Myths and rituals and spirituality and science coexist in the Indian psyche whereas it may be an amusement or bewilderment in the western mind. Though the cultural and technological changes brought in by scientific advancements have influenced the folk traditions, they have reemerged as a spiritual science and have wide acceptance even in the west where all the Vedic literature is being translated and accepted (https://archive.org/ stream/garudapuranam00 duttgoog/garudapuranam_00_duttgoog_djvu.txt).

It is the time most opportune now for the renewal of the folk practices to reassert the rationale behind the lively traditions that not only echo through the creative artistic expression of the people but also create a strong cultural identity (Bande, 2005).

The forest resource has been depleted at an alarming rate through once considered unlimited. Therefore, the conservational aspects require strengthening of existing practices, innovating novel ecofriendly techniques and realistic implementation of existing forest practices. This requires combining of short term measures, which ensure human survival, with long term measures that safeguard resource base and improves the quality of life.

The concept of village forests was well established in the ancient Indian culture. They worshipped nature in the image of God. All components of biodiversity including plants have been respected and revered since Vedic times. Various plants associated with different Gods and goddesses were adored and are still used traditionally as an offering for propitiating them. Among them different plant species associated with ‘Rashis’ and ‘Nav Grahas’ were offered to the respective presiding deities seeking their blessings.

In the present investigation, a new approach for creation and conservation of plants is being projected by linking the two ancient knowledge bases of ethnobiology and astrology. Since each ‘Rashi’ and ‘Graha’ has a specific plant associated with it, establishment of ‘Navgraha’ gardens of associated plants
species seems to be a simple way to create and conserve biodiversity and simultaneously propitiate the deities.

As a case study, in the present investigations, laying of Navgrah Vatikain Hamirpur District of Himachal Pradesh has been undertaken along the following lines:

(I) Appraisal of the importance/ significance of plant diversity in Indian Traditional Knowledge (ITK)

(II) Motivation of the people towards afforestation programmes.

(III) Mass afforestation in private lands through people’s participation in District Hamirpur.

(IV) Creation and conservation of Biodiversity in experimental area.

In these studies, the representative plants associated with Navgrahs and Rashis have been first systematically explored, then the ethnic information on them has been documented. The astrological significance of all these plants then has been explored and corroborated with the ethnic uses (through pharmacological and antimicrobial studies), and finally implementing the establishment of the Navgrah Vatikas and Rashi gardens at selected sites in district Hamirpur of Himachal Pradesh by involving local inhabitants of the area.

The representative plant species associated with Rashis and Navgrahas have been collected from various forest nurseries of Hamirpur Forest Division, dried and preserved following the standard herbarium practices (Jain and Rao, 1977). The voucher specimens have been deposited in the Herbarium of HFRI, Shimla. All the plants have been fully described and illustrated, providing botanical name, synonyms, family, vernacular names and other names, habit, habitat and technical description and distribution status.

The methodology for collection of ethnic information on the Rashi and Navgrah plants is as per Jain (1987, 1995).

For laying down of Navgrah Vatikas at specific sites in district Hamirpur, the motivational efforts were made by sensitizing the people and the forest contractors, involved in felling and therefore, responsible for compensatory plantations. They were motivated to form a registered voluntary organization, ‘Harit Kranti Sanstha, Hamirpur’ and to undertake compensatory forestry. The awareness campaign was organized in five Panchayats of the district to motivate
the farmers for the plantation drive through various interactive sessions highlighting the social, religious and economic significance of plants.

The air quality at the Navgrah Vatikas has been analysed for $\text{SO}_2$, $\text{NO}_x$ the SPM (suspended particulate matter). Sulphur dioxide in the air was determined by modified West and Gaeke method (West and Gaeke, 1956). $\text{NO}_2$ in the air was determined by Sodium arsenite method (Greenwood and Earnshaw, 1997) and the total concentration of RSPM in air was calculated by the formula given in the chapter on methodology.

The phytochemical analysis of the Rashi and Navgrah plants was carried out following (Raman, 2006). The antimicrobial activity of the plant parts against three pathogenic bacterial strains was carried out by Disc diffusion method and the cultures were obtained from IMTECH, Chandigarh.

