



## Staff Reporter Raipur,

Battle of indigenous communities for their right to 'Jal, Jungle aur Zameen' (water, forests and land) is never-ending. When Bastar went to polls on April 19, 2024, issues like inadequate healthcare, education and nutrition may also have been on the minds of the tribal voters. However, amid the ever present need for government-aided development, one social organisation is doing its part to generate livelihoods and strengthen the connection of rural and tribal communities with their ecology and natural resources. Grow-Trees.com's recent plantation of over 2,50,000 trees in Bastar acknowledges the pivotal role that forests play in the lives of indigenous communities like Bhil, Gond, Pardhi, Munda, Kondh, Andh, and Baiga. The project titled 'Trees for Tribals' is helping to create a self-reliant community," according to Ayush Kumle, Forest Officer, Bastar District.

"Grow-Trees has been working with us for the past few years. Not has only the plantation initiative done wonders for the environment, but it has also been very beneficial for the local communities grappling with the prospect of migration to urban areas due to economic instability. This project has created job opportunities, boosted the economy, and educated locals about the importance of conservation. It's incredible how just one initiative can make such an impact on so many lives," said FO Ayush Kumle. The project also carried out community sensitization towards the problem of uncontrolled grazing while the expanded forest cover helped create a stable

ecosystem that provides fuel wood, medicines, and livelihood security through the collection, sale, and use of non-timber forest produce (NTFP). In the Monsoon of 2023, over 50,000 saplings were planted and generated over 4080 workdays for around 1975 locals who developed nurseries and carried out planting and maintenance activities. Over 40% of these direct beneficiaries were women empowered by the increase in their income.

The complete plantation of over 2,50,000 trees was able to generate more than 20,000 work days for over 2856 individuals while also providing indirect benefits like mitigating climate disasters such as flooding. The co-founder of Grow-Trees.com, Pradip Shah shares, "Human activities, erratic weather patterns, and the loss of green cover create a slew of problems that erode biodiversity and also distress forest-dependent communities. Forests provide them with fire wood, fodder and water for their cattle and they also forage for wild fruits, seeds, gum and flowers and more. 'Trees for Tribals' is our attempt to restore the health of their forests and counter soil erosion, reverse land degradation, halt desertification, and provide clean water through an augmented water cycle. We choose diverse tree species which are now helping to protect soil, elevating the water table and addressing a variety of economic and ecological issues. On maturity, the 2,50,000 trees will also absorb approximately 50,00,000 kgs of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere."

### What did they say for this?

[Sign in](#) ▾



Share your thoughts about that

Guest ▾

Username

Email

Post as Guest

0 comments

★ Best   ↓<sub>1</sub> Oldest   ↓<sub>1</sub> Newest

Write the first review for this !