

What's inside the Svalbard Global Seed Vault ?

Today the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway celebrates the 10th anniversary of its official opening. The Norwegian government has planned to spend about \$13 million to upgrade the vault.

It is a facility located on a remote island in the Arctic Ocean and it houses the world's largest collection of seeds. The seeds can be of use in the event of a global catastrophe or when some species is lost due to natural disasters. It is therefore also referred to as the doomsday vault.

Read more: <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-sundaymagazine/ark-in-the-arctic/article6603654.ece>

According to the latest release from Crop Trust, one of the operators of the vault, there have been over a million seed samples deposited by 73 institutions till date.

At Chang La in the Himalayas, at a height of 17,300 feet, there is a storage facility with over 5,000 seed accessions. One accession consists of a set of seeds of one species collected from different locations or different populations.

The vault is a joint venture of the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (which comes under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research) and the Defence Institute of High Altitude Research (under Defence Research and Development Organisation)

“It started as a small experimental set-up almost 10 years ago. We used the facility as an additional storage or a safety duplicate for the seeds at the National Genebank in Delhi,” said Dr.K.C. Bandal, former director of the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources.

Dr. Bandal was one of the representatives from India who carried the deposit box from India to Norway in April 2014. “In Norway, we have deposited 25 accessions of pigeon pea. Pigeon pea is a high source of protein and India is one of the highest producers of the pulse crop. This is a first step in safeguarding the crop diversity and agricultural wealth of our country,” he said

An official from the Defence Institute of High Altitude Research said, “When a seed needs to be stored for few years, maintaining it at just 10 degree Celsius is enough. But in the long run, for 10 to 20 years, they need to be kept at a minus 15 to minus 20 degree Celsius (range). Chang La has a prevalent temperature in this sub-zero range.”

Receive the best of The Hindu delivered to your inbox everyday!

Please enter a valid email address.

Fossilised bird dung from almost 1500 years ago was used for the study.

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com