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VMC finds banyan trees unfit for Banyan City, looks for open areas

The Department of Forest and Environment may have mooted an ambitious plan to plant banyan tree across the city, but the civic body's parks and garden department is not keen to encourage its plantation due to the lack of sufficient place.

Sources in the Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) admitted that though the plantation of banyan trees is done, but only at a few selected locations. After the Forest and Environment principal secretary S K Nanda mooted a proposal to this effect, the VMC planted banyan tree saplings on a piece of land near Gujarat State Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited on the city outskirts.

“So far, we have planted about 5,000 banyan trees, which include some sites in the city area and also near GSFC. We are choosing the spots where the tree has better scope for growth instead of planting at a place where it would become a problem,” said V R Chikhalia, director, Parks and Garden department, VMC.

However, officials in the same department maintained that it is not possible to plant banyan trees in the city areas with the road traffic increasing rapidly. “Banyan tree needs a lot of space. Its roots work as the support system. We have observed that once we plant banyan tree

it does not get sufficient space for growth, as a result of which these trees get uprooted during monsoon,” said an official seeking anonymity.

Another senior official at the VMC said a large number of banyan trees were uprooted during this year’s incessant rains, as the main trunk could not bear the weight of the tree.

“If we continue planting banyan trees indiscriminately, it would be inviting trouble in future because if the same trees cause accidents then we would be blamed for it. That is why we have decided to plant other trees in the areas where vehicular traffic is more,” added the official.