The observations made on Systematics clearly point out that majority of these plants, integrated into the culture and tradition of India, are used in various religious ceremonies. Some of these have even created history, such as Prosopis cineraria, around which revolves the history of famous Chipko movement. Ficus religiosa gets its specific epithet from the fact that this is one of the most religiously revered plants of India. Cynodon dactylon, the common Durva grass, is offered to Lord Ganesha and is used throughout the course of performance of all rituals during worship. The same holds true for Desmostachya bipinnata, the Kusha grass, which has been used traditionally for making mats or seats for meditation and also accomplishing ceremonial offerings, during worship. Michelia champaca is regarded as a cherished offering to the deities in the temples besides being of medicinal value. Mangifera indica leaves are strung auspiciously during every ceremony and its wood is used in sacrificial ceremonies, as well as different parts have a proven medicinal value. Dalbergia sissoo is also a multipurpose tree which is used in Havan and also in ethnic medicine for treating a variety of ailments. All parts of Aegle marmelos find use in one or the other way, from religious ceremonies to food and ethnic medicine. It is also a sacred tree whose trifoliate leaves are offered to Lord Shiva. Similarly a very common herbaceous plant, Achyranthes aspera has been used extensively in folk medicine and also as an offering in the sacrificial fire during religious ceremonies.

Ethnobiology reveals that the nine Navagrah plants and the twelve Rashi plants have been revered, worshipped and used in various ceremonies and rituals.
Many myths are attached to them and they are prominent constituents of many traditional medicine. Our ancestors used them as per their popular beliefs, worship patterns, associated ceremonies, rituals, myths and traditional medicine.

The information gathered from the target groups through a semi structured schedule reveals that all respondents (medical practitioners, teachers and common people) responded with the similar type of information on sacredness, worship and medicinal uses of Navgrah and Rashi plants. This information corroborates the one that has been retrieved from the scriptures.

The nine Navagrah plants and twelve Rashi plants have a long history of ethnic use since Vedic times in Indian culture and tradition which has been transmitted through generations. Since it has been passed on through descent, the ceremonies have acquired various hues and colours for usefulness. The modern science has attempted to rationalize this information through scientific investigation and scrutiny and many of the myths stand validated.

The information gathered from respondents primarily revolved around medico-religious beliefs and conservational aspects but the awareness about the significance of these as Rashi plants was little. For Navgrah plants, they uniformly stressed are religious plants, used in Havan and Homa ceremonies besides in worshiping Navgrahas and are usually collected from the wild and at times purchased from shops which deal with such items. The respondents showed keenness and eagerness to raise them for their ready availability. Some of them even suggested that since these plants are continuously used in ceremonies, every village would welcome such Vatikas and gardens at a common place for use by the entire village, approving the concept of Navgrah Vatikas. Charak Samhita and other scriptures advocate the planting and protection of trees as is clear from the following Shalokas:

विग्रहेन्द्रिये खुलुए तेषु जनपदोध्वंस करेषु।
भविषुसेनोपपाय मानंना न भयं भवति रोगम्यश्च।।

चरक संहिता, विमानस्थान, अ 3.11

वनों का विनाश राष्ट्रों एवं मनुष्य जाति के लिए सबसे ज्यादा खतरनाक है, समाज कल्याण का वनस्पति से प्रक्रिया समबन्ध है। प्राकृतिक पर्यावरण के प्रदूषण और वनस्पति के विनाश के कारण जनपद एवं राष्ट्र बर्बाद हो जाते हैं एवं अनेक रोग पैदा हो जाते हैं। तब शिक्षास्वरूप गुणयुक्त वनस्पति ही प्रकृति की अभिवृद्धि करके मानव को ठीक कर सकती है।
Forests and community welfare have a direct relationship, declining forests is a danger sign for a Nation. Environmental Pollution and depletion of vegetation leads to devastation of communities due to occurrence of many diseases, earlier unknown. During such trying periods, the medicinally benign plants provide succor and relief to the suffering humanity.

