

A tree for every cottah in New Town

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The building rules of New Town will be amended to make it compulsory to have a tree on every cottah of land. That translates to a tree every 80 square metre.

The New Town Kolkata Development Authority (NKDA), which administers the township, has initiated a process to amend Rule 9 of the New Town Kolkata (Building) Rules 2009 to make it compulsory to plant at least one tree on each cottah of land, an official said.

“For plots larger than one cottah, there must be one tree for every cottah,” the official said.

“We are amending the building rules. No building plan will be approved unless it shows exactly where and how many trees will be planted in the compound.”

Anybody who wants to construct a building in New Town has to submit a building plan to the NKDA for approval.

The minimum size of a plot in the planned township is one cottah.

The authorities in the township have carried out tree plantation along almost every major road and even inside residential blocks. An official said the drive was aimed at, apart from expanding the green cover, ensuring that even standalone houses built on smaller plots have trees around them.

A giant tree looming in front of a house can be a worrying thought for residents as its roots might damage the foundation and huge branches might crash into the house during storms.

In order to ensure that residents and builders get the right idea of what to plant, the forest department has been asked to provide a list of tall trees that can be planted near buildings.

A forest department official said they would like plot owners to plant dust-absorbing tall trees such as shirish, kadamba, gokul, palash and neem. Slim trees such as coconut, pine and casuarina, which have flexible trunks and can sway with winds, can also be planted.

“We are preparing a list of trees that can be planted near buildings made of bricks, cement and plaster,” the forest department official said.

The list will be uploaded on the NKDA website www.nkdamar.org. Copies will also be available at the NKDA office.

Builders can source the trees from Tall Tree Nursery in New Town’s Action Area I, another NKDA official said. The nursery is jointly run by the Hidco and the forest department’s West Bengal Wasteland Development Corporation Ltd.

NKDA chairman Debashis Sen said the space where the tree would be planted would have to be marked on the building plan.

“Residents will have to ensure that the trees are not chopped off. We will conduct routine inspections to check on the trees’ well-being,” Sen said.

More than 2,20,000 trees have been planted along dividers and boulevards in the township over the past couple of years as part of a number of plantation drive.

A “tree library” has also come up in New Town in collaboration with the forest department, where visitors can familiarise themselves with and get basic information about trees. The library stands on a three-acre plot in Action Area 1D, a 10 minute-drive from Kolkata Gate.

Source: <https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/west-bengal/a-tree-for-every-cottah-in-new-town/cid/1700986>