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NDMC zeroes in on more sites for mini-forest

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NEW DELHI: Taking ahead its project of developing mini-forests in the middle of congested neighbourhoods or busy commercial areas, North Delhi Municipal Corporation has started work at five more sites in places like Rohini, Prasant Vihar and Azadpur. The project is targeted to be completed this year, taking the total number of mini-forests to eight.

In 2019, the horticulture department had started a special drive to identify such neglected sites to develop them into man-made mini-forests. Unlike parks, only saplings of native trees are being planted in such forests.

The civic body had begun with developing one acre in Rajendra Nagar on the direction of Delhi High Court and soon chose two more sites at Keshavpuram and Karol Bagh. “After getting encouraging response at Rajendra Nagar, we identified five more sites last year at C Block park, Azadpur Mandi; park B4 adjacent to a primary school in Sultanpuri; vacant area at G Block in Prashant Vihar; area near Pocket 2 in Rohini’s Sector 25; and Pocket 8A in Rohini’s Sector 24. Though the deadline for planting trees is March, we have already completed work at some places like Azadpur Mandi,” said an official.

“With the hiring of 600 more contractual staff, we will speed up work at other sites as they need proper maintenance to increase the survival rate of saplings,” said the official.

In mini-forests, the corporation gives stress on planting native trees like pilkhan, banyan, gular, jamun, mahua, neem, mango

and teak at short distances while a walkway is constructed on the sides. “Our purpose is to develop lush green areas. Such places are important in congested areas where there are no or limited trees,” said the official.

Officials appreciated the help of RWAs or locals in ensuring survival of 90% of the saplings.