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Plantation being carried out for forest growth

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RAWALPINDI: Plantation of saplings for the growth of forests on acres of barren and uncultivated privately owned land has been started by the Punjab Forest Department, Rawalpindi Division, under Prime Minister Imran Khan's Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Project (TBTP).

Only in Chakwal district, 5,000 kanals of land has so far been turned into dense forests, said District Range Forest officer Sher Afzal Raja, adding 400,000 saplings will be distributed among farmers.

He urged farmers and cultivators to resettle their barren lands through afforestation and announced that the forest department would provide them saplings at the rate of Rs2 per seedling. Farmers will plant these saplings in their barren lands and the department will help them grow these saplings in a proper way, he said, adding millions of these plants would be given to farmers in all districts and tehsils of the division.

Practical measures have also been taken to expand forests on lands owned by the department and protect existing forests, which has led to a massive increase in the forest area for the first time. "Along with these practical and solid steps, we are also raising public awareness to highlight the need and importance of trees for which a massive publicity campaign has been launched," he said. Meanwhile, Conservator of Forests (North) Saqib Mehmood said that the Rawalpindi Forest Department planted nearly 5 million saplings in civil division areas during financial year 2020-21.

He said hectic efforts were being made by the departments concerned to make all available areas green. He said that the 'Plant for Pakistan' campaign had been inaugurated in the region and the forest department had planted over 3.6 million saplings in the four districts of the civil division and over 1.3 million on private lands during 2020-21 financial year. He said, under the campaign, saplings were being planted in government forests, on the land of several government departments, the defence department and private lands in the region.

The conservator said that the government was making efforts to mitigate the effects of pollution through aggressive plantation in the country. Due to the effective awareness campaigns, the trend of planting saplings had increased considerably and the citizens had started playing their due role.

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1629197/plantation-being-carried-out-for-forest-growth>