(Charaka Samhita, Vimansthan, A. 3.11)

The observations also clearly recognize their great medicinal value. Most of them have been used for the treatment of some common as well as dreaded diseases e.g. gastrointestinal problems, dental problems, skin diseases, rheumatism, heart and liver complaints, constipation, kidney disorders, body aches, fever, malaria, diabetes, hypertension, ulceration, cancer, eye diseases, as anti HIV, diarrhoea, dysentery and diuretic etc. Some of these have nutritional value too. Some of the plants amongst these have multipurpose use as fodder, fuel and source of oil. The wood of many plants finds use as timber, for making furniture, in paper industry, in agricultural implements and some are also beautiful avenue trees. Therefore, these are preferably to be planted and conserved.

In Astrology, nine Planets are considered to govern the Astrological chart of an individual. These are the Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rahu and Ketu. Each planet, depending upon its position and the position with regard to placement of other planets, produces favorable or unfavorable effects on the individual. The malefic effects are responsible for causing various ailments. The ailments may vary according to the sign and the house it occupies besides the planets afflicting it. The parts of the body governed by the signs and planets are likely to be affected.

Each of these Planets also has an associated plant species which is reported in scriptures, to ward off the malefic effects caused by disfavourable location of the respective planet in the Astrological chart (Garuda Purana, Shardha Tilak and Narada Purana). Therefore, planting of respective plant species has been recommended to nullify, reduce or combat the ill effects of the planetary afflictions.

In Astrobiology the observations have been recorded on the basic traits of persons born under the specific zodiac sign, their possible health concerns and plant species associated with the particular zodiac sign, and to corroborate the scriptural ethnic data with the data from phytochemical analysis by modern
techniques. It has been tried to establish linkages between the possible health concerns of the individuals and the pharmacological potential of the respective plant species to synchronize it with the ailments and the active chemical constituents. For example, the persons born under the zodiac sign of Aries are prone to diabetes, stress, depression and indigestion. The plant associated with Aries is *Pterocarpus marsupium*. It is a well established antidiabetic plant in ethnobotanical literature. Pharmacologically its active ingredients are used for balancing blood-sugar levels, as immunomodulatorsto relieve stress from the body and also to set the digestive system right. Based on these observations, it is suggested that the Ariens should undertake planting of this tree to neutralize the malefic effects associated with the sign as recommended in the scriptures.

It is clear, that astrology is closely linked with biology and hence biological aspects of these twenty plants point towards close connections between them. The unfavourable placement of the Navgrahs in different Rashis produces some malefic effects. These effects are expressed in the individuals through various changes in the metabolic processes and diseases caused because of these seem to be the morphological expressions of altered physiological and biochemical processes. The optimum functioning of the physiological and biochemical processes in the body is controlled by maintenance of appropriate energy levels. An imbalance in them weakens the system creating health problems. It is not mere coincidental but perhaps a Divine design that the associated plants have been recommended which may perhaps provide energy for balancing the disturbed energy equations and thus ward off the malefic effects. Hence, there is a need for in depth understanding of these apparently abstract phenomenon and to investigate them holistically taking and applying principles of systematics, ethnobiology and Astrobiology.

The **Phytochemical Analysis** and antimicrobial potential has been carried out to corroborate the projected medicinal uses because medicinally the antimicrobial activity and presence of bioactive compounds like flavonoids, alkaloids, saponins, glycosides, terpenoids, tannins, sterols and carbohydrates is considered vital for preventing diseases and promoting health.

An analysis of phytoconstituents of Rashi and Navgrah plants reveals that out of the ten phytoconstituents analysed, most of the plants show the presence of almost all of them i.e. Carbohydrates, flavonoids, phenols, proteins and amino acids are present in all the *Navgrah* and *Rashi* plants. During the last, over
hundred years the phytochemicals have been isolated and characterized from vegetables, beverages, fruits, bread, soy foods etc. and their nutraceutical significance has been proved beyond doubt (Moorachian, 2000; Doughari and Obidah, 2008; Doughari et al. 2009).

Herbal preparations have been used in the traditional system of medicine since centuries for treating human ailments. They are preferred over modern medicines because there are no side effects. During all these years, it has been observed that pathogenic organisms have developed resistance against antibiotics. The diseases caused by pathogens are reported to cause kidney failure, blood infections, acute gastroenteritis and meningitis etc. In this study, the antimicrobial activity of nine Navgrah plants and twelve Rashi plants has been investigated against three pathogenic bacteria: E.coli, P. aeruginosa and C. albicans.

