



## Study reveals 30 per cent dip in Kolkata forest cover in 10 years

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Kolkata, according to a report published by the Forest Survey of India, not only has the least forest cover but has lost the second highest percentage of green cover in the last decade among India's seven major cities.

The Forest Survey of India functions under the Union ministry of environment, forest and climate change.

Green patches with 70 per cent or more canopy are known as "very dense forest". The ones with 40 to 70 per cent canopy are called "moderately dense forest" and 10 to 40 per cent "open forest".

The India State of Forest Report 2021 shows that Kolkata last year had about 1.8sq km of forest cover, less than 1 per cent of the city's area.

Of that, 1.7sq km falls under the "open" category and the rest can be called "moderately dense".

Overall, the forest cover in Kolkata has reduced about 30 per cent from 2011 to 2021. The green spread in 2011 was 2.5sq km.

Among the seven cities studied, only Ahmedabad has lost more forest cover, 47 per cent, but still 2 per cent of its area is green.

In contrast, Mumbai had about 111sq km of forest cover in 2021, about 25 per cent of the city area. It has gained 9 per cent over the past decade.

Hyderabad and Delhi follow Mumbai with around 13 per cent forest cover — Delhi has 194sq km of green canopy and Hyderabad 82sq km.

Bangalore's green cover comprises 7 per cent of the city area and Chennai's around 5 per cent.

The report confirms what Kolkatans have been complaining about over the years — that the city is being denuded with impunity.

"Trees have been felled as a rule in the city in the name of development. We demand that the civic body immediately ensure not a single tree is felled henceforth. If a tree needs to be felled, the

compensatory planting should take place much before the felling,” said a Kolkatan who lives off EM Bypass in east Kolkata.

Mayor Firhad Hakim said: “Though we have planted trees, often they cannot be maintained as they should have been. I am trying to push an urban forestry programme in the city. We will further expedite the programme in the light of the findings you mentioned.”

Debasish Kumar, mayoral council member-in-charge of parks and gardens, said: “We have planted a significant number of trees but a series of cyclones and infrastructure projects led to felling of trees.”

Source: <https://www.telegraphindia.com/my-kolkata/news/study-reveals-30-per-cent-dip-in-kolkata-forest-cover-in-10-years/cid/1853954>