

Chhattisgarh creating India's biggest man-made forest on barren land, abandoned mine

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The entire cost of the project is cited to be Rs 3.37 crore. (Photo | EPS)

RAIPUR: Chhattisgarh is on its way to accomplishing an action plan to develop the nation's largest man-made forest on a vast area, mostly the abandoned and non-functional mining belt, at Nandini in Durg district, about 55 km from Raipur.

The ongoing exceptional initiative will turn the unproductive and mined-out areas into the natural habitat of jungle stretching across 3777 acres. So far 1120 acres in the region have been transformed into a forest. This year, over 83 thousand saplings of around 30 different species, including medicinal, were planted under the special drive in 895 acres by the state forest department.

During his inspection, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel also planted a banyan plant as a symbolic gesture under the Jan Van programme here. The entire cost of the project cited to be Rs 3.37 crore.

"It's a new concept based on environment conservation and been executed with Miyawaki, a Japanese technique that helps in creating dense self-sustaining native forest where the plants as natural and multi-layered grow much faster (around 10 times). Once completed the Nandini forest will be the biggest man-made forest in the country. The project has been chalked out at the behest of the chief minister", said Rakesh Chaturvedi, the state Principal Chief Conservation of Forests (PCCF).

Owing to the excavated sites of the mines, which usually were of dolomite-limestones, huge water reservoirs are created inside the forest. Besides the area also serves as the ideal habitat for birds owing to the massive wetland present in the region. The migratory birds from the Eurosiberian region were also spotted here. The project is likely to take a comprehensive shape in the next couple of years, the PCCF added.

In Chhattisgarh, there is no dearth of abandoned mines deserted with little effective reclamation being done. The future plan at Nandini is also to develop the site as eco-ethnic tourism, which will include landscaping, promotion of water sports, cottages for stay. Around 44 percent of the state land is under forest cover.

Source: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/good-news/2021/sep/16/chhattisgarh-creating-indias-biggest-man-made-forest-on-barren-land-abandoned-mine-2359739.html>