This is the first attempt to analyse Rashi and Navgrah plants for their phytochemical constituents and for antimicrobial activity and to verify their ethnic uses. The phytochemical analysis reveals that these plants have all the important bioactive compounds. These plant species can, therefore, serve as potential sources of phytochemicals and can be used for designing drugs that can prove to be of keen interest in the treatment and prevention of diseases like cancer, tumour and heart diseases. Hence protection and conservation of such plant species should be prioritized.

These studies on antimicrobial assay were primarily meant for observing the antimicrobial effect of the phytoconstituents as these plant are used in Havan and Yagna etc., which are known to purify air and sanctify the premises because they possess germicidal or antimicrobial properties. The studies clearly indicate that not only the plants used in Havan ceremony but others called as Rashi and Navgrah plants, are potent in suppressing the growth of the microorganisms. Hence this proves, that the indigenous ethnic knowledge and traditional wisdom on these plants was based upon basic scientific principles and was not merely mythical.

Peoples participation and Motivation in Afforestation programme in Hamirpur distt. reveals that the forests of Hamirpur district are under considerable pressure but there is little scope to cope up with this demand through plantations on forestry land. The alternative lies in raising plantations on fallow private lands and on private lands on the fringes of dense and under stocked forests involving
people. This requires proper motivation of the local people by the Forest department.

It is expected that by proper appraisal of Indian Traditional Knowledge and motivation strategies, afforestation on private lands could be undertaken with a feeling of “belongingness”. The present studies were been undertaken to motivate people by making them aware of the status and importance of forests.

As per the ten year felling programme approved by the State Government, the private contractors are required to plant three saplings for each tree felled, but the data of three years understudy (2007-2009) reveals that only around 10,000 have been planted against felling of 1 lac trees.

The reluctance of the people to raise plantations on their lands, indicated, among other reasons, lack of proper awareness and motivation. Hence a programme was designed to make people aware of the importance of tree plantings in social economic and religious settings through personal contacts, meetings, structured talks, presentations and lectures.

The first earnest motivational attempt made was during the year 2007-08, to persuade the forest contractors of the District to float an organization for making Hamirpur a green and clean district so as to undertake compensatory forestry seriously. To promote plantations, a voluntary organisation named “Harit Kranti Sanstha Hamirpur” was floated in April 2008. To motivate people for planting traditional Indian species in their private lands, structured talks were delivered and presentations were made in the selected panchayats, for two successive years (2007-08 and 2008-09). Interactive sessions were conducted at Nanwan, Karsai, Patlander, Sahnwin (Aghar), Jhaniari, Booni, and Hamirpur.

Another group targeted for planting programmes was the Yoga pacharaks. The people attending Yoga camps were observed to have greater concern and awareness for religious and environmental values and that people attending these camps are earnestly interested in the rehabilitation of both inner and outer environment. These people were quite aware of the planetary influences, yoga and Ayurveda and hence were considered good target groups to highlight the importance of Navgrahas and Rashis. These people readily accepted planting of such tree species because most of these species are used in traditional Vedic Ceremonies as well as in Ayurveda.
Voluntary organizations, Self Help Groups (SHG), Yuvak Mandals (YM), and Mahila Mandals (MM) etc. were also targeted as these organizations regularly associate with annual planting programmes and hence are more receptive to new ideas on Environmental Conservation.

The other target group selected was the school children. An awareness campaign was also organized at State level Mela at Sujanpur in March, 2008, a stall was put up at the site of Mela where a computerized programme Parashar Light was displayed with the caption “Make your Birth Chart and know your Rashi plant”.

The author prepared and delivered a series of talks (over 30 in number of one hour duration each) highlighting the importance of various Indian traditional plants on the local TV network. Direct interaction with the farmers on the AIR generated lot of useful and healthy discussions.

The interaction with different target groups oriented them positively and made them realize the positive aspects of conservation of forests in their own interest and for protection of environment. Most of the apprehensions expressed by them were removed to their satisfaction. It encouraged the local people to plant selected recommended species on their private lands. The plants were procured by the local forest contractors from forest nurseries (Forest Department) and planted by the farmers themselves. The recommended species of plants were planted in the five Panchayats during the monsoon season of 2008 (July-August 2008).

