



Van Mitra Scheme

[Haryana Government scheme for plantation by community on non-forest land]

1. Executive Summary

The Van Mitra scheme is an initiative by the government to encourage community participation in tree plantation activities on non-forest lands. Recognizing the critical role of green cover for a healthy environment and the shortfall in forest areas in Haryana, this scheme aims to involve local communities directly in enhancing tree cover across the state. By leveraging the support of local volunteers spread all over the State, the scheme envisions fostering a culture of environmental guardianship and personal commitment towards tree planting and care. The maintenance of tree planted under “**Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam**” campaign launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India in June, 2024 shall be integrated with Van Mitra Scheme.

2. Introduction

Environmental sustainability depends on the extent of green cover on the land. In forest-deficit states like Haryana, the need is to increase tree cover outside designated forest areas for the restoration of ecological balance and ambient environment for the citizens. The Van Mitra scheme represents a strategic intervention aimed at mobilizing community resources and inculcating enthusiasm for tree plantation and aftercare of plantations.

3. Scheme Overview

- a. **Objective:** To promote community participation in tree plantation, ensuring increased survival rates of plantations and enhancing tree cover on non-forest land for a healthier living environment.
- b. **Operational Procedure**
 - i. **Public Awareness:** The scheme will be given large publicity through print media and the website of the forest department.
 - ii. **Identification of Eligible Families:** The eligible families/persons having an annual income of less than 1.8 lakh will be identified from data of Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP) maintained by the Citizens Resources Information Department (CRID) and intimation of eligibility for participation in the scheme will be given to the families through various measures. Through this message, the stakeholders will be made aware of the process of registration on the Van Mitra portal/ mobile app. of the scheme.

- iii. **Registration:** The eligible families will register one eligible member (age between 18 to 60 years) of the family on Van Mitra Portal/app. The information on the number of saplings to be planted will be given at the time of registration by the family member.
- iv. **Plantation by registered applicants:** All registered applicants on the Van Mitra portal shall be given opportunity to plant minimum of 10 and upto 1000 saplings on non-forest land identified by them within a designated timeframe, which will be communicated via SMS. The applicants shall identify non-forest land and dig pits, geo-tag and upload pit photo on the Van Mitra App. After successfully digging pits and uploading information on Van Mitra Portal, the applicants can collect saplings from designated nurseries operated by the Forest Department. The Van Mitra portal/App (<http://164.100.137.122/vanmitra>) and the Forest Department's website (<https://haryanaforest.gov.in/>) will provide a comprehensive list of these nurseries, including their locations and the names of the nursery in-charges. The digging of pits and plantation by the applicants, shall be carried out according to the specified pit size and plantation techniques detailed in the training material. Additionally, all applicants who successfully dig pits, geotag and upload photographs on Van Mitra portal will be given incentive of Rs.20 per pit. After collection of plants from forest nurseries and planting them on the dug up pits, geotag and upload photographs on the portal on Van Mitra Mobile app, The Van Mitras shall receive incentive of Rs.30 per plant, directly credited to their account.
- v. **Selection of Van Mitra:** All registered applicants who successfully plant trees, geotag and upload photographs of them using the Van Mitra mobile app will be recognised as “**Van Mitra**”. These Van Mitras will be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the saplings they have planted, as well as those handed over to them by other, Van Mitras, or participants of the '**Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam**' campaign. The transfer of such plantations for subsequent maintenance to the Van Mitra will be conducted online through the Van Mitra portal.
- vi. **Land Identification:** The Van Mitra will identify and arrange non-forest lands such as Panchayat land, institutional land, and government land (e.g., schools, colleges, dispensaries, government offices, water-works etc.), as well as village ponds, panchayat buildings, shamshaan ghaats, non-notified roads etc. for plantation.
- vii. **Training:** Registered applicants will have access to comprehensive training materials on the Van Mitra portal and app. These resources will cover plantation techniques, protection measures, and the geotagging of planted saplings using the Van Mitra mobile app.

4. Implementation Timeline and Activities

a. 1st Year

- i. **February/March:** Registration, selection and training.
- ii. **July 15th to August 31st:** Pit digging and Plantation along with geotagging.
- iii. **September to March:** Maintenance and protection of plantation.

b. 2nd, 3rd and 4th Year

Maintenance and protection of plantation.

5. Incentives:

a. 1st Year

Digging of pits

- i. **Rs. 20 per dug up pit** after geo-tagging and uploading the photograph of the pits dug by Van Mitra on the Van Mitra Mobile app.

