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No official record on vegetation cover in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation yet

GHMC says they are in talks with firms to hold study on calculating vegetation cover



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Trees planted on the medians and by the roadside in Hyderabad | vinay madapu

By V Nilesh

Express News Service

HYDERABAD: What percentage of the about 650 sq km area falling under Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation(GHMC) is covered by vegetation? Surprisingly, there is no official record which can answer that question, as the exercise of calculating vegetation cover of the city has never been undertaken till now. Although the municipal administration and urban development department has been taking up a wide range of projects in Hyderabad, it comes as a shocker that there has been no initiative till now to quantify vegetation cover of the city.

This is despite the city being home to the National Remote Sensing Center(NRSC) which has an expertise in finding out such data, apart from various other research institutions and universities that have the capability to take up.

There have been various studies done by researchers from academic institutions over the years calculating and predicting the change in vegetation cover of Hyderabad, including one study by Indian institute of Science(IISc) that was published in 2016, which predicted that as per the growth trajectory of the city, its vegetation cover will just be about 3 per cent in 2019.

When contacted, V Krishna, Additional Commissioner(Urban Biodiversity), GHMC, said, “As of now there is no data on the extent of vegetation cover in GHMC. The only vegetation cover data available is from many years ago, of the erstwhile Hyderabad Urban Development(HUDA) that was calculated to be about 18.5 percent.”

He added, “There have been various reports claiming green cover in GHMC to be very less. However, those figures cannot be relied upon. GHMC has lot of vegetation which includes 13 forest blocks, saplings planted over the years and many parks. We are planning to soon get a study conducted on calculating the vegetation cover in GHMC for which we are in talks with some organizations, like EPTRI.”

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