Over 17,360 saplings of traditional species were planted in open spaces on private lands. The plantation was entirely carried out by the local people, the Forest Department providing the technical inputs (pit to pit spacing, the size of the pit etc.). The funds for procuring the saplings from the forest nurseries were provided by the forest contractors against the compensatory afforestation of 10-year felling programme.

The survival rate of plantations in five selected panchayats was substantially high. Therefore the concept of Social fencing was able to deliver substantive outputs.

The planting programme was extended further and during 2009 (July-August 2009), more plant species were planted in other areas. The survival rate after two years was assessed to be around 80%, which is a very high survival rate.
With earnest efforts of priests and management of temple and Goshalas, a sprawling *Navgrah Vatika* on an impressive platform with marble statues of the deities of nine planet Gods at Jamli, Kale Amb, Hamirpur (without any Govt. assistance) was created.

The other major Goshala Samities involved in the tree plantation concept are at Jamli near Hamirpur, Bumana near Aghar and Bhagoli Bhagour near Nadaun.

The results at Holi Mela Sujanpur were very productive. A large number of people came forward to get their birth chart made and know about their Rashi plants on the basis of their respective horoscope. Each one of them was suggested a Rashi plant which were later distributed to the registered volunteers during July/August 2008. 1366 persons were registered over a period of 2 days. This effort, towards creation and conservation of biodiversity, using public fair as a platform was duly recognised and appreciated by one and all including the high dignitaries.

A *Navgrah Vatika* (a temple of nine trees), one at NIT Hamirpur campus and the other at Children’s park at Hiranagar, Hamirpur are of special significance. Both these Vatikas are visited by several hundred people every day motivating them to plant such species in their vicinities. A Conservation Park was developed adjoining the world famous Lord Baba Balak Nath Ji shrine at Deot Sidh Hamirpur.

Analysis of *Air Quality* at NIT *Navgrah Vatika* reveals that the particulate matter is lesser in the vicinity of the Navgrah Vatika as compared to a distant location (near Civil Engineering Department of NIT). The SO\textsubscript{2} and NO\textsubscript{X} levels at both the locations were below detectable limits (BDL). This indicates that laying down of *Navgrah Vatikas* helps in reducing pollution levels.

It is very apparent that sustained interaction with people, motivated efforts and creation of awareness produced the desired results. The people voluntarily planted the saplings on their own lands and in lieu of that the contractors could meet their obligations towards government and people. These target groups proved to be fertile nurseries not only for planting but for carrying the message further. However, this required honest, sustained and continuous efforts and inputs. The *Navgrah Vatikas* and *Rashi* gardens are serving as ‘sacred groves’, are being taken care of, maintained and protected. They are serving as good store houses of
germplasm of at least twenty important plants of tradition and culture. Further, they are helping in the rehabilitation of the degraded environment. This can become a people’s movement with strong public support. Therefore, it proves but the forestry advocates that the environment has to be set right ‘By the people and has to be for the people’.

Thus the studies can be concluded with an old Chinese saying, “If you are thinking of one year, plant Rice, if you are thinking 10 years ahead plant trees, and if you are thinking 100 years ahead, educate people”. The studies carried out herein, as per Chinese traditional wisdom, are indicative of a long term plan for restoration, conservation and protection of environment.

9.1 Future Prospects

All religions revere trees and there are many references of tree worship in other religions as well. The Buddhists for instance, Aswattha (Ficus religiosa) is the bodhi tree of Sakyamuni or Buddha under which Buddha attained liberation and enlightenment. Similarly they also worship Asoka tree as Buddha is said to have been born under an Asoka tree. The tree is planted near temples both by the Hindus and the Buddhists and its leaves are used in all religious ceremonies. The tree is also associated with the attainment of omniscience of the Jain muni Mahavira. His initiation under this tree according, to the Jains, was attended by gods.

