

BMC to install tree tubs with wheels to prevent uprooting of plants in Mumbai

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Mumbai: Several development projects are undertaken on a regular basis in the city that often harms roadside plants. To protect these trees in public places from getting uprooted and to increase the tree density of the city, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has come up with a unique concept of installing 'trees tubs with wheels' affixed beneath them. Senior officials from the BMC said that the primary objective of these tubs is to ensure that there is no need to uproot or remove any tree or sapling during development projects in the city.

As part of the plan, the BMC will be placing these tubs on various footpaths and public open spaces, likewise to the existing tree basins that we see on the footpaths.

However, unlike the conventional tree basins, these tubs will have wheels affixed beneath them and could be moved from one location to another.

In the first phase, the BMC will be placing 500 such tubs in several open spaces and footpaths in the Worli area.

Sharad Ughade, assistant municipal commissioner shared, "Whenever we carry out road widening projects or trenching works in the city, some of the trees and plants get affected. With these movable tubs in place, we can easily relocate the trees from the location of construction work without harming them and again place them back to their original place after the completion of the project."

"Having these tubs will also not require the digging of the surface or footpaths, so automatically we can increase the green cover of an area without harming the urban infrastructure," he added.

Ughade also shared that these tubs will be in place in the next 15 days and soon after the number of locations will be scaled.

"The tubs that will be in public places like footpaths and promenades will be maintained by the BMC. We are also in talks with residential welfare associations and corporate houses so that they can also adopt these tubs within their premises from us," Ughade said.

The BMC officials maintained that the tubs are made of metal sheets and the size of each tub will be around 3x2x2 feet. The officials said that native Indian plants like Taman will be planted in the tubs. The officials also said that these tubs are cost-effective and the expense behind the construction and maintenance of each tub and tree would be between ₹4,000-₹5,000.

"Each tree will have a height of at least 10 feet and our officials will be pruning them regularly to make sure the size and shapes of the trees are maintained well. Also, having the

trees inside these tubs will prevent encroachments in the footpaths as in many cases, we see encroachers building shanties around tree basins,” said an official.

“Initially we had planted saplings inside these tubs and now that they are growing into trees, we will be bringing them out in the locations,” the official added.

Meanwhile, experts commended the idea and said that the maintenance of the trees needs to be done regularly.

“This is a unique concept in Mumbai and the process of having more trees in public places will definitely increase the tree density of a place. Similar kinds of plantations and landscaping are done in several places in Europe and we have to wait and watch how it gets implemented in Mumbai,” said Vaibhav Raje, a city-based arborist.

Dr Vishwas Apte, a city-based botanist shared, “Having more trees in public places is definitely a good idea but at the same time, the BMC needs to be strict with the maintenance because trees that are being grown on tubs need extra care because their roots are not attached to the natural soil. Therefore, regular maintenance and watering should be done.”

BOX with bullet points

The concept is similar to that of flower pots.

The tubs will be rectangular boxes made with metal sheets.

Each tub will be 3x2x2 feet and will be housing the trees in the centre.

Initially, these tubs will be placed in locations like Worli Sea Face, Haji Ali, Dr Annie Besant Road.

Each tub will cost between ₹4,000- ₹5,000

Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/mumbai-news/bmc-to-install-tree-tubs-with-wheels-to-prevent-uprooting-of-plants-in-mumbai-101649356909691.html>