



Introduced by the Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki in the 1980s, the Miyawaki technique helps trees grow densely and quickly. It also lowers temperatures via concrete heat islands, reduces air and noise pollution, and creates carbon sinks.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke about the technique in his monthly radio show 'Mann ki baat', where he lauded the efforts of Kerala-based teacher Raafi Ramnath's Vidyavanam, who used the Miyawaki technique to transform a barren land into a mini forest by planting 115 varieties of trees.

Mumbai has embraced the idea of urban forests, and one of the largest urban forests is the Miyawaki forest, located in the heart of Chandivali, Mumbai. The 34000 square metre forest results from an effort by Nahar Group, a real estate developer.

"While considering all the parameters mentioned above, we have studied gardens developed in India and overseas and concluded that an expansive green cover needs to be an integral part of our design philosophy. Miyawaki projects have been buoyed by India's promise, under the Paris Agreement, to improve its green cover from 25 to 33 per cent by 2022," said Manju Yagnik, Vice Chairperson of the Nahar Group.

Miyawaki forests are not intended to and will never replicate natural forests, but it is a technique to restore biodiversity and fight climate change impact within cities. Apart from its benefits, it also helps attract several species of birds and insects, including butterflies, moths and bees, that play a significant role in pollination.

Creating green spaces in urban environments is a priority that is the need of the hour, especially in the light of cities choking under pollution and rapid development. The concept advocates for the preservation of indigenous trees that are native to specific regions, giving them a new chance at life. These species are often forgotten and in danger of being lost.

The forests proliferate in one-tenth the time of regular forests. Bengaluru has also adopted this technique as it is losing its green cover to infrastructure projects. The need to have lung space is a priority for cities, and this technique helps in more ways than one.

Photo by Samuel Berner.

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