



शुष्क वन अनुसंधान संस्थान

भारतीय वानिकी अनुसंधान एवं शिक्षा परिषद्,
पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय,
भारत सरकार की स्वायत्त शासी संस्था

पी. ओ. कृषि मण्डी, नईपाली रोड, जोधपुर (राजस्थान) - 342 005

ARID FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education,
An Autonomous Body of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Govt. of India
P.O. Krishi Mandi, New Pali Road, Jodhpur (Rajasthan) - 342 005



BHARAT KI AAZADI KA AMRUT MAHOTSAV

Minutes of the Visit of Honourable Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Culture, Government of India – Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal

Honourable Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Culture, Government of India – Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal visited Arid Forest Research Institute, Jodhpur on 14th October 2021 as part of the Bharat Ka Amrut Mahotsav Celebrations.

Upon arrival, the Honourable Minister was welcomed by the Director AFRI Sh. M.R. Baloch, *IFS* at the AFRI Guest House in the presence of the Head of Archeological Survey of India's (ASI) Jodhpur Circle Dr Biri Singh and Head Extension Division, AFRI, Smt. Anita, *IFS*. He then visit of the ASI Office and thereafter planted a sapling of Sandalwood tree in the AFRI lawn. During the plantation ceremony he actively interacted with the employees of AFRI who were present at the spot for the event. He emphasized the importance of trees and explained about its connections and elaborate description in ancient Indian scriptures.

After the plantation ceremony, he was welcomed at AFRI Seminar Hall by the Director AFRI, Shri M.R. Baloch, *IFS* with a floral bouquet and a Rajasthani Safa and Shawl. Smt Vanita Seth, Mayor, Jodhpur City and Shri G.C. Jain, Chairman Rajasthan Marudhara Rural Bank and other people from Jodhpur were also present for a short duration at the occasion and felicitated the Honourable Minister, Shri Meghwal. Dr. Tarun Kant (Scientist F, AFRI) presented an elaborate introduction of the Honourable minister and a brief overview of his achievements that have made him a renowned figure in his field. Some of the most interesting highlights of the introduction included his being an excellent academician, having authored some books, an environmentalist and ardent social worker promoting social justice to the under-privileged, besides a brilliant yet humble politician who promotes happiness. Thereafter, all the participants present on the venue introduced themselves. The introductory session was followed by a welcome address by Director AFRI who delivered, in a summarized manner, a note on the important research activities and the extension programs undertaken by AFRI, while also mentioning the steps taken by AFRI towards release of *Dalbergia sissoo* clones that are expected to soon be available once their approval process is completed, a feat accomplished through years of consistent and concerted efforts and informed about the preparation of Luni River DPR and upcoming Aravalli DPR projects. He also highlighted the Honourable Minister's contributions in nation building. The Director AFRI also informed that the Honourable Minister is a down-to-earth person and has got multi-faceted personality. He has been awarded the 'Best Parliamentarian Award' twice. India's Missile Man - Late Dr Abdul Kalam, Honourable Past President of India has narrated best true stories and praise about Sh. Meghwalji in his well acclaimed book "A Manifesto For Change", which everyone must read. A short film showcasing the highlights of institute and its research activities was screened before the Honourable Minister.

Then, the Honourable Minister, Sh. Arjun Ram Meghwal, was welcomed on the stage to address the anticipating participants as the Chief Guest of the program that was part of the 'Bharat Ka Amrut Mahotsav' celebration. Sh. Meghwal, in a very interesting and captivating way, enlightened the hall by narrating his life experiences that led him to make righteous choices and go





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down paths to do his part in the betterment of all.

The key points of the address of the Honourable Minister were as follows:

1. At the outset he described the genesis of 'Bharat Ke Aazadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav' and how the Honourable Prime Minister, Sh. Narendra Modi set the tone for celebrating the 75 years of Indian Independence. He informed that the Ministry of Culture, Government of India is the nodal implementing body for the Mahotsav.
2. He mentioned names of two of his authored books, 'Ek Safar Humsafar Ke Saath' and 'Divya Path Damptya Ka', which serve as testimonies acknowledging the contributions of wives in the lives of married men. He reiterated that contributions everyone in life should be acknowledged.
3. He then emphasized on the importance of a happy society, as a happy society is a productive society and leads to progress of the Nation.
4. He voiced his strong belief in 'equality for all' and that partiality is a vice.
5. He reiterated the spirit of team work and that we should think in terms of a 'Team India' and work together for the nation as a team.
6. He emphasized the need to make efforts at individual level also so that every person can do their part in contributing towards achieving the goal of reducing carbon footprint of the country. He reiterated the message of The Honourable Prime Minister of India, Sh. Narendra Modi, given at the signing of the Paris agreement, to take necessary actions to achieve the targeted carbon emission reduction. Honourable minister also said that as his part of reducing the carbon footprint and to inspire others at the same time he often uses and travels by a bicycle. He urged all to use a bicycle for achieving the fitness and contributing at the same time towards carbon emission reduction goal in a personal capacity.
7. Honourable Minister also advocated hosting 'Ekraatchaandkesaath' events by people, as being done by him where he invites a large gathering to spend time under moonlight. He encouraged everyone to do the same, to spend time with family and friends under moonlight, at the very least on every full moon. This will be a way to connect with nature and at the same time cut down on electricity usage. He said that this is even a better and a more effective way than visiting Earth Hour just once a year. This can be jointly organized with ASI and he would also try to join online.
8. He also conveyed to the audience his work experiences as a Minister of Culture, recalling incidences during times he has spent collecting information on the life histories of unspoken war heroes of the movement for independence, specially dalits and tribals etc. He also explained all the facets of the culture of a nation and his endeavours, along with the help of many others, in preserving it, while also describing how individuals of specific talents can approach and seek help from associates of the ministry to hone their abilities.
9. He also motivated the participants to feel free and share with the ministry should they happen to encounter such an incidence where intervention by the ministry can accord protection to cultural valuables or promote them.
10. In the end, he expressed his delight at having been invited to AFRI, Jodhpur.

A memento was presented to The Honourable Minister by the Director AFRI, Shri M.R. Baloch, IFS. The program ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. G. Singh (Scientist G & GCR, AFRI, Jodhpur).

(M.R. Baloch) IFS, Director





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Glimpse of the Program





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