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# Green touch: City to witness massive plantation drive soon

*The volunteers are asked to submit a list of places they would plant the saplings before taking them from the department.*

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According to a study, Bengaluru's green cover decreased from 68 per cent to six per cent between 1973 and 2017

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**BENGALURU:** The city's green cover, which according to several experts has witnessed a massive decline over the past decade, will soon get a boost with a massive plantation drive being planned by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) across all 198 wards. Around one lakh saplings will be planted across different administrative zones of the BBMP and volunteers and NGOs are expected to come forward to help with the initiative.

According to a study by Professor TV Ramachandra of the Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru had tree coverage of up to 68 per cent of its area in 1973 and over the years, as the city expanded, this figure has dropped to as low as six per cent in 2017. The growth in urbanisation has also led to the spike in temperatures that Bengaluru has been witnessing over the past few years, experts say.

As a result, several groups in the city came forward to initiate moves to recover the green cover as well as to protect whatever trees are left. These include protests against the axing of trees in the city. With the initiative by the BBMP, supporters hope they will be able to bring back some of the city's lost glory.

Around 300 saplings have been distributed for planting till date and according to officials, around 10,000 saplings will be planted in each East, west and South zones. In crowded commercial areas, gap planting will take place. “We have started this drive for the beautification of the city and to ensure an increase in green cover around the city. About eight NGO’s have come forward to help us in this drive till now and we are looking forward to more joining us,” stated Chola Raju, Deputy Conservator of Forests. Also, the deputy range officers in each zone will help the volunteers with the task.

The volunteers are asked to submit a list of places they would plant the saplings before taking them from the department. The Yelahanka, Rajaji Nagar, Mahadevpura, Bommanahalli and Dasarahalli zones will receive 15,000 saplings each. “After the pre-monsoon showers begin, more saplings will be added to the list,” added Raju.

Number speak

Around 1 lakh saplings will be planted across administrative zones of BBMP. Yelahanka, Rajajinagar, Mahadevpura, and Dasarahalli zones will receive 15,000 saplings each.