

Planting forests in Bengaluru: Bimal Desai tells you how

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Bimal Desai at a forest patch around his house. Pic: Amogh Rayankar

Bimal Desai has been a one-man army protecting much of what we see of Cubbon Park. The 14 cases he filed over the last two decades ensured that night-time traffic was banned in the park and encroachments were kept at bay. But one of his learnings while he was fighting the system over the years, was that you can't always win. So while he continued his legal battles, Desai decided to parallelly start greening the city to compensate for its lost green cover.

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Using the same method, he has created patches of urban forests inside the Director General of Police premises in MG Road, and is now developing similar spaces near the Cantonment Railway Station and a couple of schools. Using the Miyawaki method, he has created eight patches of forests in his house, which is set across three acres of land in the heart of Bengaluru.

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“While we continue to fight what the administration plans to do to our common green spaces, there is nothing that stops us from creating lush green forest patches around us. You can start with space as little as 10 ft x 10 ft, where hundreds of trees can be planted,” he says.

But with land being at a premium in a city like Bengaluru, with the increased demand for housing, where does one find this kind of space?



Bimal Desai's list of trees planted in his mini forest.

Pic: Sujnan Herale/Amogh Rayankar

“Builders who have large projects that spread into several acres can use this method to create a lush foliage that runs through the perimeter of their property. The BBMP has many islands built around the most polluted junctions in the heart of the city. This (afforestation) is something we are doing near Cantonment, where the railways have given us land. If each one of us can get this to happen, I can't see why the city cannot recover its green in five years,” says Desai, as he walks around, showing the forest patches around his house.

His mantra, he says, is simple – stop complaining, start acting. “We are angry about what is being done to our city. But we can reverse it. And it is quite simple. Just needs a little will power,” concludes Desai.

Source: <http://bengaluru.citizenmatters.in/planting-urban-forest-bimal-desai-34687>