

Coimbatore Corporation plans 100 Miyawaki forests across city

Civic body ready to sign MoU with associations coming forward to raise them

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Coimbatore Corporation has drawn an ambitious plan to improve the city's green cover by going in for Miyawaki urban forests across the city.

Corporation Commissioner Raja Gopal Sunkara told *The Hindu* the civic body had planned Miyawaki forests at 100 places - all reserved sites - in the five zones. The Corporation had invited non-government organisations, corporate companies and industries based out of Coimbatore, industry associations and residents' welfare associations to join hands with it to raise the Miyawaki forests.

The Corporation was ready to sign an MoU with the associations or organisations or companies coming forward to raise the forests and had prepared a draft agreement. The civic body would play the role of a facilitator.

As a pilot initiative, the Corporation and Environmentalist Foundation of India had selected two reserved sites - Maharani



Coimbatore Corporation has started readying a reserved site in Veerakeralam to raise a Miyawaki urban forest.

■ S. SIVA SARAVANAN

Avenue, Veerakeralam and Jothi Garden, Pongaliyur, near Vadavalli - to develop the urban forests.

At other sites, after the associations or other agencies come forward, the Corporation would look at sinking borewells to provide access to water, Mr. Sunkara said and added that the Corporation wanted to replicate the success the Greater Chennai Corporation had had in the metropolis.

The Corporation was also looking to improve the upkeep of the parks. It had de-

ployed its conservancy workers to clean the parks, which were out of bounds for the public until recently due to the COVID-19 lockdown restriction.

It had cleaned a few parks and would complete cleaning all the 100-plus parks in the coming days. Thereafter, the Corporation would float tenders for the maintenance of the parks. The contracts for maintenance of parks had expired a year ago or were under extension due to the COVID-19 lockdown. But before floating the tenders,

engineers had been asked to list all the parks and classify them type-wise, the Commissioner said.

Bigger parks like the V.O.C. Park, Bharathi Park or Gandhi Park would come under category 'A', medium-sized parks under type 'B' and the small parks under group 'C'. For each of the classifications, the Corporation would adopt a unique approach for maintenance.

The civic body was even open to letting the residents' welfare associations or local companies take care of the maintenance of the local parks or group of green spaces. For the bigger parks, which required a professional approach to maintenance, the Corporation would have to go to contractors, he further said.

While floating the tenders, the Corporation would also include penalty clause and looking at enforcing the penalty clauses in case of dereliction, something that the Corporation had not done thus far, he added.