

IIT-I to develop 50-ha Nagar Van

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DFO SAYS | Urban forest to support conservation research, biodiversity and public learning

IIT-I to develop 50-ha Nagar Van on campus

Tina Khatri
INDORE

IIT Indore will soon have a 50-hectare urban forest under the Nagar Van Yojana, as the Indore Forest Division begins work on a project aimed at integrating conservation, research and public engagement within an academic campus.

The project, funded with Rs 1.985 crore under the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), will convert a large portion of the campus into a managed forest ecosystem with learning and conservation functions, said Pradeep Mishra, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Indore.

"This Nagar Van is planned as a functional forest, not a recreational park," Mishra said. "It will support biodiversity, conservation research and environmental education."

FOREST INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNED FOR RESEARCH AND MONITORING

IIT Nagar Van will include nature interpretation trails, bird-watching tracks, water bodies, internal pathways, seating areas, solar lighting, signage and watch towers, shared Mishra. He added that the layout is intended to allow long-term ecological observation and student involvement in monitoring forest health and species diversity.

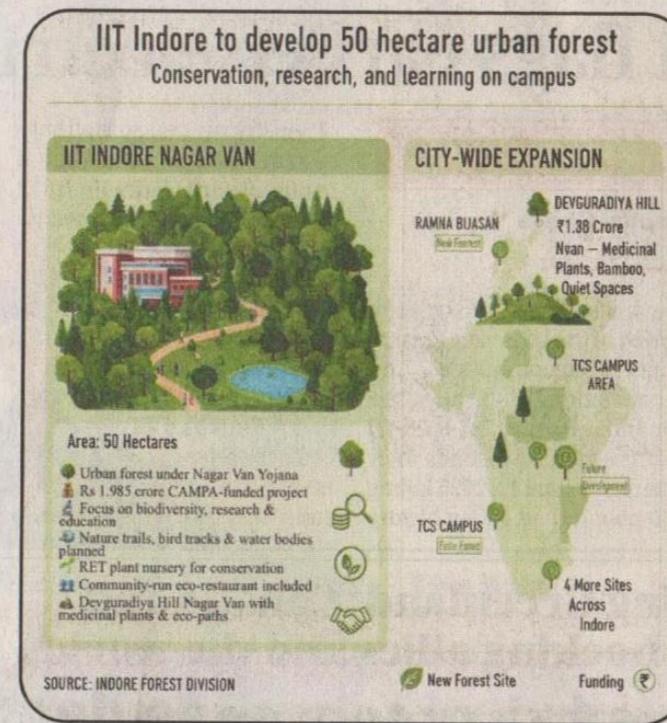
"The focus is on creating habitats and allowing people to understand how forests function," he said.

RET nursery to support conservation work

A key component of the project is a nursery for Rare, Endangered and Threatened (RET) plant species. The nursery will raise native saplings for use within the campus forest and for restoration activities in surrounding areas.

"Raising RET species requires scientific methods and sustained care," Mishra said. "The nursery will support structured conservation rather than short-term plantation drives."

Students and researchers will be able to study seed collection, propagation techniques and habitat restoration as part of the programme.



Community participation through forest-based livelihoods

The project also includes an eco-restaurant to be operated by Joint Forest Management Committees, linking forest conservation with livelihoods.

"This allows people to see how conservation and community participation work together," Mishra said.

Devguradiya Nagar Van highlights the cultural role of forests

Alongside IIT Indore, the Forest Department is devel-

oping another Nagar Van at Devguradiya hill for Rs 1.42 crore. That site will focus on medicinal plants, eco-paths, bamboo structures and quiet spaces.

"Forests serve ecological as well as cultural functions," Mishra said. "Devguradiya reflects that aspect."

More sites identified across Indore

Indore Forest Division has identified four additional sites for Nagar Van development in the next financial year, including Ramna Bijasan, areas near the TCS campus and locations on the city outskirts. Theme-based proposals will be sent to Van Bhawan, Bhopal, and then forwarded to the central government for approval.

"These forests will increase green cover and provide accessible natural spaces within the city," Mishra said.

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