during the drive. "Bamboo is the favourite food of jumbos. Making adequate quantity of food available to the elephants would help in reducing man-animal conflict. It would keep the elephants consigned to the forest and stop them from intruding into human settlements in search of food," the forester said.

Five herds of elephants, numbering about 45 caught the migratory corridor leading to the jungles of West Midnapore and Bankura in neighbouring Bengal late on Sunday evening. Elephants usually migrate to Bengal in August-September but it has been early this time.

Source: <https://www.telegraphindia.com/jharkhand/sans-rain-newly-planted-saplings-dry-up-in-jumbo-abode/cid/1786842>