

NEW DELHI NATURE SOCIETY

July 2017 Newsletter

Pragati Madan tree felling

Delhi has lost more than 15,000 trees in the last three years. It's ranked as one of the most polluted cities on the planet and we might not be able to afford losing over 1,713 trees at the expense of our health. So we at NDNS are raising our voice against 1,713 trees being cut in Pragati Maidan. Help us by donating >>> [HERE](#)

The following articles are from Hindustan Times

1,713 trees set to make way for new exhibition centre at Pragati Maidan

RTI REPLY Environmentalists raise concern, say around 15k trees felled in Capital in last three years, authorities promise replantation

Joydeep Thakur
@joydeepthakur

NEW DELHI: More than 1,700 trees may be felled to give way to the integrated exhibitions-cum-convention centre at Pragati Maidan, a RTI query has revealed.

The RTI regarding tree felling was filed by an advocate Aditya Prasad.

"As many as 1,713 trees have been identified for felling for the project. We have already issued permission as per the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act. The required fees has been deposited," said a senior official of the state forest department.

It was in January this year that the Cabinet approved the proposal to redevelop Pragati Maidan by setting up a world class integrated exhibitions-cum-convention centre.

Work has already started and several structures, such as the iconic Hall of Nations have already been demolished.

Environment activists have already raised concerns as more than 15,000 trees have been felled in the capital over the last three years. While more than 5,000 were cut in 2014-15, around 4,600 and 4,700 trees were felled in 2015

Vanishing greens



and 2016-17.

"This is a horrifying story. Pragati Maidan, as I know it, is full of old Pilihan trees, some of them as old as 60 years. Had there been a place of worship here could they have razed it? Do the planners know the value of these trees?" said Pradip Krishna, Indian filmmaker and environmentalist.

An estimate made by US researchers has revealed that a tree on an average absorbs more than 20 kilograms of carbon dioxide every year. And by the time it reaches the age of 40, it can sequester up to around one ton of carbon dioxide.

Earlier this week a group of

residents and green activists managed to stall the felling of nine trees near Aurobindo Marg in south Delhi.

The trees were being felled to ease traffic snarl.

"We would be planting 10 times the number of trees we are going to cut. While some of these saplings would be planted inside the perches, the rest would be planted in the O Zone of Delhi Development Authority which comprises the river front of River Yamuna," said a senior official of National Building Construction Corporation (India) Limited, the implementing agency of the Pragati Maidan redevelopment project.

The Delhi Preservation of Trees Act provides for compensatory plantation in the ratio of 1:10 in case of felling and 1:5 in case of transplantation of a tree.

But activists do not seem to be satisfied with these equations.

"Chopping full grown trees and planting saplings has become a ploy to give permission to infrastructure projects. These saplings would take years to give the same benefit as a full grown tree. It is high time we build several full grown trees," said Padmarati Dwivedi, green activist and Delhi's tree consultancy.



FAUNA CORNER

NDNS rescued and nursed a Yellow Footed Green Pigeon found in B Block NFC, a cute Mynah fledgling from C Block NFC, a Barn Owl from A Block NFC and a Kitten from C Block NFC this month. The birds are released where they were rescued from once they heal. The newborn kitten was abandoned by the mother so we are looking for a caring home for her.



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Newdelhinaresociety@gmail.com



9711115666



@newdelhinaresociety



www.ndns.in

Aam Khaao, Guthli Bachao campaign 🍌

The king of all fruits is a relishing delight but we often throw away the mango seeds which either land up in garbage heaps or grow in awkward places like drain sides. Each mango seed is the womb of an 'ambra vriksha' which holds the potential to grow into a full-fledged healthy tree that can support another few thousand fruits in its lifetime.

Mango trees attract frugivore creatures like Parakeets, Hornbills, Bats, Flying Foxes, Treepies, Bulbuls and Mynahs most often. They are also home to a variety of insects like Caterpillars and Butterflies. So the next time you eat a mango, remember to save the seed and plant it. Once the sapling is ready, you can gift it to your friends or simply enjoy the fruits of your fruit seed yourself! This campaign was featured in [Gulf News](#), [Mail Today](#) and Samvada NFC.



Breathing is not an option

Concerned residents of Delhi joined hands to form a human chain to save trees from being removed on Aurobindo Marg. The group met The Environment Minister and after discussions, he has got the cutting halted so that we can get together and plan on alternate solutions while saving the trees.



Delhi Times  Delhi Times  @DelhiTimesTweet

After green activists tied rakhis to save trees on Aurobindo Marg, Delhi environment minister @ImranHussain orders not to cut them down



Minister takes up tree felling case

Delhi environment minister Imran Hussain on Monday held another meeting with activists over the felling of trees in Aurobindo Marg, along with senior officials from the forest department, PWD and Traffic Police to find a solution to decongest the area without the removal of trees. Led by activist Padmavati Dwivedi, the locals from the area were assured that the trees would not be cut, and all departments were asked to come up with solutions to decongest the area without the removal or felling of such trees.

al records have recognised that the hills in Faridabad, Rewari

[Watch Video HERE](#) + Coverage by THE WIRE >> [HERE](#)

Cement removal from around trees

Trees in Delhi NCR must have at least 1 meter of soil space in all directions but a few residents decide to cover the soil around the trees with cement. They do not realize that this will kill the tree very soon by preventing its growth and water percolation. NDNS has been finding such sites and helping trees by spreading awareness and getting the cement removed.

