

Dhyan Vatika

Devrai is a patch of virgin forest which is preserved in the name of God and which represents an eco-system.

During an interaction with Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayanada in November 2016, the Maharashtra Vruksha Samvardhini team gave a proposal to him, expressing their ability and willingness to help and guide to construct a man-made Devrai for Chinmaya Mission. And on 11th December 2016 it was agreed upon to create a Devrai at Chinmaya Vibhooti, Kolwan.

Maharashtra Vruksha Samvardhini (MVS), Pune, and Chinmaya Vibhooti (CV), Kolwan, Mulshi, together successfully planted 550 indigenous plants at CV campus, near Pranav Ganesh Mandir. Swami Tejomayananda planted one tree (a Vad / Banyan tree) on Saturday **28th May 2017 at 5.00pm** and declared the name for this Devrai to be **Dhyan Vatika**.

MVS and Chinmaya Mission are both organisations working for society, mankind and natural development. This **Dhyan Vatika** will provide a serene ambience full of positive energy and it will be an ideal location for meditation. Panchavati sankalpana is associated with all our sacred places. Panchavati means a group of five sacred trees viz. Banyan tree, Peepal tree, Amala tree, Bilva tree and Ashoka tree, planted in a peculiar orientation. These trees represent Panch-Mahabhoot Tattva. There will be two such Panchavati groups at Dhyan Vatika.

For this collaborative project, MVS has provided expertise and technical support, as well as donating all the plants, and nurturing and caring for the plants after plantation. Chinmaya Mission has given land at Chinmaya Vibhooti with a sprinkler system for development, and also provided financial support, manpower and labour.

A Quick Recap of Events of This Project:

Phase - 1

1. 11th December 2016: Project sanctioned by Swami Tejomayananda. MVS visited the site.
2. 27th December 2016: Launch of this project and MVS gave a token six types of plants (Vad, Peepal, Bilva, Fig, Bherali Maad & Bakul) to Chinmaya Vibhooti. Swami Tejomayananda chanted a few mantras.
3. 7th January 2017: MVS explained their ideas to the CV team: to remove grass, take a count of existing trees, make a small temporary nursery for keeping the donated plants, prepare an accessible route to the site (via stairs).
4. 17th January 2017: MVS and CV team members visited Kalika Mata Devrai (60 km from CV campus) to understand the concept of Devrai.
On site work: Removed unwanted and troublesome plants like Undir mari (Glerisedia), Ran mari, Subabul etc. Finalised the location for Panchvad. Compound to be repaired.
5. 1st February 2017: Pala pachola (leaf litter) was spread on the site. Grid was ready, marking for 21 pits was done, and MVS demonstrated how to fill the bags to the CV team. MVS handed over the following plants: Sadaphuli, Owa, Korphad, Amba, Vad, Hirda, Neem, Karanj, Bherali Maad and Peepal. By this date, a total of about 150 plants had been handed over at different times.
6. 10th March 2017: MVS asked CV team to collect leaf litter to be poured around sprinklers.
7. 31st March 2017: Sprinklers were ready on site, and around each sprinkler the team poured dry leaves + cow dung + culture. A 4 feet ring of all these material was spread around each sprinkler.
8. 6th April 2017: MVS asked the CV team to make 650 pits of 18x18x18 inch size at a distance of about 8 to 10 ft.
9. 11th May 2017: All 650 pits of desired dimension were made ready. All pits were kept open, exposed to sunlight, to kill the microbes and weeds.

10. 24th May 2017: Each pit was filled with ash + Pala pachola + Neem pend. MVS transported 550 plants to CV for plantation (list of plants given separately) by sending a tempo to Mr. Dhole's nursery.
11. 28th May 2017: MVS team + CV team and staff planted about 550 plants.
At 5.00 pm Swami Tejomayananda planted Vad and two Parijatak plants, and some other plants were planted by Swamis and Swaminis and devotees.
12. 29th May 2017: Post caring of plants taken up by MVS staff and CV team. From then onwards sprinklers have run for 2hrs daily for the newly planted saplings until the regular monsoon starts.
Sagargota seeds were sown near the fencing. At the end of the left side small pits were made ready for plantation of Nirgudi. All pits were filled with Pala pachola and saw dust for good mulching.
13. 9th June 2017: MVS inspected the site and observed that more than 90% of the saplings were fresh and well-established. MVS handed over two saplings of Madhavi Lata (climber) and gave instructions to plant all remaining indigenous plants on site. Other more exotic plants could be planed anywhere in the CV campus.

End of Phase-1.

What's Coming Up In Phase-2:

Protection and sustenance of these plants for long term.

- Marking of pathways inside Dhyan Vatika
- Plantation in the remaining pits
- Nurturing of saplings
- Preparing nallah bunding and rain water harvesting
- Plantation of bamboo and other trees to be continued
- Repairing of fencing and plantation near Dhyan Vatika to avoid intrusion of stray animals
- Some shrubs, herbs and climbers are to be introduced to make Dhyan Vatika an adequately bio-diverse and balanced eco-system