The Christians rever the “Christmas tree” (Picea smithiana) while the Muslims hold the date tree, which is the life line of desert areas, as sacred. Likewise, the Sikhs also worship many trees. One is a tree of Ber (Ziziphus mauritiana) growing in the compound of the Golden Temple at Amritsar which is believed by the Sikhs to be a tree which removes sorrow. Similarly, a tree of Carissa spinosa or the sacred Gama, growing in a village called Badal in the Hoshiarpur district of Punjab, is a tree of great antiquity and is held in great reverence by the Sikhs. Near Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh there is a tree of Amla (Embelica officinalis) one branch of which bears sweet fruits and the rest of the tree bears bitter-sour fruits. No doubt a case of mutation in the plant but the Sikhs hold the tree sacred under the belief that one of their Gurus once rested under this tree and the branch which gave him shade, since that time bears sweet fruits. So in future, in addition to the establishment of Navgrah Vatika and Rashi gardens, the
work can be extended to laying down of some additional conservational efforts bearing different names:

9.1.1 Sarv Dharma Vriksh Kunj (The Cosmic Tree)

Since trees can serve as a focal point for motivating people of all religions, hence planting of trees can be given practical shape by developing a Sarv Dharma Vriksh Kunj. This can be a model sacred grove with representative trees of all religions planted at a single location (fig below). The plan of the model is depicted in a form of tree with its crown representing the Mother earth. The various sectors of the circular crown shall bear different religious symbols on a marble plate and shall be planted with trees/flowers/grasses pertaining to these religions. The multiple geometry landscape shall also incorporate the map of Himachal Pradesh with districts represented by flora of different colours. The concept may initially be given practical shape at few selected locations at each District and may then be gradually disseminated to other places.

Plate No 9.1

Sarv Dharma Vriksh Kunj (The Cosmic Tree)

This ‘tree’ comprises different branches and each branch represents a specific religious Vatika. The Vatikas are:-

1. Navgraha Vatika/ Panchwati
2. Budh Vatika
3. Jain Vatika
4. Christian Vatika
5. Guru-ke-Bagh Vatika
6. Kurani Vatika

In these Vatikas, the trees associated with various religions shall be planted.
9.1.2 Laying down of Panchwati

A group of five holy trees, namely, Vad (*Ficus benghalensis*), Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*), Bilva or Billi (*Aegle marmelos*), Amla (*Emblica officinalis*) and Ashok (*Saraca indica*) is called Panchvati. The numbers of the trees are specified: Vad, Pipal, Ashok, Bilva and Amla for creating Panchvati. Vad gives shade, Pipal produces vast amounts of oxygen, Bilva is offered to Shiva, Amla has significant medicinal properties and Ashok drives away sorrows. *Panchwati* is considered to abode of Rama and it is believed that Rama alongwith Sita and Lakshman took shelter in “Panchwati” during their exile. Planting five trees in such configuration around residential complexes, educational institutions etc. is considered as a symbol of prosperity and overall well-being of the mankind.

Plate No. 9.2
9.1.3 Laying down of a Nakshtra Vatika

Constellations are groups of stars which appear to be fixed in the sky. The Hindu Panchanga assigns a separate tree for each of the 27 constellations (Nakshatras) through which the Sun passes. This tree is supposed to have originated from its respective constellation.

Plate No 9.3

Relative positioning of 27 Nakshtras

---

(नक्षत्रों से वृष्टि की उपस्थिति––) जितने भी वृष्टि अर्थात श्रेणी वृष्टि हैं उनकी उपस्थिति अतिविनी से हुई है। भरणीसे यमक (जुड़े हुए दो) वृष्टि: क्रीड़काल उत्तराचार्य (पूर्वी), रोहिणीसे जामुन, मृगशिरसे खैर, आदारसे काली चाकर, पुर्वाल्पसे बांस, पुष्यसे पीपल, आर्द्राचार्यसे नागकेसर, मधासे बरगद, पूर्ण–कालुनीसे पलाश, उत्तराल्पुणीसे रुद्रकधक वृष्टि, हल्ल से अरिह्नट (छाती का वृष्टि), चित्रा से श्री वृष्टि (बेल), स्वालीसे अरुलुम वृष्टि, विशालिसे बिकड़कट (जिसकी लकड़ी से कलड़िया बनती है), अनुवादा से वकुल (मोलश्री), जैक्या से विदिकुष्ठ, मूलसे सर्ज (शालका वृष्टि), पूर्वाल्पसे वज्झुल (अशोकका), उत्तराल्पसे दठ, श्रवण से आक, चन्द्रिका से शामी वृष्टि, उत्तर भाद्रपद से पितुलुम (चीम का पेड़) तथा रेवती से महुआ की उपस्थिति हुई है। इस प्रकार ये नक्षत्रस्वभावी वृष्टि कहे गये हैं। 204–210। जब जिस नक्षत्र में शनिवार विद्यमान हो, उस समय उस नक्षत्र–सन्नद्ध वृष्टि का यज्ञपूर्वक पूजन करना चाहिए। 211।