[Watch Video HERE](#)

NDNS conducts its first Mumbai Tree Climbing Workshop

NDNS spread its wings in Mumbai and conducted the first Tree Climbing workshop in Mumbai last month!



Fun and interactive posters by children at Serra International School, NFC

NDNS created a project to raise awareness about trees for World Environment Day which was on Monday, 5th June. These posters were made by four year olds of Serra International School NFC and were put up in New Friends Colony. The RWA and MCD Horticulture helped us in placing these on bamboo poles, near the trees, since there is a Rs10,000/- fine as per NGT to place banners on trees with ropes or nails.



PLASTIC FREE NFC

NDNS has been conducting a "Say no Plastic bags" shop to shop campaign in NFC with the RWA. One pencil or a banana also comes with a plastic bag absolutely free which is used for not more than 5 minutes and is thrown into the garbage or on the road. They are neither biodegradable, nor are they resellable, so they end up blocking drainage lines or chocking animals stomachs. Plastic bags are never washed or reused, and is very commonly seen burnt on roadsides which add to Delhi's famous air pollution. So we must encourage cloth bags or paper bags instead.

Watch video [HERE](#)

COMPOST CAMPAIGN

There is an ongoing door to door campaign for Composting in A Block NFC, urging residents to give their kitchen waste separately to the garbage collector, which goes to the colony compost pits. Once the compost is ready, it is sold at Rs5/kg and is very good for your plants.

Watch Video [HERE](#)

Talk at Karma Lakeland

NDNS presented a slideshow of all the work done over the years to inspire and motivate the audience to connect with nature. The children climbed trees and played a few nature games in the garden after the talk.



Sundown at Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary

Participants enjoyed an evening of fun in nature. Tree Climbing, Slack Lining and making seed bombs while being surrounded by trees, birds, butterflies and cool breeze.



Asiad Village “Connecting people with nature”

The Earth Collective organizes a weekly organic farmers market and invited NDNS to conduct a walk in the forest with residents of Asiad Village and participants from other parts of Delhi as well. Everybody enjoyed the sights and sounds of nature, tree climbing and seed bomb making.



Chat over Chai

NDNS spoke to residents of NFC about their plastic waste and how it devastatingly affects us directly. This event was organized by RWA and also had MCD councilor present to discuss colony matters.



Birthday in Nature

NDNS organized a birthday celebration at the Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary. 6 year old children with their parents enjoyed fun activities in nature. Tree climbing, slack lining, seed bombs, nature walk and refreshments without leaving any non biodegradable waste behind. Sunset, cool breeze, birds, butterflies, fresh air and lots of greenery made everybody feel great.



Save trees: Kids 'draw' PM's attention

Jasjeev.Gandhiok
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Schoolchildren have sent 300 postcards to the Prime Minister urging him to stop felling of 1,713 trees at Pragati Maidan for a redevelopment project.

A citizen group of environmentalists, tree lovers and activists, which is behind the drive, is also planning to launch an online petition as well as move court against the decision to cut these trees for the redevelopment of the ITPO complex at Pragati Maidan. They have suggested alternative measures to incorporate the trees into the project architecture itself to prevent them from being cut.

The postcards, with messages like 'Please don't cut trees in Pragati Maidan' and 'Save trees, Save Delhi', were sent to the Prime Minister's



BUDDING ENVIRONMENTALISTS: The schoolchildren's postcards with the messages were sent to the Prime Minister's residence

residence on Sunday.

The drive was launched after the group came to know through an RTI application that the forest department has already granted permission for felling these trees. However, the project is yet to get an environmental impact assessment (EIA) clearance.

"These are large, adult trees estimated to be around 50-60 years old and replacing them with small saplings does not make any sense, especially as Delhi is reeling under air pollution that is at hazardous levels on a regular basis," said Preeti Bharadwaj, social worker and environ-

mentalist who is spearheading the postcard campaign.

"A revised plan with the trees integrated in the design will be a model for our country to showcase. Delhi has lost over 15,000 trees in the last three years, so we need to put a complete stop to any more tree felling," said Verhaen Khanna, a tree lover and activist.

According to the EIA report accessed by the group, the PM2.5 levels in the area vary from a minimum of 42 micrograms per cubic metre to a maximum of 126. Activists argue that cutting down trees in the area will only make the air quality worse. "The prescribed limit of Central Pollution Control Board is 60 micrograms per cubic metre. If these trees are cut, the levels will only get worse," said Aditya N Prasad, an environmentalist.



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