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To
The Editor,

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Sir,

I request that the following matter may kindly be published in your esteemed daily:

Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu inaugurates One lakh Native Tree Growing Programme at FC & RI, Mettupalayam

Health of the nation is based on the wealth of its forest. Trees are the real health, wealth and prosperity of a nation. Based on this concept, the **One lakh Native Tree Growing Programme** was held on Oct. 24, 2019 at the Forest College and Research Institute (FC & RI), Mettupalayam, which is one of the constituent colleges of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore. Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Banwarilal Purohit inaugurated the **Tree Growing Programme**, and planted the first tree seedling (Shenbagam – *Michelia champaka*) in the presence of Dr. N. Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, TNAU, Coimbatore, Thiru. Gagandeep Singh Bedi, IAS., Agrl. Production Commissioner & Principal Secretary to Government, Agriculture Department and other dignitaries.

This programme is the first of its kind, wherein one lakh native tree seedlings are planted inside a single institute. The tree saplings produced at FC & RI itself, were planted in the 'K' and 'F' blocks of FC & RI, covering an area of around 50 acres. By this programme the degraded forest area of this Institute will be rehabilitated successfully. Proper silvicultural procedures such as addition of plant growth promoting bacteria, vermicompost, Farm Yard Manure (FYM) and bio-control agents were followed while preparing the pits for planting. This is meant for enhancing the growth and increasing the hardiness of the plants to withstand drought situation.

The tree seedlings were planted by Board of Management Members of TNAU, Students and Staff of FC & RI and TNAU main campus, Coimbatore. Totally 35 indigenous tree species were planted, and the important ones include: Sandal (*Santalum album*), Satinwood (*Chloroxylon swietenia*), Bahara (*Terminalia arjuna*), Sage leaved alungium (*Alangium salvifolium*), Chinese Banyan Tree (*Ficus retusa*), Helicopter Tree (*Gyrocarpus jacquini*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*),

Karuvel (*Acacia nilotica*), Illupai (*Madhuca longifolia*), Pungam (*Pongamia pinnata*) and Poovarasu (*Thespesia populnea*). These tree species will help in augmenting the climate and eco system, by way of carbon sequestration, releasing of oxygen, temperature moderation, manipulation of micro climate, soil and water conservation, recharge of groundwater, and this habitat will become home for birds and wild animals. It will also serve as a good resource for food, fodder, fuel, non-timber forest products such as honey and fruits, small timber, and function as an educational plot for students and researchers. Apart from this, this will also serve as a demonstration plot for educating farmers, forest officials and other stakeholders.

Maintenance of the one lakh tree saplings will mainly include elephant proof trenching around the plot, and life irrigation during summer seasons. Students will be involved during the post silvicultural operations, both for maintenance and growth, which is part of their course curriculum.

The arrangements for this programme were made by Dr.K.K. Suresh, Dean, FC & RI and Team. Board of Management Members of TNAU, Government Officers, Staff and Students of FC & RI, and Students from TNAU main campus, Coimbatore participated in the programme.

Public Realties Officer