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THE TIMES OF INDIA

22 lakh trees to be planted in Gandhinagar

TNN | Jun 23, 2022, 08.34 AM IST



AHMEDABAD: Back in 2019, a Forest Survey of India (FSI) report had warned that the state capital Gandhinagar had lost its moderate dense tree cover between 2017 and 2019. The report had explained that the moderate dense forest area in Gandhinagar, with 40-70% canopy density, had become an open forest area with just 10-40% tree density. All fingers pointed to the development taking place within the city and on its outskirts. The state forest department is now planning to reverse this process, intending to plant 21 lakh trees within and around Gandhinagar city, through its 'Hariyalu Gandhinagar' mission.

In 2003, a social forestry department survey found that Gandhinagar had 416 trees for every 100 people. This was more than any other city in the country. In Ahmedabad, there were just 11 trees for every 100 people.

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"The situation changed between 2005 and 2020, when drastic development works required large numbers of trees to be cut within Gandhinagar city limits. The Hariyalu Gandhinagar scheme is to make up for this loss," says a senior forest department official.

Under the mission, some 428 hectares of land under GEER Foundation will see plantation efforts, areas around Punit Van, in the municipal corporation area and within the GIDC estate will see plantation on 75 hectares.



Block plantation in various sectors of the city and a few surrounding areas will see plantation on 748 hectares. “We have relied mostly on native varieties of trees under the mission,” said the senior forest official. The official added that apart from 22 lakh trees, the forest department will plant 4.6 lakh shrubs inside and around the city. The native trees that will be planted will include the neem, gulmohar, jacaranda, Cassia fistula or garmalo, and a few fruit trees.