

**Public Relations Department, Chandigarh Administration**  
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**Press Release**

**Chandigarh, March 21:- The Punjab Governor and Administrator, Union territory, Chandigarh, Mr. Shivraj V. Patil has called for a crusade against degradation of environmental heritage and loss of forest cover, adding that conservation of flora and fauna and preservation of forest resources is very essential for maintaining ecological balance and livelihood security. Mr. Patil, today planted a Buddha coconut tree which goes to the height of 80 feet to mark the celebrations of World Forestry Day at Nepli Forests Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary, 15 kms from Chandigarh.**

**Speaking on the occasion, after launching a 'Green Action Plan' for the year 2010-11, Mr. Patil said that on this day we are reminded our duty to maintain the ecological balance and environmental stability and the urgent need to save our forest resources. He emphasized the involvement of every individual, village panchayats, municipal bodies, educational institutions and NGOs as active partners in this environmental – friendly programme. He said that association of trees, plants and animals with various Gods and Goddesses since ancient time when tree worship was quite popular and universal, testified reverential attitudes of the people towards the nature. Therefore, it is the sacred duty of every citizen to contribute towards making this city greener by planting saplings during the coming monsoon, he added.**

**Appreciating steps taken by the Secretary Forests, Mr. Sanjay Kumar and his team to ameliorate the environment of Chandigarh, Mr. Patil congratulated them for raising forest and green cover of Chandigarh to 38%. He said that different departments have different views regarding forest cover. The Forest Department says the area covered in the forest is 12%, Study of Space Department through satellite says it is 8%, but if you cut Himalayas and Andaman Nicobar it comes to just 4%, he added. He said Government can make plans, provide funds and saplings but without the participation of the public it is not possible to implement the plans effectively. He asked the School Children present on the occasion to join hands and take pledge to plant at least one sapling in their respective homes.**

**Mr. Patil stressed upon generating awareness among the people about the social and economic importance of plants in human life and development. He said that the forests are essential for the existence of all life forms on planet earth and plays a vital role in maintaining the delicate ecological balance in nature. They**

**constitute an important component of livelihood resource. Mr. Patil also gave away prizes to school children who won in a competition held regarding pollution control and environment.**

**Mr. Pradip Mehra, Adviser to Administrator said that in the recent past the green cover of Chandigarh has increased tremendously and the Chandigarh Administration is committed to increase it further by undertaking short and long term measures.**

**Mr. Sanjay Kumar, Secretary Forests while speaking on the occasion said that target has been fixed to plant 1.90 lakhs saplings in Chandigarh during the year 2010-2011. He said in order to improve the green cover, various steps has been implemented effectively which includes preparation of annual green action plan, involvement of all sections of society in the annual massive afforestation drive.**

**Mr. Ishwar Singh, Director Forest, said the views of the Punjab Governor and Administrator, UT, Chandigarh, Mr. Shivraj V. Patil would be a source of inspiration for all of us and he assured that the valuable suggestions and guidelines given to us would be implemented effectively.**

**Prominent amongst others who were present on the occasion included Mr. M.P. Singh, Secretary to Governor, Punjab, Dr. Roshan Sankaria, Commissioner, Municipal Corporation and Capt. P.S. Shergill, Additional Deputy Commissioner.**