

Miyawaki forest flourishes in Chhattigarh's Bhanupratappur

TNN | Mar 27, 2023, 07:10 AM IST



RAIPUR: Forest department has developed mini forest in Kanker's East Bhanupratappur forest division by taking up Japan-inspired 'Miyawaki' afforestation method.

The project was taken up in 2020 when 12,000 saplings of 25 species, including local species, were planted on 0.6 hectare of land adjacent to Bhanupratappur town. After almost three years, the mini forest now covers three hectares area. "The average height of saplings was 50 cm and today the average height has reached four meters with a whopping survival rate of 90% after two and a half years," said Manish Kashyap, divisional forest officer (DFO), who initiated the project in 2020 and is currently posted in the Van Vikas Nigam, Nava Raipur.

Miyawaki plantation involves planting of saplings in a tight space which when planted after proper pit preparation and planning, will emerge as a mini forest in a surprisingly quick time. Even as the cost of planting with Miyawaki technique is 6-7 times higher than the natural plantation, forests developed with this Japanese technique give 10-20 times more benefits than a natural forest. In this technique, saplings are planted very close. In normal plantations, 1000 saplings are planted per hectare in 3x3 metre spacing. In Miyawaki, 20,000 saplings are planted at an average spacing of 0.5x0.5 m. Soil is ploughed properly before plantation and rice husk is mixed with manure to increase porosity and moisture retention, Kashyap said.

At Bhanupratappur forest division, the plantation was done in the encroachment affected land which has been transformed into dense forest and has become the favourite place of morning walkers.

Over the past few years, Miyawaki forest projects have been literally springing up all over the country and is popular in big cities like Hyderabad, Bangalore and Mumbai. Miyawaki models absorbs 20 times more carbon dioxide than a natural forest and reduces sound and air pollution by 1000 times than the traditional plantations. According to DFO Jadhav Shrikrishna, the survival rate of natural forest is just 20-30% while in case of Miyawaki forest the chance survival rate remains much higher after two years of watering which is a costly affair.

Basically it is the replication of natural forest, but the technique we adopt helps the plants grow at a faster pace. However, the benefits of this mini forest are much higher than the natural plantations. From the environmental and global warming point of view, this technique can bring much needed respite for the human being, Shrikrishna said.



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