

**PMC to give Rs 26.25 crore funds to protect Warje urban forest**

22 July 2021



TO PROTECT the fast depleting green cover in the city due to rapid urbanisation, the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) has decided to provide funds of Rs 26.25 crore, with Rs 5.25 crore each for next five years, to protect the urban forest in Warje through various steps to be taken up by the joint forest management committee.

The Union government in 1988 had launched an initiative to protect the forest through a joint management committee of officers from the forest department, local civic body and villages. On the lines of the initiative taken by the Centre, a similar move was launched to protect the Pune urban forest in 2006 by forming a joint forest management committee of officers from the forest department, PMC and city residents.

“The PMC allocated Rs 10.23 crore for the initiative between 2006 and 2011, and Rs 9.61 crore of funds was used for development work. Thereafter, the PMC allocated Rs 4.8 crore for the conservation and protection of the forest, while Rs 2.31 crore of the allocated funds was spent on development work,” said Hemant Rasane, chairperson of the standing committee.

He said, “The PMC has now increased the allocation to Rs 26.25 crore in the next five years for protection and conservation of the forest in the Warje range.”

There is around 1,826 acres of forest land in the city. In the first phase, protection and conservation work started on 988 acres, including 613 acres of Pachgaon-Parvati, 250 acres of the Bhamburda forest range and 125 acres of Warje. The second phase included work in the forest areas of Pachgaon-Parvati, Bhamburda, Warje along with Kothrud and Dhanori.

“The funds are spent on construction of boundary wall, tree plantation, construction of barrages and providing security personnel to keep check on illegal activities,” he said, adding that allocation of more funds would give a major boost to the efforts to protect the urban forest in the city.

PMC Garden Superintendent Ashok Ghorpade said the civic standing committee has approved funding to protect the forest area in Warje by constructing a boundary wall and developing a forest park meant for physical exercise.

“The funds have been approved but will be given based on the financial situation of the civic body in the next five years,” he added.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/pune/pune-civic-body-funds-worth-rs-26-crore-protect-urban-forest-7416550/>