

TITLE: *Nurture a Sapling* initiative by Nisarg Club

CONTEXT:

The college believes that the students are the agents of change in the society, and that if a caring attitude for nature is developed in students today, it would prove beneficial in the long run, since they would carry on such practices even at their work place in years to come. With the College running and Education program, the students who will take up teaching profession can take inspiration from their college and set up nursery at other educational institutes. The idea was thus intended as an activity to foster a responsibility in students towards environmental protection.

OBJECTIVES:

The Nisarg Club set up a plant nursery in the year 2017. The main aim behind setting up this nursery was twofold: 1. Create an increased awareness, proactiveness and empathy for nature, and 2. Initiate tree plantation drive with the assistance of students and teachers of VPCCECM so as to increase the local green cover.

THE PRACTICE:

Nisarg Club members were provided with a sapling, which they have to plant, nurture and document. The record of plants being nurtured is maintained in form of photos on the Nisarg Club Whatsapp group.

In addition to this saplings were provided to teachers of this institute, who wish to organise Vanmahotsav in varied localities.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND RESOURCES REQUIRED:

1. Setting up of Nursery required financial backup.
2. Maintaining the nursery especially watering the saplings regularly.
3. Replenishing the stock of saplings

HOW THE ISSUES WERE RESOLVED:

1. One key requirement towards setting up the nursery was the green shed. Scraps of metal rods and pipes left over from previous construction of the College building were gathered and shaped into the shed. The agro shade net was donated to the college by Vice Principal Dr. Sukhaji G. Naik.
2. Maintaining the nursery and watering of the saplings regularly was taken care of by hiring the services of a gardener on contract basis. In addition, NSS and Nisarg Club volunteers, and the Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) members would regularly help maintain the nursery.
3. The stock of saplings was regularly replenished by the Department of Forest.

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS:

From 2017 till date around 167 individuals have planted more than 500 saplings and nurtured them. At present the Nursery has around 1500 saplings of coconut, mango, chikoo and guava.

UNIQUENESS:

This practice of nurturing a plant by each member of Nisarg Club not only makes these students more caring towards nature but they also encourage other students of the college to nurture plants. Looking at this practice followed by college staff and students, the teachers of other sections of this institute got motivated to take up tree plantation.