

Plastic thickness detectors, tree plantation in BMC's eco drive

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KOLKATA: The Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation (BMC) is going to take up two environmental initiatives like plastic ban drive and plantation across Salt Lake and Rajarhat-Gopalpur soon.

The civic body will plant small- and medium-size trees and are also distributing saplings to all the 41 councillors for roadside plantation in their respective wards.

TWIN MEASURES BY CIVIC BODY



Banned plastic bags in Salt Lake



A plantation drive in a BMC area

➤ The **BMC** is going to take up plastic-ban and roadside **plantation** drives soon across **Salt Lake** and **Rajarhat-Gopalpur**

➤ The civic body is procuring **detectors** to **measure** the **thickness** of **plastic bags**

➤ Small and medium size **fruit bearing trees** will be planted in **Salt Lake** and **Rajarhat**

➤ **41 BMC councillors** are getting **15 saplings** for **plantation** in their respective wards

☞ A regular drive is needed to prevent the use of banned plastic bags. The block committees can also be engaged for this purpose

Sarat Mullick | SECRETARY, BIDHANNAGAR WELFARE ASSOCIATION

☞ The nature of soil in Salt Lake is weak. For roadside plantation, small or medium size palm trees should be considered

Arijit Poddar | SECRETARY, BIDHANNAGAR HORTICULTURE SOCIETY

☞ The use of banned plastic bags needs to be stopped and a continuous awareness campaign is needed

Rahima Bibi Mondal | MMIC (ENVIRONMENT), BMC

The civic body will also procure plastic detectors to measure the thickness of plastic bags used in the BMC area. Separate teams of civic officials will move around different parts of Salt Lake and Rajarhat-Gopalpur as part of the anti-plastic drive.

Earlier, the BMC had imposed a ban on single-use plastic bags measuring below 75 microns and penalised both the vendors and buyers for flouting the ban. But the banned plastic bags are back in use due to lack of constant monitoring. “People have to be aware of the menace of using plastic. We are going to resume the drive against plastic and procuring detectors to measure the thickness of plastic bags,” said BMC MMIC (environment) Rahima Bibi Mondal.

A study by the International Society of Waste Management, Air and Water (ISWMAW) shows a higher non-compliance in banning single-use plastic bags in BMC area (68%) as compared to north Kolkata (58%) and south Kolkata (41%). The study also showed the higher use of plastic cutlery in Salt Lake and Rajarhat-Gopalpur as compared to north and south Kolkata.

Environmentalists are stressing on the need to crack down on the manufacturers of the banned plastic. “A check on the manufacturing and distribution along with special programmes to spread awareness are primary steps in implementing the plastic ban,” said JU waste management expert, Sadhan Ghosh.

“The manufacturing of banned plastic has to be stopped at its source. There is also a need to come up with cost effective alternatives to replace such banned plastic bags,” said green activist, Subhas Dutta.

BMC councillors are getting 15 saplings each for roadside plantation in their respective wards. “The plan is to plant fruit bearing trees,” said Mondal.

The civic body has been pruning large trees to reduce their weights so that it could continue to stand on. “With the forest department’s permission, we will also start uprooting the damaged trees, which are dangerously leaning forward in many places,” said a BMC official.