



## Award-winning teacher turns his school campus into a mini forest with over 450 trees

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It all began when [Raphi Ramanath](#), a biology teacher at Vignjana Vilasini Higher Secondary School (VVHSS) in Kerala, became the coordinator of his school's eco-club.

His aim was simple — to create awareness among the children on the [importance of the environment](#) and nature conservation. For this, he set up a herbal garden and a mini forest with 450 trees on the campus.

“We started the herbal garden with the help of the forest department and they provided us with 50 saplings. We kept on planting more and now the herbal garden has grown so much that they are not plants anymore but full-grown trees,” he informs The Better India.

Apart from the garden, he used the Japanese Miyawaki method to [set up a mini forest](#) on the campus.

“We also built a fence surrounding the mini-forest. The forest, named ‘Vidyavanam’, now has over 450 trees of 112 varieties,” he says.

The success of the initiative in school pushed him further on a greener path. “I started taking up initiatives like plantation drives in Alappuzha and in different districts,” says Raphi who became the Alappuzha district coordinator for an NGO in 2013.

Over the years Raphi has helped set up several herbal, fruit gardens, butterfly gardens and *nakshatra vanam* (planting trees named after stars in the Malayalam calendar) in several schools, government offices, places of worship, and so on.

Source: <https://www.thebetterindia.com/318674/kerala-teacher-grows-mini-miyawaki-forest-herbal-garden-on-school-campus/>