Plantation

- ii. **Rs. 30 per planted sapling** after geo-tagging and uploading photographs of the saplings planted by the Van Mitra on the Van Mitra mobile app.

Plantation Maintenance

- iii. **Rs. 10 per surviving sapling**, in the first week of every following month of maintenance/ protection works of the plantation and uploading of photographs of plants on the Van Mitra mobile app by Van Mitra.

b. 2nd Year

Rs. 8 per surviving sapling in the first week of every following month of maintenance/ protection works of the plantation and uploading of photographs of plants on the Van Mitra mobile app by Van Mitra.

c. 3rd Year

Rs. 5 per surviving sapling in the first week of every following month of maintenance/ protection works of the plantation and uploading of photographs of plants on the Van Mitra mobile app by Van Mitra.

d. 4th Year

Rs. 3 per surviving sapling in the first week of every following month of maintenance/ protection works of the plantation and uploading of photographs of plants on the Van Mitra mobile app by Van Mitra.

6. Technology Integration

- a. **Van Mitra App:** For registration, geo-tagging and assessment of the survival of plantations.
- b. **Payment of Incentive:** Payment of incentive to Van Mitras will be made directly into their accounts, adhering to the government's Direct Transfer Benefit (DBT) policy of Government.

7. Basic implementation guidelines of Scheme

- a. **Species Selection:** Under the scheme, only native and multipurpose tree species shall be planted. Saplings to be planted will not include short-rotation species such as eucalyptus and poplar, which are typically used in agro-forestry.
- b. **Plant-to-Plant Distance:** The minimum plant-to-plant distance will be around eight meters. With this spacing, about 65 plants per acre can be planted.
- c. **Plantation on Non-Owned Land:** In case the plantation is done on land not belonging to Van Mitra, he will hand over the plants to the owner of the land after completion of four years of plantation to the owner of the land and the owner will then take care of the plant as his property. An honorarium of Rs. 25 per handed-over plant will be given to the Van Mitra. In case the planted tree is on the land of Van Mitra himself, he will be deemed to be the owner of the tree and further incentives hereinafter will be admissible to him as the owner of the tree.

8. Role and responsibility of Van Mitra

- a. **Consent for Non-Owned Land:** In case the land identified for the plantation is not in the ownership of Van Mitra, he will obtain consent from the owner/authorised person in writing.
- b. **Plantation and Care:** To dig pits required for plantations and further carry out plantations in the pit and take their care as per specifications contained in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- c. **Geotagging and Uploading:** To geotag and upload photographs of each pit/sapling after completing activities such as pit digging, sapling plantation, monthly maintenance/protection of plants and to provide number of surviving plants using the Van Mitra App. If more than 10% of claimed work is found to be false, Van Mitra shall be disengaged.
- d. **Survival of Plants:** To ensure good survival of plantations.
- e. **'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' Campaign:** Any resident of Haryana can plant a tree under the campaign 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' in the name of his/her mother and hand it over to the concerned Van Mitra for further maintenance. Subsequently, the Van Mitra will be responsible for the maintenance of the said tree and will be entitled to incentives as per para 5a(iii).

9. Role and responsibility of the Forest Department

- a) **Controlling/Supervisory Officers:** The concerned forest guard shall be the controlling officer and concerned Block /Range officers shall be the supervisory officers of Van Mitra for facilitating the execution of work. They shall also evaluate and assess the uploaded reports of Van Mitra.
 - b) **Supply of Saplings:** To provide healthy saplings for the plantation and to beat up mortality of saplings (10%) to the Van Mitra.
 - c) **Training:** To impart basic training to Van Mitras, training materials will be provided covering techniques of plantation, maintenance/protection, geotagging of planted saplings, and the preparation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) such as requirements for weeding, hoeing, irrigation, and measures for protecting plants from frost. If required, Van Mitras will also receive hands-on training on the Van Mitra mobile app.
 - d) **Advisory Support:** The forest guards, foresters and range officers will provide advice concerning plantation to Van Mitras within their area of jurisdiction as and when required by them.
 - e) **Disengagement of Van Mitra:** The engagement of Van Mitra may be discontinued on the grounds of misconduct/misbehaviour, or unsatisfactory performance. The Van Mitra shall have no right to claim regularisation/absorption/appointment as a regular government employee of the state government.
 - f) **Documentation:** Documentation of assessment of survival percentage of plantation done by Van Mitra.
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