

IIT Indore to set up Van Vatika

Our Staff Reporter

INDORE

Soon, a Van Vatika will come up on the campus of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Indore which has been chosen by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for the Nagar Van project under the National Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). The foundation-laying ceremony was held on Saturday. IIT Indore has been chosen as the first IIT in the country and is the only educational institute in the district for this project. The pilot scheme of Nagar Van Yojana (NVY) envisages developing 400 Nagar Vans and 200 Nagar Vatikas in the country during the period of 2020-21 to 2024-25 with an objective to significantly enhance tree outside forests and green cover, enhancement of biodiversity and ecological benefits to the urban and peri-urban areas apart from improving quality of life of city dwellers. The programme was attended by Subhash Chandra, CEO, National CAMPA and Prof Suhas Joshi, director, IIT Indore.

Joshi said, 'IIT Indore was eyeing this project for quite some time and we are happy that we have been entrusted with this responsibility. IIT In-



Foundation laying ceremony for Van Vatika on IIT Campus

dore has been unique in terms of conserving nature and we have been constantly developing dams, ponds and enhancing the natural habitat. With this Van Vatika coming up, we will have a unique identity as we are the first IIT to get this. Before the grant of this project, IIT Indore has already been working on such projects, but the grant of this project will be further help speed up the activities.'

Chandra said, 'We are aware of the adverse effects of climate change resulting in droughts, flash floods, cloud burst resulting in the natural cycle of water and biodiver-

sity loss. The change in rain cycle is also adversely affecting the productivity of land, resulting in the birth of harmful insects, and challenging food security. Through these projects, we intend to arrest soil degradation and improve water content in the rain-fed rivers.' He further said, 'IIT Indore may look for the feasibility of having an automated weather station in the campus and study rainfall pattern & biodiversity which is crucial for studying nature and climate.'

The institute should prepare a list of plants which are aboriginal to this area and improve the baseline data of the biodiversity and plant around 170 types of trees which are unique in central India. A study should be conducted to see the impact on climate change by developing such biodiversity.'

A total of 50 hectares of forest land will be identified for development and it will be used for afforestation, improving quality of forests through assisted natural regeneration, enrichment of biodiversity, improvement of wildlife habitat, control of forest fire, forest protection and soil and water conservation measures. A total of Rs 1.98 crore has been sanctioned for the execution of the project.