

In Mangaluru, Ullal plans to turn empty land into forest

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MANGALURU: He is a nature lover and green champion, who planted over two lakh saplings by the side of roads, crematoriums, schools and other public places in the past 37 years. Today Madhav Ullal has bigger plans - to turn 35 cents of land near a temple in Mangaluru taluk into a mini forest. The green activist has begun planting saplings of various species on the land near Sri Samba Sadashiva Temple in Kuppepadavu to mark the 75th birth anniversary of Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala Dharmadhikari D Veerendra Heggade.

Ullal said saplings of 75 species of Ayurvedic plants and fruit-bearing trees have been planted at the premises of the temple located in Bardila village at Kuppepadavu. Some of the saplings include ashoka, palasha, indigenous nagasampige, kenda sampige, Arjuna, shami, haale mara,

kadamba, jambu nerale, Rama pathra, kolijuttu, red sander, curry leaves and other species, said Ullal, who has distributed nearly three lakh saplings to various organisations and institutions.

He said the initiative was taken up with the support of forest department, Pilikula Nisargadhama, Ullal Janajagruthi Vedike, Sri Durgayuvaka Mandala of Kuppepadavu, Karnataka Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene.

"We have planned a 'vana' (forest) near the temple by following the natural process, which is different from the Miyawaki concept. All saplings planted in the land will grow into trees within a few years. In fact, it is difficult to arrange saplings since it is the re-bagging time for nurseries. However, the forest department and Pilikula Nisargadhama supported the initiative by providing saplings. A similar project was taken up at the premises of Sri Mahalingeshwara Temple in Innoli last year," he said. Ullal also takes care of the saplings he planted by ensuring that watering is done every day. "In most of the places where I

planted saplings, the forest department, institutions and organisations have been watering and looking after it. Meanwhile, in many places, I personally visit and take care of the saplings," he said.

Ullal was instrumental in launching a green canopy project by planting Kadamba Vriksha, also known as burflower tree or Neolamarckia Cadamba, by the side of national highway from Talapady to Nanthoor.