

## **CNS MESSAGE ON PN MANGROVES PLANTATION CAMPAIGN 2021**

Mangroves make up one of the world's most unique ecosystems and provide host of benefits including protection of land from erosion and limit sea intrusion. Since mangroves are adapted to survive in saline and sheltered coastal areas, approximately 1/4th of the world's tropical coastline have mangroves estimated to be spread over an area of approx 181,000 sq km of 112 countries. Mangroves play an invaluable role as nature's shield against cyclones and disasters and protect shorelines. They are valuable breeding and nursery grounds for a variety of fish and shrimp and host a variety of life forms like invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds etc. Above all, mangroves produce oxygen and purify the water by absorbing impurities, harmful substances and help us to breathe clean air by absorbing pollutants.

Pakistan is blessed with 0.6 M of mangroves ecosystem, probably the 10th largest in the world spread along the coast of Sindh and Balochistan. However, mangroves forests are facing a real challenge of sustainability and existence. Covered area of mangroves forests has decreased significantly over the period due various factors such as reduction in fresh water supply, marine pollution, coastal erosion, mangroves cutting etc. Therefore, requirement of new plantation as well as preservation/ protection of existing CP mangroves forests need to be undertaken. A coordinated effort of all stakeholders needs to be undertaken for expansion, preservation and rehabilitation of mangroves forests. In this regard, support of Govt agencies having administrative control of respective areas is paramount to revive the mangroves forests.

PN as a major stakeholder of sea and coast of Pakistan actively participates in mangrove plantation in line with the vision of Govt of Pakistan. Considering it a national obligation, PN launched Mangroves Plantation Campaign in 2016 with a plantation target of 1 M mangroves during which over 1.1 M mangroves saplings were planted. After the success of Pakistan Navy Mangrove Plantation Campaign-2016, PN regularly undertakes mangrove plantation annually at adjoining areas of its coastal establishments. Mangroves Plantation Campaign 2021 earmarks the significance & dedication of PN to achieve the goal of developing 'Green Coastal Belt'. In this regard's plantation is one part but ensuring their sustainability is the actual achievement. I would urge those involved in this plantation Campaign to give utmost importance to sustainability aspect. Only then the campaign will have wide reaching and positive outcomes. (Improving the health of the environment will ultimately contribute in to reducing the risk of local and national disasters through better flood management and protection, sustainable livelihood, ensuring food security, impacts of climate change and rising sea levels.

I urge all my countrymen to join hands with Pakistan Navy for maintaining clean and better coastal environment by preserving and planting of Mangroves for ourselves and our future generations.

