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To make the State clean and pollution-free under the ongoing green drive, Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal on Thursday gave nod to provide 40 lakh saplings to all Government institutions and villages free of cost. The Chief Minister asked the officers of the forest department to carefully choose plants as per the topography of different regions of the State to ensure their longevity. Badal, presiding over a meeting of Governing Council of the Green Punjab Mission, said that officers were required to play a proactive role for transforming the campaign into a mass movement by ensuring maintenance of saplings after they were planted.

He also gave nod for sending Forest Department officers abroad to undertake further studies for the preservation of plants in scientific manner. The Chief Minister approved projects worth Rs 16 crore including five new ones for improving urban forestry and imparting education to the citizens by creating pockets of forest near Ropar, Amritsar, Patiala, Ludhiana and Bathinda and establishment of common facility centre in Talwara for increased value addition of local products. He gave concurrence for the Annual Plan Outlay

for 2015-16 under CAMPA to the tune of Rs 67.95 crore, said the government spokesperson.

Badal was informed that construction of State Forest Institute at Ladhawal near Ludhiana, in collaboration with Forest Research Institute (FRI) Dehradun, was going on in full swing and the Rs 23.29 crore project would be completed by November this year, he said. The institute would focus on research related to agro forestry promotion in the state. A Clonal Eucalyptus Nursery being set up at Ludhiana in collaboration with the FRI, which would be the biggest of its kind in north India with a capacity to provide 50 lakh seedlings to the farmers, the spokesperson added. Also a nursery of herbal-cum-medicinal plant has been set up on 25 acre land in Talwara region which would serve as a model for replication in other areas of Kandi region in the future.

Source:

<http://www.dailypioneer.com/state-editions/chandigarh/state-govt-to-provide-40-lakh-saplings-under-green-punjab-mission.html>