



Though the district administration had promised to compensate for the loss of green cover that resulted due to the BRTS project, there has been no progress on the issue.

The state government had announced to plant 30,000 saplings in different areas of the city through its various agencies.

The city-based NGOs have hit out at the administration for failing to keep its word, lamenting that the city has lost hundreds of trees to the project.

Apart from the NGOs, senior BJP leader Laxmi Kanta Chawla and chief parliamentary secretary Dr Navjot Sidhu have openly come out against axing trees. While the NGOs claimed that the felling of trees was indiscriminate in nature, Chawla too opposed the indiscriminate chopping of trees in Amritsar.

Chawla said the government has not compensated the city yet for the loss of its green cover caused due to ongoing development works. She said the present SAD-BJP coalition would be known for robbing the holy city of its green cover. She added that the city was ready to accept the BRTS but it was actually thrust upon it.

Chief parliamentary secretary (CPS) Sidhu had criticised the move and had approached Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal on the issue. Upset over the chopping of trees, Sidhu said the government agencies were yet to deliver on their announcements.

After coming under the scanner over the chopping of trees to facilitate the construction of various development projects, including the ambitious BRTS project, the Amritsar Improvement Trust (AIT) had announced a project under which 20,000 saplings would be planted to compensate for the loss of the green belt in July 2014.

The AIT would bear an expenditure of Rs 40 lakh with two years' maintenance cost of the trees and their guards. Under the project, saplings over 10-feet high would be planted. These saplings are to be planted at Ranjeet Avenue, New Amritsar and the Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Mall Mandi scheme area.

In the same month, the Municipal Corporation had announced that it will plant around 10,000 saplings in different parts of the city to augment the green cover.