

Urban forest inaugurated in Dehradun

26 September 2020

Anand Van, an urban forest was recently inaugurated at Dehradun in Uttarakhand. It has been developed in the Jhahra forest range by the forest department in order to reduce the severe levels of air pollution in the region.

It will provide detailed information regarding the fauna and flora of the state as it has been developed as an education centre as well. It is scheduled to be opened to the public during Navratri this year.

Constructed with a budget of Rs 43 lakh over four years, it is hoped that the park will provide employment opportunities to local youth in the forest department.

State officials say that Uttarakhand will have similar urban forests in Rishikesh and Haldwani very soon with plans of setting up nature parks in other places using funds from Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA).

The urban forest and the grand announcements may seem a tad ironic considering what's coming up under the guise of the controversial Delhi-Dehradun Expressway. It will result in the cutting and destruction of over 2,500 trees in Uttarakhand, including a stunning British-era Sal forest. All so that the travel time between Delhi and Dehradun is cut to 2.5 hours!

The Sal forest has 100 to 120 year old trees and environment experts have said that these would be nearly impossible to regrow and regenerate as they have "reached their climax". In a report in TOI, a former scientist of the Forest Research Institute stated that "It is not recommended to fell trees that are part of climax species. Sal forests play a vital role in holding slippery hills of the Shivalik range and are a perfect habitat for wildlife species like leopards, tigers and elephants."

Source: <https://www.outlookindia.com/outlooktraveller/travelnews/story/70658/dehradun-gets-an-urban-forest>