

Miyawaki forest in Mumbai giving results: Forest official

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The Miyawaki urban forest in Mumbai has emerged as an example of how the green cover can be increased in cities across India, said a top forest official of the Maharashtra government.

The BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation has been actively pursuing the concept of urban forestation by the Miyawaki method, which is pioneered by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki. The technique, that is gaining popularity in India, helps build dense, native forests – 10 times faster and 30 times denser. Only native species are planted – and species are divided into shrub, sub-tree, tree and canopy.

“The BMC’s Miyawaki forest project has been very successful,” says additional principal chief conservator of forest (wildlife) Sunil Limaye. According to him, the concept must be replicated in the entire Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). “We need to address various issues in cities like Mumbai. We have to create Miyawaki forests, we have to protect mangroves,” Limaye said, addressing an online discussion on Maharashtra’s forests and biodiversity hosted by Mumbai-based Instucen Trust managing trustee Mugdha Karnik.

He said that the government is promoting the concept of urban forests and it's going to add up to the efforts of enhancing the green cover. It may be recalled, on Republic Day, this year, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray formally launched BMC’s Miyawaki forest project.

According to the plan that was initiated by the state’s Environment, Tourism and Protocol Minister Aaditya Thackeray, 65 plots in Mumbai will have over 4,00,000 plants to improve the green cover in Mumbai.

A veteran forest official, Limaye, who earlier served as the Director of Sanjay Gandhi National Park, said that Mumbai’s nature is very unique. “Nature reclaims itself fast with little care...it regains itself,” he said.

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