

TREE PLANTATION CAMPAIGNS IN RRCAT DURING 2021

As in previous years, this year also during the monsoon season (July - August 2021), a massive "Green Cover" enrichment program was undertaken in RRCAT campus towards the aim of protecting the environment and improving the biodiversity of the campus. With these aims, two tree plantation campaigns were organized in the RRCAT campus with the themes of Nakshtra Udyaan (constellations) and Miyawakii. The plantation drive was organized with limited participation of the senior administrators of RRCAT. All the Covid-19 related precautions were followed during the plantation drive.

During the first plantation campaign organized on July 31, 2021, the site chosen was the Central Park in front of the old D-type quarters (area between Basketball Court, AECS and Open Air Theatre). The theme of plantation at this site was "Nakshtra", which means constellation (group of stars). Every Nakshtra has a symbolic tree/plant that has a connection with eternal nature, and has medicinal, economic as well as aesthetic value. Trees suggested here were all indigenous and suitable for local environment. Some of the prominent tree species selected are *Azadiracta indica* (Neem), *Ficus benghalensis* (Barghad), *Ficus benjamena* (Benjamin fig), *Ficus religiosa* (Pipal), *Mangifera indica* (Aam), *Nyctanthis arbortrista* (Harsingar), *Terminalia belerrica* (Bahera), Achar (*Buchanania latifolia*), Anjan (*Hardwickia binata*), Khirani (*Mimusops hexandra*), Bijasar (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), Kusum (*Schleicher oleosa*), Baraga (*Gmelina arborea*), Papada (*Gardenia latifolia*) and Garud (*Radermachera xylocarpa*).

During the second plantation campaign on August 05, 2021, the site chosen was the area around the Laser R & D Block - I (LIGO Building site). The theme of plantation at this site was "Miyawakii", which is a high density tree plantation scheme aimed at creating a multilayered natural forest using with native tree species with a thrust on beauty, colour, canopy, shape, texture and foliage. Plants selected in this drive were trees and shrubs which grows 10 time faster and 30 times denser than the traditional ones, and have ornamental value. The selected varieties require up-keep for only the first three years period and thereafter require minimum care. Some of the selected species include flowering shrubs, Royal palms, *Ficus benzamina*, *Ficus infectoria*, *tecoma*, in combination with colourful flowering shrubs like *ixora*, *pulchirimas*, *gardenia*, *bouganellea*, etc. with introduction of some extinct species like Achar, Anjan, Kaim, Garud, Kusum etc. in the degraded soils.

In all about 1600 plants were planted during the campaign by planting about 47 heterogeneous species with a special focus on Rare & Endangered flora of MP. Necessary pre-planting activities likes pit excavation, filling of garden earth etc. were undertaken by Horticulture Section, Construction & Services Division of RRCAT. Plants used in the campaign were raised and reared in-house in the Nursery within RRCAT.

The Tree Plantation campaigns were graced by members of the Directors Advisory Council (DAC) with the back-up support from the members of the Advisory Committee for Clean and Green Campus (ACCGC) of RRCAT, and the staff members of the Horticulture Section.

**Member Secretary,
Advisory Committee for Clean & Green Campus, RRCAT**