

## “DESERTIFICATION CAN BE TACKLED EFFECTIVELY WITH PEOPLES’ PARTICIPATION AND COOPERATION AT ALL LEVELS”: UNION ENVIRONMENT MINISTER CELEBRATIONS OF UN WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2017 HELD IN HARYANA

Posted On: 17 JUN 2017 3:27PM by PIB Delhi

Asserting that desertification can be tackled effectively and solutions are possible, Union Environment Minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan has said that active participation of the local people and cooperation at all levels are the tools to achieve this aim. The Minister urged the people of Haryana and the nation to become a large force of ‘Paryavaran Rakshaks’ (environment protectors) to fight the challenges posed by desertification, global warming and climate change. Addressing the gathering at a function to inaugurate Swarna Jayanti Nature Camp and launching of nature awareness and Aravalli conservation campaign in Bhondsi, near Gurugram in Haryana today, to celebrate the United Nations World Day to Combat Desertification 2017, the Minister highlighted that such days are in reality a reminder of the spirit symbolized by that Day.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan pointed out that modern science & technology and environment can come together to protect the nature. He referred to the devising of a solar tree by the scientists on an area of 4 sq. metre, which generates 5 KW of electricity. In the context, the Minister also highlighted the leading role played by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, to form the International Solar Alliance at the Conference of Parties at Paris in 2015 and added that the Government was firmly committed to implement policies on solar energy.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan urged the people to go back to their homes with the spirit imbibed at the celebrations and work with renewed vigour for afforestation as a means to combat desertification. He also said that the picturesque Aravalli range is venerable, not just for the people of Haryana, but the entire nation, and that the people should work with resolve and dedication to make Aravallis more beautiful. The Minister added that the Central government will extend all possible support to any scheme formulated to realize the vision of enhancing the beauty of the Aravalli range. He reiterated that the people should concentrate on taking small steps to protect the environment. He reminded the gathering not to forget the lessons of environment protection imparted to us by our ancestors and in fact, to use the lessons to protect the nature.



Environment Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan addressing the gathering

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister of Haryana, Shri Manohar Lal, said that climate change is having an adverse impact on our lives and is also adding to the desertification of land. He stressed that afforestation can act as a bulwark to stop the process of desertification of land. The Chief Minister announced that the forest around Bhondsi area has been renamed as “Chandra Shekhar Smriti Van” in the memory of former Prime Minister Chandrashekhar.

Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Ajay Narayan Jha, Director General, Forests and Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Sidhanta Das and other senior officers and officials of Ministry of MoEFCC attended the celebration. Minister for Public Works, Forests,

Agriculture & Civil Aviation, Haryana, Rao Narbir Singh, Minister for Industries & Commerce, Environment & Industrial Training, Haryana, Shri Vipul Goel, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Food & Supplies and Forests, Haryana, Shri Karan Dev Kamboj, MLA, Sohna, Shri Tejpal Tanwar, MLA, Gurugram, Shri Umesh Aggarwal, MLA, Pataudi, Smt. Bimla Chaudhary and Sarpanch, Bhondsi, Smt. Durga Devi and people from Bhondsi and nearby areas were among the distinguished ones in the gathering.

A report prepared by Wildlife Institute of Dehradun titled "Mapping Aravallis" on the state of Aravallis was released to mark the occasion. A short film on the conservation of 'Goraiya' (house sparrow) was also screened.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan and Shri Manohar Lal also rode a part of the distance at the venue, on bicycles to spread the message of environment protection and good health.



Dr Harsh Vardhan pedalling a part of the way on the venue

Earlier, the Environment Minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan and Chief Minister of Haryana, Shri Manohar Lal, witnessed an exhibition on United Nations World Day to Combat Desertification, put up by Haryana government.

\*\*\*

**HK**

(Release ID: 1493145) Visitor Counter : 299