–नारद पुराण पूर्वभाग–द्वितीय पाद त्रिस्तत्व ज्योतिषका संहिताप्रकरण (विविध उपयोगी विषयों का वर्णन) 332
It is believed that celestial bodies like the Sun and the Moon exert different influences on human beings when they are transiting through these 27 constellations. It is also believed that such effects can be moderated or enhanced by planting and worshipping trees assigned to each constellation. This collection of trees planted in the correct order as depicted in the following table constitutes a *Nakshatra Van*.

**Table No 9.1**

**List of Nakshtra Trees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Nakshtra</th>
<th>Tree Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ashwini</td>
<td><em>Strychnos nuxvomica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bharni</td>
<td><em>Emblica officinalis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kritika</td>
<td><em>Ficus glomerata</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rohini</td>
<td><em>Syzygium cumini</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mrigshira</td>
<td><em>Acacia catechu</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ardra</td>
<td><em>Aquilaria agallocha</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Punarvasu</td>
<td><em>Dendrocalamus strictus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Pushya</td>
<td><em>Ficus religiosa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ashlesha</td>
<td><em>Mesua ferrea</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Magha</td>
<td><em>Ficus benghalensis</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Purva Falguni</td>
<td><em>Butea monosperma</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Uttara Falguni</td>
<td><em>Ficus rumphii</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Hasta</td>
<td><em>Jasminium auriculatum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Chitra</td>
<td><em>Aegle marmelos</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Swati</td>
<td><em>Terminalia arjuna</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Vishakha</td>
<td><em>Mesua ferrea</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Anuradha</td>
<td><em>Mesua ferrea</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Jyestha</td>
<td><em>Bombax ceiba</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Moola</td>
<td><em>Vateria indica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Poorvashada</td>
<td><em>Calamus spp.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Uttarashada</td>
<td><em>Artocarpus heterophyllus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Shravana</td>
<td><em>Calotropis gigantea</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Dhanishtha</td>
<td><em>Prospis spicigera</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Saiabhisha</td>
<td><em>Anthocephalus cadamba</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Poorva Bhadrapada</td>
<td><em>Mangifera indica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Uttara Bhadrapada</td>
<td><em>Azadirachta indica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Revati</td>
<td><em>Madhuca lafifolia</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9.1.4 Establishment of Sale Centre for religious/Rashi plants at Deotsidh

Judging the requirements of plants by response of the people, forest department can establish sale centre for all religious/ Rashi plants. Initially one such centre can be established at Deoth Sidh, which shall provide religious (of all religions on demand) as well as rashi (Sun sign/Moon sign) plants to the devotees coming from distant places to this shrine as a form of blessings on cost to cost basis. This concept shall help conserve the native flora as well as promote a sense of belongingness towards trees amongst the umpteen devotees. The Rashi plants (as enumerated in the Table 8.6) raised in the nurseries shall further be sprinkled with the holy water and vibhuti from the main shrine of Sh. Baba Balak Nath Ji & shall also be tied with a sacred thread from the shrine as a symbol of blessing. This concept may later be extended to other religious places of the state including Mosques, Gurudwaras, Churches and temples.

9.1.5 Planting a tree for every book you read

This concept is to encourage the school students to plant & protect trees. This concept emerges from the fact that “Every book that we read was once a tree”. Hence we need to plant a tree for every book that we read. The educational institutions may be encouraged to plant and protect as many trees as the total no of books and copies that the institute is using.

******************************************************************

JAI SAI RAM

******************************************************************