

## From wasteland to urban forest

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*This urban forest was grown using the Miyawaki plantation method*

**By Saumyangi Yadav**

The residents of Somasundarapalya, Hosapalya, HSR Layout, along with the Rotary Bengaluru HSR, Community Task Force (CTF) and Saytrees NGO, have developed an urban forest with the Miyawaki plantation method. The plantation was done over six to eight months ago with the help of several residents and authorities, and now, the one-foot-tall saplings have grown as tall as 15 feet. Now, the residents have demanded the MLA, Satish Reddy, provide support for the maintenance of the urban forest.

On Tuesday morning, Rotary Bengaluru HSR carried out a walk in the urban forest with the MLA, asking for the provision of watering facilities, seating facilities for nearby residents, and more.

Suresh V, president of Rotary Bengaluru HSR, told Bangalore Mirror, “The MLA has already approved two borewells for the urban forest since the summer season is arriving soon. We have also asked for a pathway where the residents can walk. That too has been approved. These are the immediate sanctions, and we have also been promised benches across the urban forest for people who want to come and sit.” These two acres of lakebed land in Somasundarapalya were being used for the purpose of garbage dumping for several years, local citizens informed.

“With the help of the lake department, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), and Karnataka Compost Development Corporation (KCDC), we were able to get a compound wall around the area of 4 acres. Out of that, we got 2 acres of land and developed a Miyawaki forest and planted around 12,500 saplings of native species.

Over a period of more than six months, the saplings have grown to a height of 15 feet. They include several fruit-bearing plants like guavas, jackfruit, custard apples, and so on. There are several aromatic plants that have also been planted to cover up the smell from the KCDC dumping ground nearby.” 200 bamboo plants have been planted as these are considered to be oxygen rich, he added.

The urban forest is located along the Somasundarapalya Lake in HSR layout. The residents are demanding proper maintenance and beautification of the area by the help of local authorities now that the urban forest has started taking shape.